

SEPTEMBER 1967

A Monthly Magazine issued by

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 ye be not deceived"

AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD

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CHRISTENDOM - AND OTHERS - ASTRAY

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

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At the Table of the Lord

“Blessed are the Meek . . .”

WE are reading in Numbers of God’s Hand upon Israel as they prepared to enter the land promised. That Hand was there to help against the kings of the land who opposed them, against adversaries such as Baalim who sought to beguile Israel away from God to the serving of idols. Every necessary help was given to them by their merciful God, revealing His love, His justice, His righteousness. As they came closer to the land promised, their anticipation of the blessing would grow more keen, bringing as well the end of forty long years of wilderness journeying.

The nearness of the land would remind Moses of God’s judgment—that he could not enter that land because of his failure at the rock. Yet God in His kindness, allowed Moses to see that promised land.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Get thee up unto this mount Abarim and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.” (Numbers 27:12)

Spread out before Moses was the goal of forty years of wandering—the foretaste of all that God promises to His people. How glad Moses would be to see it, to know that soon his people would enter it, led by their God. Here on this mount, God spoke further to Moses :

“And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. For ye rebelled against my commandment in the desert of Zin, in the strife of the congregation, to sanctify me at the water before their eyes. . . .” (verses 13-14)

Here again was a sober reminder to Moses of God’s justice and righteousness. As we read of Moses’ response, we are helped to discern his spirit. There was no rebellion, no resentment, no thought of himself—although he must have felt very badly. His care was for Israel, for the children he had nurtured for so long.

“Let the Lord . . . set a man over the congregation . . . that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd.” (verses 16-17)

Moses’ love for His brethren and sisters, his care for them, was more important than his own grief. He recognised that the judgment of God was right and just, and so submitted to God’s hand upon him.

If we had been in Moses' position, might we not have been resentful ; have felt, "look at all I've done for Israel. I only made one mistake—everyone is entitled to one mistake—God is too demanding." The flesh in each one of us—in Moses—thinks and sometimes speaks like that, unless it is controlled by the Spirit, as it was in Moses. The record concerning him is found in Numbers 12:3 :

"Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth."

We see in Moses' reaction on Mount Abarim, this meekness which was so pleasing to God. His submission to God's Hand illustrates for us what true meekness involves. Moses' concern was not for himself, but for God and for God's people. By his example, we can be helped, brethren and sisters, to grow in these holy qualities, submitting to the Hand of God, and so becoming more pleasing in His sight.

"He spoke unadvisedly with his lips . . ."

Meek, we find, means also lowly, humble, poor. Moses was all of these, in his spirit of submission to God.

Yet, like all of us, he was flesh and failed. In Numbers 20:10, we read of his response to the provocation of Israel, who murmured against him, against God, because they had no water.

"And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels ; must **we** fetch you water out of this rock?"

Here Moses failed. Being provoked, he became angry because of the rebellion of the children of Israel. Such anger, such lack of meekness, in ascribing to himself and Aaron the bringing forth of the water, is understandable, we might say ; but in God's eyes it was wrong, as we have read in Numbers 27:14 :

"For ye (Moses) rebelled against my commandment . . . to sanctify me at the water before their eyes. . . ."

In God's eyes, Moses' failure to sanctify Him was **rebellion** ! Look at the consequences of Moses' lack of meekness at this one time ; he was **forbidden** to enter the promised land—rebuked by God. Moses accepted it, exhibited that humble spirit for which God looks. But does not God's judgment upon Moses show us the importance of a humble spirit? Moses, the meekest man on the earth, failed to sanctify God through this lack ! Is it not a warning for us, brethren and sisters ; a help to us as well, to show us what God requires in His children—that we must in all our ways, in all our words, sanctify God? Failure to do so in that humble spirit, will only bring sorrow, trial, and judgment, such as Moses experienced.

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David helps us to appreciate Moses' position more fully in Psalm 106:32-33 :

“They angered him also at the waters of strife, so that it went ill with Moses for their sakes ; Because they provoked his spirit so that he spoke unadvisedly with his lips.”

