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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
Papal and Protestant Christendom

A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days
foretold by Christ

"Take heed that ye be not deceived"

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE"

In the world today freedom is a state much desired and sought after. It is a privilege guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and consequently this country is hailed as a country of liberty — free.

This last week has brought about events here and in other nations which revolve around freedom. Martin Luther King Day has been established as a tribute to one who was a renowned advocate of freedom for his people. It has been some one hundred and twenty years since Abraham Lincoln emancipated the slaves. Indeed a costly civil war was fought over this issue. Yet today many, if not most of the black people in this country, feel they do not enjoy the same freedom as other races. Very recently in the City of Miami, Florida, severe tension and hatred over what was felt to be police oppression have caused violent riots, bringing fear and destruction. This sense of oppression has lent itself to a further 'freedom' — to burn, to loot and to riot.

In the rest of the world we see situations are similar. There is an ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. Riots are common as these Arabs seek freedom. This quest, they believe, gives them "freedom" to hurl stones and fire bombs at the Israeli authorities. In Czechoslovakia there is suppression of dissenters by force, beating and arrest as they seek freedom from Russian domination. This week President-Elect George Bush was inaugurated, and in his address spoke of freedom and human rights which are to be a vital part of his presidential policy. The desire and struggle for freedom has been a part of the world's history, in measure, since the beginning.

At the time of the Lord Jesus, the people of Judea were in rebellion against the Roman power, seeking to be free. As an outcome of that continued rebellion, Jerusalem was burned in A.D. 70 by Titus and his Roman legions. It was during this struggle that Jesus was born, grew, taught, died and rose from the dead. He witnessed through His words, His living, His miracles and finally through His victory that He was the Messiah promised by His Father, come to bring hope, life and ultimately the kingdom to those of Israel who heard and obeyed His words. We have listened to the record concerning Jesus:

"As he spake these words, many believed on him."

John 8:30

What did He speak?

"...I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him."

Verse 26.

Jesus conveyed to Israel, and has to us, God's wishes, purpose and grace—the gospel, the way of salvation. Many put their trust in Him, believing that He did indeed speak the Father's words. These He encouraged:

“...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
Verses 31-32

He revealed a means of freedom to those who sought Him because of what they saw and heard. However, often there was not an understanding of what that freedom involved, for they replied:

“...We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?”
Verse 33

How unperceptive they seemed! They were indeed Jews, Abraham's seed in the flesh, but did not perceive their lack. Politically they were in bondage to Rome; spiritually they were in bondage to the flesh, subject to the law of sin and death. They were not free at all as Jesus made clear:

“...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”
Verse 34.

Although claiming to be true Jews, the seed of Abraham, their words revealed their great lack. If they were indeed of Abraham they would be looking for that seed (Christ) promised to Abraham, a seed who would in God's determined time “possess the gates of his enemies” (Genesis 22:17). By His victory, he would free them and all faithful from the law of sin and death. Jesus said to those who questioned:

“...If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me,...”
Verses 39-40

Instead of rejoicing in God's provision, these were prepared to kill the promised One of whom God had sworn: “...in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:3). How was this blessing to be made possible? By hearing and believing the words which Jesus taught. But few in Israel received them, for those who heard Him felt “we're Abraham's seed” or “we're all right” — and so lost their freedom, both natural and spiritual.

Some of Israel who did hear looked for Him to free them from Rome,

not perceiving the greater freedom He brought them — freedom from the power of sin and death. We today are seeking to be free from that law, to live in obedience to our Father, and thus be covered by Jesus' sacrifice which we have remembered here this morning. His words already mentioned help us in this struggle:

“...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;...and the truth shall make you free.”

John 8:31-32.