The Spirit recognised that he was sorely provoked ; yet it was required, for it was a test of his strength, a test of his spirit. We, too, face such tests, to see whether we will be meek, be humble, will sanctify God even in the face of provocation. Will we put aside personal feelings, and sanctify God? Failure to do so with Moses, resulted in his being told by God, “ye rebelled against my commandment. . . .” And so it can in ourselves. How dreadful to think that we can be “rebels”. Let us then learn by Moses' example, and so strive harder to be meek, lowly, humble, before God and man.

Unhappily, we are not naturally constituted this way, and can only be so as we come into subjection to God. Our flesh says, If I am humble, meek, people will take advantage—will “walk all over me.” Perhaps this is so now ; but we find help to put away these excuses, for David tells us :

“For evildoers shall be cut off ; but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be . . . but the meek shall inherit the earth ; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” (Psalm 37:9-11)

There will be a time when the proud, the arrogant, the oppressor, the rebel against God's Word shall be cut off, and the “meek shall inherit the earth”. The promise—the hope—is sure ! Jesus Himself tells us,

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5)

How much this promise meant to David, to Jesus, to Moses, and to all those who are striving to give their lives to sanctifying God. In the end, will be the abundance of peace for all who have proved to be meek in the eyes of God.

“. . . Learn of Me . . .”

Jesus who was lowly, humble, meek in all His living, was able to get the victory over His flesh nature. He alone never failed in humbleness before God. The prophets speak of Him :

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion ; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem : behold, thy king cometh unto thee : he is just,

and having salvation ; lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” (Zechariah 9:9)

Jesus came in accordance with God’s plan, to fulfil prophecy, and was lowly. When He entered into Jerusalem riding upon the foal of an ass, the children of Israel sought to make Him king ; but, no—it was not yet His time. He had to submit to God’s will, be crucified, and rise again to prove His meekness before God. He will return soon as King, and will gather to Himself all who are lowly, who strive to sanctify God. Jesus speaks to us to help in Matthew 11:28-29 :

“Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and **learn of me** ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

“**Learn of me**”, was Jesus’ command ; understand me, be like me. Jesus’ spirit is revealed for us here in His own words—for us to **learn of Him**. What better help could we have? Let us, with our learning, brethren and sisters, strive more fully to walk after Him, to truly sanctify God. How much we can learn of Him : meekness is only one of His many qualities which pleased His Father ; but how very important it is, as we consider that Moses was refused the privilege of entering the Land because of such a failure ! We know that Moses was a righteous man, and will be granted redemption when Christ returns ; for his was a right spirit—one which realised failure, repented of it, and submitted to God’s Hand upon him, confirming God’s judgment that he was the meekest man upon the face of the earth.

God works with His people to help them toward that meek and quiet spirit which is so pleasing in His sight. In Deuteronomy 8:2-3, Moses spoke to Israel to remind them of God’s purpose in the wilderness journey through which they had just come.

“Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, **to humble thee**, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments, or no. And he **humbled thee**, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna . . . that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.”

“To humble thee—to see whether thou wouldst keep his commandments”—all this is involved in being meek and lowly before God! How important it was in God’s eyes that His children be teachable,

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dependent, meek, and humble, that they sanctify Him! To such, His promise is—they shall inherit the earth!

As we profit, brethren and sisters, by Moses' example, by his meek and quiet spirit, we are brought closer to that promise ; especially so as these days seem so near to the end. Let us give ear to the exhortation of one of God's prophets who helps us.

“Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment ; seek righteousness, seek meekness ; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.” (Zephaniah 2:3)

This is our prayer, our hope—to be hid, covered, redeemed in the day of God's judgment upon those who refuse to sanctify Him. We are helped toward that hope by the example of our brother, Moses. If we are blessed in finding salvation upon Jesus' return, we will be able to talk with Moses and thank him for the help his example has provided.

Brethren and sisters, let us look into our hearts ! It is a great deal to rise up to, is it not?

Brethren and sisters, let us look into our hearts ! Could we ourselves receive such thanks from some one for the help and example of meekness we have also shown? It is a great deal to rise to, is it not?