How vital it is then to continue in His word. How are we to thus endure or last? By allowing that word to rule our living, putting down that man of flesh which is so determined to have dominion, influencing our living and our doing. Paul reminds us most helpfully:

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”

Romans 6:16

Obedience maintained then is the key, for His way leads to righteousness. Sin which is of our natural way can lead only to death. However, Paul continues:

“... God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”

Verses 17-18

We, Brethren and Sisters, are not free from sin, for we do fail often. But as this word free means, we are delivered from servitude to sin and are graciously shown the way to be servants of righteousness. Jesus' faithful and unblemished work did “fulfil all righteousness”. He alone who perfectly obeyed, now sits at His Father's right hand as mediator and redeemer for all who continue in His word. Let us consider how Jesus was able to do this:

“Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”

Hebrews 5:8-9

What did He suffer which taught Him to obey? Temptation, reviling, blasphemy. He must have been sorely tempted to use the power given to

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Him to retaliate, to prove Himself God's Son; but no, by relying upon God's word He endured. What really does obedience mean? "To be attentively hearkening" — and this Jesus did all His life, to His Father. Paul tells us the result:

"For as by one man's (Adam's) disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Christ) shall many be made righteous."

Romans 5:19

It is our hope to be made righteous through His victory, in subjection to His word. But how hard we find it is, to do as Paul exhorts:

"...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

II Corinthians 10:5

This is indeed a life-long labor, as Paul himself experienced:

"...I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Romans 7:23-24

To Paul this conflict was agonizing, but he took comfort from his conviction that:

"...the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Romans 8:2

How can we hope to be free, Brethren and Sisters? The Truth is revealed in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Still, we may ask, What is truth? The word is made up of two parts meaning not hidden. Yet truth is hidden unless it is valued and sought after. Pilate listened to Jesus' words:

"...Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

John 18:37

Pilate's "non-answer" was: "What is truth?" Thereby he shut off Jesus' words, lacking both interest and desire. How true it is among most

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people in today's world; they seek only what they want to be truth.

Can we not see clearly why even with such a striving to be free, there is no freedom? Freedom in a general sense involves submitting to righteous laws and guidelines. Only under the influence of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus can men willingly and lovingly learn that submission which brings forth the blessing of the Truth's "freedom".

Let us go back to Jesus' words:

"...Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:32

It has been and is our privilege to know the truth, unfolded by a merciful Father through His Son, if and as we continue in His word. Let us recognize that it is only as we endure in that word, subject to it, obedient to the putting down of temptation, saying NO! to the flesh's requirements that we can hope to be free. Paul again helps us:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast, continue, endure; it is a constant battle, but what hope we have! In His word, ever available, we can find the source of Jesus' strength. Also we have brethren and sisters engaged in the same struggle, who can bring help and comfort as well as correction — thereby binding all ever closer in that body of Christ which is precious in the sight of His Father.

Let us look again at the world today as it ever seeks freedom. Each individual, each group, each nation has its own aims and seeks first of all to pursue them. The result is strife, frustration, violence, warfare. Thus the world's quest for freedom is futile. The only true freedom is found through the word of God, as it unites a people motivated by only one desire: to continue in His word, faithfully united in one heart, one hope, and one great service — to Him alone.

J.A. DeF.

“BELIEVE THE WORKS”

As we compare the work of the Lord Jesus to man’s in this age, we cannot help but acknowledge that His indeed was far and above the most important work of man. Men seek to have their deeds recognized as we see today, adulation, honor and prestige is given to those able to accomplish great things in the world’s eyes. How they pale in comparison to that work of the Lord Jesus even though His was met with a lack of understanding and enthusiasm by many because the world takes note of only those things which satisfy its own fleshly interests.

Reading of this in the Book of John we see how it was done by the power of God to reveal His purpose to any who would open their eyes, hearts and minds. Much of that work relied on that power to witness. Of the many miracles Jesus performed, the greatest perhaps was the raising of Lazarus from the dead, witnessed by those who knew he had died. Many who saw this miracle were impressed and believed, but many more did not, blindly following the dictates of their hard hearted leaders:

“And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.”

John 11:43-46

Obviously for those who left, seeing was not believing — rather seeing caused them to fear for their own prestigious positions. So they began the plot in to have Him removed. Caiaphas the high priest subtly calmed them by using the Lord Jesus’ own words:

“And one of them, named Caiaphas being the high priest that same year, said unto them,
Ye know nothing at all,
Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

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And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;”

John 11: 49-51

“Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.”

verse 53

The Lord Jesus’ response was very revealing:

“Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.”

(verse 54)

The Lord Jesus moved away from the obstacles in His path. He had no fear of being taken for He knew what His work entailed from Isaiah 53:7, no doubt rehearsing many times these words in His mind:

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.”

Why did the Lord Jesus remove himself? He knew that the purpose of His work was to show forth the power of God to the people. We read in John 7: verse 1 and 6:

“After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him”

Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready.”

Perhaps with these simple words He was explaining the difference in His work and the work we have of trying to follow in His example. Ours is to be ready — “..your time is alway ready”. We need to be perceptive in our witnessing that we are prepared to do whatever God indicates.

The leaders of the Jews continued in their desire to kill Him and stamp out His witnessing. Jesus spoke to them of their great lack in John 8:19-22:

“...Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the

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temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: wither I go, ye cannot come."

Here He presented in simple words for their consideration what their life's end would be if they did not heed His words and repent, yet these fell on deaf ears as we read of their reaction in verse 59:

"Then took they up stones to cast at him:

but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by."

Their desire was to kill Him, yet they could not for His time had not yet come. His work had yet to be fulfilled. John 5 also speaks of this in verses 17 and 18:

"But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."

How utterly devoid of spirit they were, needing instead to have a mind of humbleness and subjection. The Lord Jesus continues in verses 19-20:

"...Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel."

Some did marvel at the miracles but still did not hear as He bare witness to that power. Jesus tried many times to impress upon them the fact that He was doing the work of His Father. In John 10:30 He said: "I and my Father are one". Verse 31 gives the Jew's response to these words:

"Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him."

Jesus tried to reason with them, in this appeal he said:

"Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?"
John 10:32

"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."

John 10:37-38

How could such logic fail to stir their hearts? It obviously did fail for the next verse tells us, "they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand" (John 10:30). His works and words were unheeded — though done that they might marvel and through belief in Him attain the hope of eternal life. Yet they took offense and bristled when He pointed out their sinful state and the need to change. Can we imagine the Lord Jesus' mind as He perceived their unresponsiveness? Did he feel depressed or discouraged, asking Himself how He could help them to believe? Could they not even see the power He possessed in being able to elude their stonings so many times?

We too must not fail to marvel at His great work as did the majority in His day, for it was a labor done in love, an accomplishment that has not been equalled before or since in all the world. We think of the great statesmen or leaders of this world, who are very proud of their comparatively meager deeds — how few ever mention the work of the Lord Jesus, for by doing so they may offend those who do not believe. Nothing much has changed in over 1900 years.

Yet as we try to follow after His example, we must take care that the work in which we labor is not our own but His, bearing witness to the gospel and His saving name. Following His example, we too must work in singleness of mind and heart as we look for the soon return of Jesus that we may hope in His promise of life eternal. Time is given of a merciful Father that all who may be called can be joined to His body, until He knows that body is complete, a bride made ready for the bridegroom. Let us then consider our work, thinking upon that which the Lord Jesus has accomplished and will fully complete with the saints when He returns. Are we doing all that we can to be found in readiness when He calls?

M.C.S.

BAPTISM

When we consider the words of the Lord Jesus, "Ye shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out", (Luke 13) the conclusion, it seems, of that testimony is that the contemporaries of the apostate nation who heard those words of Jesus were responsible in their knowledge, to the judgement seat at the time of the "quick and the dead".

There had been a call to the nation by John Baptist for repentance and later Jesus and His disciples also baptised. And to Nicodemus who came to Christ by night Jesus said "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Now it has been declared that being born of the Spirit comes in that future time (which indeed it does) of the granting of eternal life to those who have responded to baptism throughout the ages. But obviously the remarks of Christ to Nicodemus had application only from that time in which He was speaking, for baptism had not been a requirement through the many centuries of the Mosaic law (though a multitude from the Mosaic time will be born of the Spirit). Here then was a new thing given by Jesus as the time drew near when the law was to wax old and was "ready to vanish away". (Hebrews 8:13) Nicodemus asked the question "How can a man be born when he is old?" (John 3) Jesus in explanation used the metaphor of the wind, an invisible power, but nevertheless a force that can be felt and experienced though not seen. This along with the outward sign of the water of baptism places man in a "newness of life." A walk that is spiritual, with the Kingdom of God in prospect. Water in itself could not effect this. John Baptist in his courageous duty refused to baptise some of his contemporaries because their coming to him was not spiritual. They were told to "Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3) Obviously the principled stand by John had application to all future baptisms, and gave instruction of the care needed by those doing the work of God to ensure candidates for baptism are in a right as well as knowledgeable state of mind. In other words baptism, that is true baptism, can only be efficacious by a spiritual approach thereto. However John's baptism was only applicable for a limited time, for later it was necessary that those only knowing the baptism of John should be placed under the water again to be baptised into Christ when their understanding had been enlarged. (Acts 18: 24-26)(Acts 19: 1-6). This, obviously, was not just a happening amongst the many events of the Apostolic preaching of the gospel, but laid down a principle that a degree of understanding without true baptism to go with it cannot be wholly