J. A. DeF.

The Titles of the Psalms

“Speaking unto yourselves in Psalms . . . making melody in your heart unto the Lord.” Ephesians 5:19

PSALM 11

“To the one who overcomes. A Psalm of David.”

What a glorious ray of light a correct understanding of this title, many times repeated in the Psalms, permits—“To the chief musician.” As we have seen the learned commentators, and “Divines” of Christendom fail to reach any understanding or a consensus of opinion as to what the words mean.

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How grateful then we should feel that we, who are relatively unlearned, may be permitted enlightenment on what the Spirit intended by the use of these words. As already noted the word "musician" does not appear in the original, and doubtless was introduced by the translators in a vain endeavour to give some meaning to the title. They could not think of the Psalms as more than musical recitations to be performed as meaningless "chants" and "vain repetitions".

Now we can see what the Spirit intends by the use of the title to this and other Psalms—"to the one who overcomes".

"Overcoming", which is so frequently mentioned, obviously implies there is something to overcome and a divine purpose in doing so. The true children of God will rejoice in knowing what is this purpose, and especially by being embraced in it that the Spirit may change them, making them different from their former selves, like unto God—god-like.

Godly characters are not created. They are forged in the furnace of trial, by "overcoming". A person who never experiences trial and overcomes, will be characterless. The perfect example in this divine process is the Lord Jesus. His trials covered the whole spectrum of human experience. "He was tempted in all points like unto ourselves." He overcame each one of these trials without exception. The result seen in the Lord Jesus is a joy to behold : One so much like His Father in character, that He could say "He who hath seen me hath seen the Father." Even the world with its very dim perception of virtue places Jesus on a higher plane than any other man. Those in the Truth are drawn to Him as the one who is "the altogether lovely and chiefest among ten thousand," the "express image", or character, of His Father. It is in the countenance of the Lord Jesus (remembering that countenance is expressive of character) that we can see the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God".

The Lord Jesus may seem so far above us in merit that what was accomplished in Him cannot possibly be achieved in us. True, but in a degree it must be if we are to succeed in finding approval when Jesus returns, for He said :

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." (Revelation 3:21)

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Without help, the help of a power greater than that of men, this could never be achieved. The human mind seems dull in appreciation of all that God has done to supply the help required.

Take the case of Israel. Here the task from a divine point of view was a great one. Instead of a handful of people like the family of Noah who were permitted to enter the Ark, some two millions had to be helped. What marvellous help was given showing at once the mercy and kindness of Yahweh. God called these people to meet Him at Sinai. It was here that Moses told them later that "The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire." (Deuteronomy 5:4.) We know in what sense this talk was "face to face". Not that God was seen but only His awesome majesty and presence. His words, Yahweh's words were heard by the whole of Israel. The circumstances, the trembling mountain, the thunder, the lightning, and the fire were all introduced to produce a certain effect; that the human nature of Israel (which remember is our nature!) was to be tamed into submission. An impression upon Israel was to be created which would never be forgotten. A fear in the sense of a reverence for the One who had done so much for them, and whose power was so manifestly great. There is no doubt that the experience was a frightening one. Israel said "If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die". God did not arrange these things to produce terror in the hearts of His people, but rather a reverence for Him as is expressed by Moses :

"O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever."
(Deuteronomy 5:29)

"In the Lord, put I my trust." verse 1

How easy it is to say these words and there are millions of people who repeat them. In America every coin handled is engraved with the words, "In God we trust". Such words are realised as being nothing more than an embellishment to a "form of godliness". The Almighty knows that there can be no trust in Him without experiencing trial. When this has been endured with a belief that God will deliver, then, and only then, trust is proved. This is part of the process of "overcoming". The submission of our nature to Him that doubt may be removed and faith established.