acceptable to God. What then of responders to John's baptism, who may have died during those years prior to the death of Christ, and who were referred to as John's disciples? Surely the implication is that they would be covered by their obedience to the requirements of the time. This fact indicates, does it not, that a requirement of the Spirit at one time may be superseded by a new requirement of the Spirit at a later time. It was obviously so at the time of Jesus and the Apostles, what then of our time? It is one thing to know the message of the Truth, and therefore to be responsible thereto, as the contemporaries of Jesus were, but it is another thing to have the full perception of what the truth requires as the situation of the truth becomes changed. When a division occurs the situation is indeed changed. Now it may be said, that even so, if those on the wrong side of the division, who are therefore in apostasy and error teach the interested stranger the basic understanding of the truth and as a result immerse such interested strangers, then, because it does not matter whose hands place them under the water, providing such believe, their baptism is efficacious. What is overlooked in such a thought is the Truth's position as it is applied in the new situation that has resulted from division. The candidate for baptism, by an apostate section, is not fully aware of what the Truth requires, namely to uphold those who have made the righteous stand as against those who have apostatised; and most importantly, that Christ is not divided. With the Spirit's overruling help and drawing force such can be led to those who have kept the Truth. What then is the duty required of those who have kept the Truth towards those who have been immersed by those in error? Is it not to show to such the way of God more clearly and then baptise the sincere seekers? As for those who initially were righteously baptised, but eventually go with the error when division occurs, if they return to the right, then in such cases any suggestion of a further immersion could not be entertained, as there can only be one true baptism. But it would be the duty of those striving for the right to ensure there was adequate repentance before such could return.

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A BIBLE CLASS

"But godliness with contentment is great gain."

1 Timothy 6:6

As one considers the 6th chapter of 1 Timothy, it is found that Paul is giving instruction to Timothy to help him in the circumstances which would arise in his ministry — circumstances that Paul no doubt had faced as well in the work given to him by God. His advice centers on the need to have a balance in one's living, for as he points out in verses 9-10, the rich are faced with great temptation:

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Also verses 17-19:

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

Paul in essence says that if there is conceit, highmindedness or love of money in those who have it, how can they develop the humbleness and meekness of character so prized by God in those who love Him? As verse 6 summarizes, "But godliness with contentment is great gain". There may naturally be those who have riches, but wise men will restrain self-gratification while using them in a spiritual way such as in the work of the Truth or assisting those of the household of God who may not be so well endowed. As Paul points out in that 17th verse, there is the danger that those with riches will learn to trust in the security they offer, rather than in God, the bestower of all that is good.

There are examples of many in the Scriptures who had wealth such as Job, Abraham, Solomon. Job, for instance, lost all of his possessions, including his family, yet through this hard trial retained his integrity and accepted his circumstances because they were wrought by God. He stood against his wife, rebuking her for the lack of contentment she displayed

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when she urged him to "curse God and die". When Job's trial was over, God blessed him again with riches, twice as much as in the beginning.

"And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before."

"So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning:..."

Job 42:verses 10,12.

When one looks to his own life in consideration of Paul's instruction, recognition must be given to the true riches to be found in His word namely, a peace of mind and contentment acknowledging His care. This is perfectly seen in looking to the example of the Lord Jesus who was not rich in this world's goods but had wealth beyond price in the eyes of God because He had true contentment with His circumstances as He obeyed His Father in all ways.