In this Psalm David speaks of the enemies which were against him to "make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may

“The Signs of His Coming and of the end of the World”

“PROCLAIM YE THIS AMONG THE GENTILES ; PREPARE WAR, WAKE UP THE MIGHTY MEN, LET ALL THE MEN OF WAR DRAW NEAR ; LET THEM COME UP :

“BEAT YOUR PLOWSHARES INTO SWORDS, AND YOUR PRUNING HOOKS INTO SPEARS : LET THE WEAK SAY, I AM STRONG.” (Joel 3 vs. 9-10)

RECENTLY an announcement was made by the British Government of large-scale cuts in the military programme for the purposes of economy. But this is no indication of an overall reduction in world armaments, in fact the opposite is the case. America's Gross National Product has risen steeply since 1965 whereas the unemployment figures have considerably dropped as a result of the boom created by an increasing war production. Now there is a shortage of skilled men.

The position must be similar in Russia, because there is a continual demand for Russian armaments from Communist satellites and other nations that lean towards the Soviet Power.

War is indeed being prepared. Even though the Arab nations in the recent conflict with Israel lost a tremendous amount of Russian supplied arms, the Soviet continues to pour in war supplies. This has prompted the Israeli military leader to speak with disillusionment. “I am not at all sure the physical war is over. We are now facing not only the Egyptians, but a great power.” A captured Egyptian general has revealed that Egypt was awaiting delivery in October of Russian made ground-to-ground missiles, which are launched from tanks and have a range of nearly fifty miles. Such news mocks the world cry for a reduction of arms deliveries to Middle-East countries for the purpose of preserving peace ; and makes the demands of Russia for a return to pre-war boundaries mere verbiage of no consequence for achieving a practical settlement. Indeed, these events are the fulfilment of God's prophecy “Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles, Prepare war . . .”

It is amazing that a country so signally defeated, as Egypt was, should still be able to pursue a course of arrogance. Egypt has proved to have been a “bruised reed” to the Arab cause and basically

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weak for all its boasts. Yet it is still able to shout and cry out for vengeance and act with apparent hostility towards western powers. Again this is the fulfilment of God's record which has declared "... let the weak say, I am strong".

Even though it is estimated, Egypt lost a billion dollars worth of Soviet equipment in the war, including 700 tanks out of a total of 900 in Sinai ; and the battlefield in the Mitla Pass alone has been described as conveying a scene of human and material destruction far surpassing anything observed twenty-three years ago when the German army, under Field Marshall Rommel, was retreating from El Alamein, nevertheless, Egypt carries on as though it was a victor and not the vanquished. Arrogantly keeping the Suez closed, and refusing to work to release ships of various nations that have been trapped in the waterway. There has even been lack of co-operation regarding the welfare of sailors on the vessels concerned.

But if the Arabs still pursue a bellicose course, even in their weakness, Israel also has revealed determination to hit back when the Egyptians have renewed war activities from the western side of the Suez canal where Russian built aircraft have been shot down. Two Egyptian torpedo-gunboats have also been destroyed in a brief night battle almost under the noses of the Russian warships visiting Port Said.

The battle was fought sixteen miles off the Sinai coast, west of El Arish, and not far from the cease-fire line. Israeli gunboats sank one Egyptian craft and the other was set on fire and sunk by the Destroyer Eilat. Only twenty-five miles away a Soviet fleet, comprising a missile carrier, a destroyer, and a cruiser and five troop-landing ships were concentrated. So even tiny Israel has not been completely deterred by the Soviet presence, or by the Russian Commander of the fleet (who also has four other warships at Alexandria), who has declared himself "ready to co-operate with Egyptian armed forces to repel any aggression".

The question of course now is, can Israel begin to build up her prosperity again? Her increased frontiers have thrust greater responsibilities upon her, and the war has not been without its costs for Israel either. It is not without significance, therefore, to find that even in the occupied territories, perhaps particularly as the result of the short duration of the war, the economy is quickly getting back to normal. One observer has recently stated that in what was West Jordan, now completely under the Israeli control,

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all the evidence points to the fact that agriculture and commerce are undisturbed, and little sign of apprehension by the Palestinians at the Israeli presence. Israel has been wise in that every day she allows a bus service from Jerusalem that terminates at the Allenby Bridge, which crosses the River Jordan beyond Jericho, and Arabs can, if they desire, use this service without restriction to make their way to the Arab country. Some proceed in their cars loaded with their belongings, and Israel's frontier guards allow them through. But according to one report there is only a trickle of such refugees numbering probably hundreds rather than thousands. Though on the other hand refugees from the Jewish-Arab conflict of nearly twenty years ago numbering some seventy thousand, encamped in the area of Jericho, fled across the Jordan en-bloc before the Israeli advance. Primarily no doubt as a result of the particular Arab propaganda with which they had been hatefully indoctrinated for years.