The word godliness in this consideration is rendered as piety, to do well, to revere. The Concordance ties it with the thought of the gospel, which is God's message of hope through the name of Jesus Christ. A good illustration of this is seen in I Timothy 3:16 where in describing godliness it is speaking of the Lord Jesus:

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

If godliness is reverence, how true it is that the Lord Jesus was really the only one who totally revered God, showing this by His perfect obedience. He had no desire for worldly gain, for with singleness of purpose He gave it all up in order to serve God, even the simple things of life which are taken for granted were denied Him such as a home, wife and family.

Clearly, the flesh is not content with godliness, yet all would do well to remember that no one will carry anything out of this world except the promise and hope for life everlasting one can gain if accounted worthy through passing their time of probation in godliness with contentment. How important it is then that Paul's advice be heeded to help achieve balance in one's living.

M.C.S.

FROM THE AMBASSADOR 1866
(A testimony against compromise)

It is truly a good and pleasant thing for brethren to dwell together in unity and love, but there is something far beyond and above this, and that is, the fear or love of the Lord, which the Scriptures testify to be the "beginning of wisdom". In loving God, then, we must often of necessity hate many who call themselves our brethren; not because of their fleshly selves, but because they practically hate the wisdom of the truth of God, and prefer in their stead the wisdom that comes from their own conceits and from a rebellious world.

It is vain for any man to try to cement what God has said shall remain for ever separate, namely: the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, and these can be simply defined as, first, the children of the truth, and second, the children of error. With this principle before our minds, we can fully appreciate the force of the command, to content earnestly for the faith; we can comprehend the point, the necessity, for Paul's warning to Timothy to shun profane and vain babblings, whose word would eat as doth a canker; and we can intelligently endorse the just denunciation of the Church of Laodicea, which was neither hot nor cold, but luke warm in the truth.

DR. THOMAS ON RANDOM OPENING OF THE SCRIPTURES.

How often do we hear of "Christians", of high standing for piety among their own sect, in relating their own "experience" or telling their clergyman "what God has done for their souls" — having recourse to the following heathen expedient to obtain comfort or consolation:- "Ah! sir" says deponent to the "Pastor", "I am often afflicted with doubts and fears, so that if it was not I had 'felt so good' once, I should despair of heaven or of ever having my sins forgiven." "Well, well" replies the holy priest "don't despond for your very doubts and fears are evidential of your being a christian — I have no faith in that man's christianity who never doubts!" "Oh! yes, so I have often been told, that if I would get to Mount Zion I must go through 'Doubting Castle'; and Bro.B. says that the best way of finding out my true state, is to take the Bible, and let it fall open and that the first text my eye fixes on will be the mind of God concerning me; for he knows many people who have 'got religion' in that way. Upon one occasion I tried this and the Bible fell open at Matthew 9 - and the first words I saw were, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven', which as you may suppose gave me strong consolation." Our readers, perhaps, are little aware that this superstitious practice was very common among the Pagan Romans. The persons who practised it were called *Sortilegi* or *Sorterers*. It is Isidorus who applies this name to those, who upon opening any book at random, formed conjectures from the meaning of the first line or passage which happened to cast up — Thus Pagans and sectaries prove themselves in bondage to one and the same Master, who as willing slaves are led captive at the Devil's will.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO THE "CHRISTADELPHIAN"

I read with much sympathy the letter from the two young sisters — Their dismay in the face of contention and disruption in their ecclesia and families is understandable. So, as one at the opposite end of life in the ecclesia of Christ from them, I would echo their plea. I spent my early years in the Truth among Ecclesias separated because of the "Inspiration Division". Happily they were reunited in 1957 by the patient and prayerful efforts of good and faithful brethren on both sides.

I remember keenly the embarrassments and hindrances to the work of preaching in those divided days. I remember too the misgivings and even suspicion at the time of reunion. I am ever mindful and grateful for the blessings and help that followed. How quickly suspicions proved totally unfounded and misgivings vanished.

And now I too am sick at heart to think we might be so misguided as to let the same thing happen again. So, to these young sisters, I would say: Be patient. We have been warned that our faith will be tested, not only by the world, not only in our hearts, but from among "our own selves" (by misled and misguided brethren). If you allow your faith to be shaken, then their actions will have succeeded.

For the rest of us I would plead: If there is false doctrine, if there are wrong practices, they must be corrected by positive teachings supported by scripture, brought to bear in individual cases. But let us not be forced into separating into groups of ecclesias. If we do, we shall inevitably be separated from brethren who hold the same faith and worship the same Lord and Master in the same way. Worse still, the faith of many will be destroyed and the work of preaching will be still further handicapped.

The Remnant's comments on the above

When the Spirit said through the Word "I—will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent," was the Spirit speaking only to the ecclesia concerned, or was the message to all the ecclesias, in that it was declared "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the ecclesias.?"

Surely after due space is given for repentance, if wrong is still upheld, then Christ departs, and if He departs can other ecclesias be less decisive than the Spirit when this is clearly the case?

There is something far more important than preaching, and that is

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the necessity to upholding the Truth according to the Word of God. What is the point of going "outside" to proclaim the Truth, if that same Truth is not being upheld "inside" in the manner laid down for its preservation in The Body? If false doctrine is persistently propagated by some how can it be said they "--- hold the same faith, and worship the same Lord ---" even though their belief might be identical on most points with those who oppose their false teaching?

On the matter of the "Inspiration Division" the Remnant would certainly reject the notion that it was "misguided"; that very phrase implies adverse reflection upon the honest, painful endeavour of a faithful brother and other faithful ones with him, at the time when that division occurred. But perhaps the writer of the letter made a mistake in some of the phrases used, and does not quite mean that. If so, however, one cannot see how a following of the zealous actions of that earlier time could be described as "misguided". The test of faith is whether the right is upheld even though this cause a sad and painful situation.

DR. THOMAS ON LEAVEN

Question: Is leaven generally used to specify bad doctrine only, or both bad and good? Since good leaven produces fermentation and bad scarcely any, but leaves substances into which it is introduced sad and heavy, it appears to me that good doctrine should have the effect of fermentation. I do not see this subject at all clearly.

Dr. Thomas' answer: The law of Moses commanded that "no leaven nor any honey should be burned in any offering of Jehovah made by fire." Unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, of fine flour, and fried, were offered with the thanksgiving sacrifices; and besides the cakes, unleavened bread. These were to be offered in Jerusalem; therefore Amos ironically exhorts the ten tribes, saying, "Come to Bethel, and transgress, and offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven."

On the day of Pentecost that law prescribed the offering of a new meat-offering, consisting of two loaves of fine flour baked with leaven, which were to be brought out of their habitations, and delivered to the priest as the bread of the first-fruits, which, with a kid for a sin-offering, and two lambs for peace-offerings, he was to wave before the Lord.

Leaven in itself is distasteful, though its effect upon fine flour, if the leaven be new and duly apportioned, is to render it light and palatable. The blood of Jehovah's sacrifice was not to be offered with leaven, because this would be to introduce a principle of levity and impurity into the sin-offerings; for however good it might be in itself, yet in fine flour, not being flour it is an impurity, and all sin-offerings were to be pure, and without spot and blemish.

But the absence of leaven was not only representative of purity — the sinlessness of the Anointed Sinner, the great anti typical sacrifice for sins not his own — it was also memorial of the thrusting out of the twelve tribes of Israel from Egypt with such haste, that they had no time to prepare leavened bread as in times of peace and quietness. Hence, the absence of leaven was indicative of tribulation and affliction; and its presence in an offering of peace and ground for thanksgiving; so that the Mosaic law inculcated that "Besides the cakes, the worshipper shall offer for his offering leavened bread, with the sacrifices of thanksgiving of his peace-offerings."

In the New Testament, the effect of leaven upon meal is presented, in parable, as an illustration of the relation of the kingdom of the heavens to the three parts into which the Roman empire was constitutionally divided, when it should be in the midst of them. It shall ferment, or produce

a fermentation, among them, until the whole empire is fermented and brought into peacefulness with God; or, in the words of Daniel, "the stone", which he interprets to signify the kingdom which the God of heaven shall set up, "shall grind to powder, and bring to an end all these kingdoms" of the Image-world; "and itself become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth." Then will the whole be leavened.