But Israel for years has treated its own Arab population well, hence in the recent war they were a loyal element. Israel has no television, but its large Arab population has been allowed to own television sets which have pictured programmes from Cairo and Beirut. But the Arab propaganda had no effect upon them, mainly because of the economic, educational, and social progress they have enjoyed in Israel.

The general outlook, therefore, concerning the future economy of Israel appears to be a favourable one. It is quite possible that Unified Jerusalem will see an influx of tourists which will help to boost the economy. At the same time the frontier settlements, especially in the area of Galilee, will be in a better position to become established and fruitful now that the Syrians have been taught a lesson and removed from the hills from which they harassed the Jews.

But though Israel has become firmly established as a result of their successful efforts, there is a shadow. It is not only the Egyptians now, but also "a great Power". Nevertheless though the Egyptians may still feel confident in the pursuit of their anti-Jewish policies because of the world power behind them and supporting them, they will not escape the final retribution.

"Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

"But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

“For I will cleanse their blood that I have not cleansed : For the Lord dwelleth in Zion.” (Joel 3 vs. 19-21.)

D.L.

Christendom — *and others* — Astray

“Woe unto you . . . because ye build the tombs of the Prophets . . . (but) are the children of them which killed the prophets.”

(Matthew 23:29/31)

THESSE words of Jesus were a dreadful indictment against the professors of the Truth in His day. As we read these words we may feel that there is no danger of them applying to us. We know that in the first place the condemnation was in respect of the Pharisees. We ought to remember, however, that the Pharisees were leaders of a powerful Jewish sect. They had been privileged to know the Truth but had departed from it, substituting their own “voluntary humility” instead of upholding the “judgment, mercy, and faith” of the Law.

Why should Jesus trouble Himself to condemn those who had fallen so far from the Truth? Was it not to show to the multitude, who might be influenced by these false teachers, that they were as wrong as Jesus said—“hypocrites”. These are they who pretend to be upholders of Truth but in fact are the betrayers of it.

The condemnation by Jesus of these people was not just an explosive sentiment but was part of the essential preaching of the Truth. Throughout the history of the Truth the faithful servant of God in raising the light of the Truth has always condemned the darkness. Only those who are departing, or have departed from the Truth demur when condemnation is declared. Those who would compromise the Truth, making it more acceptable to the world, will obviously make all kinds of excuses to get rid of the essential condemnation of wrong : such as, that we are now living in different times so that the language of the pioneers and for that matter of Jesus and the Apostles is no longer required today. This is obviously a failure to appreciate that the light of the Truth cannot be exalted without the darkness being condemned.

In looking at the condemnation of the Pharisees by Jesus we should be careful to heed the warning which this contains lest any feeling of self-sufficiency should overcome our thinking.

The Dreadful Pattern exposed in the Pharisees

Jesus told the Pharisees that outwardly they appeared righteous unto men, but within were full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

He declared unto them :

“Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!”

Jesus shows that while they appeared to be zealous for the Truth in building and garnishing the tombs of former prophets who had suffered death because of their witness, adding :

“If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.”
(Matthew 23:30.)

Yet Jesus condemned them in no uncertain manner. Their “Pattern” of hypocrisy was dreadful indeed. While lavishing praise on those who had died for the Truth, they were exposed by Jesus as being children of those who opposed and killed such faithful witnesses.

No wonder Jesus said to them :

“Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (verse 33.)

It will be profitable to see how the “Pattern” of pretending to uphold former witnesses to the Truth is continued, while at the same time belying such profession by showing a spirit totally opposed to such faithful witnesses.

The same Dreadful Pattern exposed in Christendom

Like the Pharisees the leaders of Christendom have been as zealous in glorifying the faithful witnesses of the Truth including Christ and the Apostles, but in their teaching have completely denied both the letter and the spirit of such teaching.

There must be many magnificent and ornate buildings dedicated to Christ and the apostles. Nearly every town and village has a

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Church known as “Christ’s Church, St. Pauls, St. James”. The fountain head of Christendom is Rome where the most expensively adorned building, the Basilica, is dedicated to “St. Peter”. Proof is supposed to have been found that this Church is built upon the grave of Peter, and the inestimable glories of the building have been undertaken to glorify him and Christ. In Venice there is the most elaborate building known as “St. Marks”, which is supposed to contain the body of the disciple Mark. London is proud of the great architectural achievement known as ‘St. Pauls’.

All these buildings have been erected and expensively decorated and in some cases adorned with jewels to glorify the names of those who were faithful witnesses to the Truth, and who in some cases died for the Truth.

They say in effect, like the Pharisees, that had they lived in the days of Christ and the apostles, they would not have joined with those who killed them. Yet take a look at the teaching of Christendom. Totally in opposition to the doctrine preached by Christ and the apostles. In their behaviour they correspond in no way to the “lamb of God”, but are as ferocious as the beasts of the jungle. Indeed, Jesus speaks of the latter-day manifestations of the nations under the figure “beasts”.

Christendom is obviously as guilty as the Pharisees of pretending to support those who were faithful witnesses to the Truth, but who in their words and actions deny such teaching and show that they are the “children” of the enemies of the Truth.

Christendom for this hypocrisy will not escape condemnation when Jesus returns, but will find its everlasting doom in the “lake of fire”.

Again the same Dreadful Pattern shown by the “others”

It is realised that this is a terrible thing to say. So were the words of Jesus to the professors of truth in His day. There can be no escape, however, from exposing that which may mislead “good and honest hearts”.

We have already observed the “Pattern”; that departure from the Truth is seen in pretending to uphold former faithful witnesses while showing the same spirit as those who opposed and killed them.

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The "others"—those who once had the Truth—freely recognise that Dr. Thomas under the hand of God was the instrument used to revive the Truth more than a hundred years ago. He was later aided in his work by Robert Roberts. Both these men are referred to by the "others" "as pioneers". They are greatly praised by the "others" for establishing once again the foundation of truth and maintaining a stand against the enemies who were many in their day. Those who are familiar with the history of the Truth will know how much they had to endure from the adversaries without and at times from those who arose within. They both realised that if the Truth were to survive then it was essential that where error arose in the Body it must be purged out as leaven. This faithful attitude angered those who were in opposition and caused great distress at times to the pioneers. Nevertheless they never wavered in the scriptural action which was necessary to maintain the Truth in its purity. The following quotations from the writings of the pioneers at the time of the Doweite Division in 1864 show the forthright and uncompromising attitude which they took in dealing with error that the Truth might be preserved :

"A strong issue was taken on the subject of requiring the rejection of error as a condition of fellowship.

At first sight it might appear superfluous, and even unwarrantable, to set forth points of non-belief as a basis of faith, but a moment's reflection will dissipate this impression and reveal the negative side of faith to be of equal value with the positive.

For instance, if a man profess to believe in the God of Israel, he is bound to be able to say that he does not believe in the gods of the heathen. If he were timorous about affirming the latter, would it not show that his belief in the God of Israel was no belief in the real sense, but merely a fragment of polytheism, which recognise different gods for different nations?

Positive belief (that is full assurance of faith) on one side necessitates and produces positive non-belief on the other."

Those who were responsible under Mr. Doweite for watering down the Truth, were withdrawn from by Birmingham under the careful guidance of Robert Roberts. Division took place, and this is what Robert Roberts said about it :

"Tis ours to abide by the Truth, measuring all men and things by it, and accepting every issue to which it guides us. Division and bitterness, even, to fire, were told long as the result of the truth's working among men ; we therefore need not be discouraged at realising them in an unexpected form now."

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This action was a relief to Dr. Thomas who had been pressing Robert Roberts as a young man to take the necessary action and divide from those who were in error or who supported the error. He wrote to Robert Roberts :

“You are right”, adding that a line must be drawn “between faithful witnesses and pretenders, in Britain.”