Again, the doctrine and hypocrisy of the Pharisees and Herodian-Sadducees is compared to leaven, in relation to the doctrine and purity taught by Jesus. His was the fine flour; theirs an ingredient which, if blended with it, would so change its nature as to make it unfit for use; "for they made of non effect the Word of God by their traditions." The Pharisees were very "pious" people, both in tone, in phraseology, in the making of long and many prayers, in going to church, in dress, in building monuments to the prophets, in saying many true things about them and the law; all this they did and, like their sectarian antitypes of our day, passed current among the people for great saints, and the very elect of God. But they believed not the preaching of Jesus, and obeyed not the commandments of the Lord. Their piety and doctrine were therefore styled leaven, because being spurious and hypocritical, it would so change the character of the One Faith and Hope as to make them ineffectual to the justification of the believer. Therefore, as the Lord Jesus said to his contemporaries, so we say to ours, "Beware of the leaven of 'those' who cant piously, but do not the truth, but their own gospel, nullifying traditions."

Sin, in whatever way it manifests itself, is the leaven of human nature. Hence Paul styles crime festering in the body, "the old leaven"; and reproves the Corinthian association for glorying while this is the case. So long as the incestuous person was recognised as in good standing with them, they were regarded as in a leavened condition, upon the principle of the law, that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." He therefore exhorts them to "purge out the old leaven" — or as he explains it in a subsequent verse, "Put away from among yourselves that wicked person" — "that ye may be a new lump when ye are unleavened." He then continues, "For the Anointed also, our paschal lamb, is slain for us," no leaven being found with him. "Therefore let us celebrate the festival, not with old leaven" — the fruit of the flesh evinced through tolerated evil doers — "the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened things of purity and truth". From the evidence, then, before us in these columns, I conclude that leaven is nowhere used in the scripture to represent good doctrine, but rather the contrary.

SIGNS OF HIS COMING AND OF THE END OF THE WORLD

" - - - I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely (confidently), all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates."

(Ezekiel 38:11)

The Palestinian peace moves seemed to be facing resolute Israeli opposition a short time ago. And while such a hostile situation prevailed it did not seem that the above prophecy would be fulfilled. Certainly Israel had a serious situation in its borders with the Palestinian Arab uprising.

But at the time of writing this article a change of attitudes is emerging. The Palestinian leadership still pursues a course aimed at coming to terms with Israel, recognising for the first time Israel's rights in Palestine. And now Israel's Defence Minister has proclaimed that a peace settlement can begin before the uprising stops. He is prepared to hold talks leading up to elections in the West Bank. Previously he had said there would be no talks until the Palestinians calmed down. He now said, "We must first agree on the whole package, then we will have a period of calm, preparations for elections, negotiations on an interim period, and then negotiations on a final settlement." In a discussion a senior officer of Israel's Shin Bet (Secret Service) said concerning the change of policy, "What does (it) mean? It proves that we have a problem with the intifada (Israel's Arabs) and are looking for a way to talk to the devil - - -."

This trend indicates the working out of the divine purpose as shown in the ancient prophecy, when in the latter days Israel will dwell confidently, " - - - all of them dwelling without walls - - -."

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MAGAZINE NEWS FOR APRIL 1989

HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. & Pleasant Avenue.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.
Sunday School 1.45 p.m.

Bible Class: Midweek: Forestville and Hamburg
Alternate Week: Revelation Study.

Gratitude is felt for help granted in illness and trial; this was in answer we believe, to the prayers of many.

Witnessing continues as opportunity is granted, giving encouragement in these last days.

Encouragement is also seen in the Sunday school work as scholars respond with interest to the record of God's word which provides example and help in their young lives.

J. A. DeF

News from the Ecclesias

MANCHESTER, Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.

Sunday: Breaking of Bread 11 a.m.

Thursday: Bible Class 7.15 p.m.

What a source of comfort it is, when in difficulty and sickness, to know that Brethren and Sisters across the seas join with us in supplication to that Throne of Grace where help and deliverance to the very utmost can be obtained.