Under the robust leadership of Robert Roberts those who desired to uphold the Truth, without the countenancing of any error were led by him through subsequent Divisions.

In 1873 Birmingham withdrew from several hundred in Nottingham and elsewhere who were led by Edward Turney who had promulgated the heresy that Christ’s nature was not capable of sinning. This gave rise at the time to a phrase little understood today that Christ had “clean flesh”.

In 1885 there was a great Division because of the introduction of the dreadful error that the Scriptures were only partially inspired. After much contention in which Robert Roberts suffered personally to a great extent, the Birmingham Ecclesia withdrew from all those who believed in Partial Inspiration and from many more who were involved who did not believe in this but supported those who did.

Again Division was necessary for the preservation of the Truth and after all appeals had been made and discussion exhausted this step was faithfully taken by Robert Roberts and those with him.

The year 1894 saw a further Division over the “Responsibility to the Judgment”. The error was introduced by some that one could become fully enlightened but not responsible to judgment without baptism had taken place. The banner of Truth was raised by Robert Roberts, and the necessary Division followed that those who embraced the error might be amputated from the Body. At the time Robert Roberts said :

“All who endorse the new position will do so at the risk of incurring the divine displeasure and imperilling the privilege which the knowledge of the Truth has conferred upon them.”

Those who would desire more details of the history of the Truth at these times and the Divisions which were carried out by Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts, are referred to “The History of the

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Truth in the Latter Days”, a copy of which will be sent upon request.

The important point to note in all this is that the pioneers knew the Scriptural principles which required there should be literal separation from error whether from one or two or from many. They believed in the simple injunction that “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump”. Above all else they did not wish to see the Truth corrupted as it was in the first century, and the precious things which belonged to the Truth lost once more in the apostasy which error ever threatens.

Coming back to the “Pattern”, how do the “others” speak of the pioneers?

In a Centenary publication of Dr. Thomas they say, he was the Founder, for it was by his labours that under God’s providence the Truth of God was rediscovered and the “things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ” set forth clearly with adequate proof based on the word of God. The eulogy continues “by voice and pen he resolutely proclaimed these fundamental truths in America when he had emigrated from England, and gathered together various small groups of ‘believers’ as a result”.

Concerning Robert Roberts, the publication is similarly praiseworthy. It states that he was the first editor of the “Christadelphian”. “During his period of thirty-four years he upheld and guided the Brotherhood, by his writings in the Magazine and other publications, and by his indefatigable ministrations in speaking and lecturing throughout Britain and abroad. He valiantly carried on the work of his pioneer, Dr. Thomas, challenging the “Orthodox” religion around him and the atheistic views of the non-religious.”

One would think from such acknowledgements of indebtedness to the pioneers that the “others” were at the present time faithful followers of their teachings. After this article was commenced it was noted that in their main publications the “others” have suggested that their members contribute some ten thousand dollars for the upkeep of the graves of Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts, which are in Brooklyn Cemetery, New York. It will be observed that even in this they are following the “Pattern”.

Ostensibly acknowledging the worthiness of the pioneers by looking after their “sepulchres”.

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It is acknowledged by the "others" that they have recently been flooded with errors of the gravest kind. Their writings speak with alarm of what is taking place to undermine and destroy their position. Some of their Magazines, notably "The Testimony", continue to protest strongly against these errors, and it is known that in an article on "Fellowship", some looked for a lead as to what should be done to deliver the "others" from the present quagmire of confusion and error. The writer of this article, James Carter, appears to take a strong line but stops absolutely short of Division. In the article, he said :

"Regarding the present Ecclesias position, some Ecclesias have already 'strengthened the things that remain', in that they have reaffirmed their belief in : (a) A literal serpent which tempted Eve in Eden ; (b) Adam was the 'first man', and not just one selected from an existing race ; (c) They are not prepared to invite to their platform any who do not wholeheartedly subscribe to these points. This writer (James Carter) urges that all ecclesias adopt a similar procedure, and so help to end the present ecclesial indecision. It has arisen because ecclesias with members who propagate contrary views and others equally pernicious (for example, the Inspiration of the Scriptures is again being assailed as it was 80 years ago, **when Bro. Robert Roberts rightly took vigorous action**—but which action appears to be lacking today) have not had either moral strength or courage—or both—to deal with them."

How good and scriptural this sounds! To take "vigorous action" like Robert Roberts did in the Inspiration Division! We thought it wise to test the writer's sincerity in these words, so we wrote to him asking whether he agreed that Robert Roberts was right in dividing from those who were wrong over the Inspiration of the Scriptures. The reply which we received, as follows, will speak for itself :

"Your query, however, savours too strongly of Matthew 22:15. (Then went the Pharisees and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk) or Mark 12:13 ; not overlooking Luke 20:20."

Obviously he, and those with him, while pretending to uphold the stand of the pioneers will never follow their lead and support a Division from those in error. On the contrary their leader states : "The fact remains that Division is in itself an evil."

The "others" have repeated the "Pattern". They are full of praise for those who were the pioneers and are zealous "to garnish

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the sepulchres of these". They say in effect that if they had lived in the days of these pioneers they would have been with them and not with their enemies who opposed them and endeavoured to kill their witness.

The words of Jesus are as clearly applicable to the "others" as they have been to those of former times who have left the Truth :

"Wherefore be ye witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which kill the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers." (Matthew 23:31, 32)

Those amongst the "others" who would escape the condemnation of Jesus for such hypocrisy must act with despatch and leave those who pretend to support the pioneers but in fact deny them.

—To be continued

News from the Ecclesias

Eden, New York. Grange Hall, Church Street.

Sundays : Breaking of Bread, 11-30 a.m. Sunday School, 1-30 p.m. Bible Class : Mid-week, Forestville, Hamburg, and Orchard Park. Alternate weeks : Revelation Study.

Results of advertising in the hope of reaching those who are concerned over the laxity in the Christadelphian body has been disappointing. It is evidence of the lack of care for God's requirements.

Gratitude is felt for the visits allowed, for they do strengthen the bonds and renew our determination to serve Him.

We are indeed grateful for the bountiful evidence of His care in our midst.

Interest by two here continues, giving encouragement to those involved, as well as to all.

J.A.DeF.

THE REMNANT

Newtownards, Co. Down, N. Ireland.

Breaking of Bread, Sunday, 11-30 a.m. Sunday School,
2-30 p.m. Bible Class, Wednesday.

We are grateful for blessing to Sister Nancy after trial and patience. All share in the happiness that comes from the knowledge that our God is a loving Father who overrules all our ways when we put our trust in Him.

We have offered to give our help to the "Gateway House" Christadelphians in response to their suggested talks on Fellowship, and would be very glad to do so. The booklet on Fellowship has given food for thought to some, and we feel is bound to have raised questions and anxieties in thoughtful minds, which can only be allayed by the sure knowledge of what God does require.

J.P.

Manchester. Memorial Hall, M.A.P.S. Building, Albert Square,
Manchester.

A blessing indeed has been granted to us in the visit from the States of Bro. and Sis. DeFries and Sis. N. Brown. Personal contact strengthens the bonds of fellowship, which we are permitted in Him. Discussion on those things which concern our Faith are a source of help and joy, permitting us to glimpse the delights and glory of that time for which we look.

Visits have been made to the Bible Class at Huddersfield, which have also contributed to the help of all.

Gratitude is felt for encouragement in the interest shown in different parts. Some by way of correspondence from as far away as Australia and New Zealand, where there seems to be considerable anxiety among the Christadelphians. This is timely, and especially so as it has been the painful duty of the brethren and sisters visiting Nottingham on Saturday, 6th August, to withdraw from Bro. and Sis. F. Harrison. Where spirits are wrong, efforts to establish true repentance are unavailing. It is impressive to observe that "repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth", is given by God. (2 Tim 2:25) This shows that the need for those who are wrong they must first of all put themselves right with God otherwise He will not help them.

Brethren and sisters are reminded of the Fraternal Gathering to be held, if the Lord will, in the Memorial Hall, Manchester, on Bank Holiday Monday, 28th August. Meeting, 2 p.m. Tea, 4-30 p.m.

W.V.B.