

Present Forgiveness of Sins

And

Immortal Resurrection of the Righteous

This pamphlet is a reply to one issued a few years ago by Mr C.C.Walker, entitled "Raised Incorruptible." He attacks a pamphlet written by me on "The Resurrection and Judgment of the Saints." When this was published seventeen years ago, the Editor of the Christadelphian remarked in his periodical to the effect; - That our view was an old heresy revamped and that the question had been settled thirty years before. As many of his brethren are not thirty years old, it must have been settled before they were born. As Christadelphians are constantly advising their hearers to prove all things, we hope they will apply that principle to their own theories. We propose to criticize the Editor's attack mainly in the order in which it is written. We hope the reader will have a copy to compare as we proceed, or he may find the substance in No. 4 of "Twelve Lectures," by Mr R. Roberts.

"Raised Incorruptible"

Why has Mr Walker chosen so brief a title? Why not style it "The Dead shall be raised incorruptible"? We particularly wish the reader to bear in mind that it is the resurrection of the dead that he is invited to consider. Whatever the living experience, that cannot be the resurrection of the dead.

"Springing into Being"

By this statement the Editor shows his fear of using Scriptural expressions. Why not say, "The dead shall be raised"? If the dead spring into being will they not be raised?

The reason is apparent throughout. If he kept to Bible statements he would give his case away. He admits that our view is apparently countenanced by Scripture testimony, but says such testimonies are superficially construed. The reader will be able to judge who errs in that direction. On page 2, he says:

"Our view robs the judgment of its terrors."

We gladly admit that, in respect to faithful believers, but not to others. Imagine Paul meeting His Lord with terror; the Bride meeting the Bridegroom with terror; the Blessed Hope of meeting the Lord with terror; or the Household of Christ holding fast the beginning of their confidence and rejoicing firm unto the end, meeting the Lord with terror!

Righteous human Judgment-seats are a terror to evil-doers, but not to righteous men. Of such a Gospel, no doubt Paul would have been heartily ashamed. Dr Thomas says. "It is only evil-doers that need be afraid."

"The Dead In Christ Shall Rise First" - 1 Thessalonians 4:16

On page 3 we are told that this text means "That the dead in Christ rise before the living are changed." To this we fully agree but there is a long exposition which seems to suggest that we think otherwise and so our point is evaded. According to Paul, these dead ones who are raised before the living are changed are the dead in Christ. We are here informed that Paul simply meant to teach that the dead in Christ are restored to life before the living enter into their inheritance. Surely Paul knew

what he meant to state. Why is there such a difference between the statement of Paul and the Editor? Why does the Editor use the words restored to life instead of raised? And why speak about entering upon the inheritance? Paul informs us that the Dead ones who rise before the living are changed are the Dead in Christ. The Editor's theory makes it the Dead out of Christ and in Christ. So the Apostles qualification is needless and misleading. We hope Mr Walker will not be so unscriptural as some of his brethren who talk about the faithful and unfaithful in Christ. "If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His."

"Blessed And Holy Is He That Hath Part In The First Resurrection" - Revelation 20:6

On the above text the Editor remarks, page 3, "It is argued from this that none of the wicked will be raised at that time." We submit that the statement is so plain that it is beyond argument. He evidently feels the force of the words and dives into the original for help; with what result we shall see. He informs us, the word "part" in the text means "a piece, portion, lot, or fellowship." So we may read "Blessed and holy is he that hath a piece, portion, lot, or fellowship in the first resurrection." How much has the Greek helped him? The reader will see it is a case of 'as you were.' Realising his difficulty he glides away from the statement and invents a substitute; "Hence" he says, "to have part in the first resurrection is to have a piece, portion, lot, or fellowship at the Coming of Christ." Why does he say, part, etc., at the Coming of Christ? Many who never die will have part at the Coming of Christ, but not part in the first resurrection. If the text means part at the Coming of Christ then it will include the living as well as the dead. He then states that "merely to come forth is not to have part in the resurrection that takes place." What a strange expression! "Merely to come forth." When the dead come forth alive from the tomb, will not that be resurrection? "Lazarus, come forth." What was that? Blessed and holy is he that hath part (or shall come forth) in the first resurrection, because on such the second death hath no power, they being raised incorruptible. The Greek equivalent of the word "raised" is *Egeiro*, in the text and also in the statement "Lazarus whom He raised from the dead" (John 12:1). So the coming forth was the raising of Lazarus. Mr Walker says "merely to come forth" is not resurrection.

An Astounding Statement

On page 5 the Editor says:

"Many will have a part in this first resurrection who will never go into the grave at all: viz. those who are alive and remain."

Thus we are asked to believe that many will be raised from the dead who never died. We think Christadelphians have little cause to charge their orthodox friends with absurdities while they hold a theory so outrageously contradictory to all the Bible says on the resurrection of the dead. Continuing his remarks on the first resurrection the Editor quotes:

"I saw thrones, etc... but the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished" (Revelation 20:4,5).

This - what? The things John witnessed, the reigning of the Accepted a thousand years. "This is the first resurrection."

We read that statement several times before we could believe that an intelligent person could make it and we were still more surprised to find the same in No. 4. the "Twelve Lectures." We maintain that the words "This is the first resurrection" point back to the statement, "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded... and they lived." This makes sense of the statement, whereas the Editor's construction makes nonsense. If the words refer to the immediate preceding words then the rest of the dead is referred to which could not be the case.

Mr Walker takes the liberty to pass over the fifth verse to the latter part of the fourth verse. Our interpretation goes back to the former part of the fourth verse. The reader will readily see to which portion of Scripture the words “This is the first resurrection” apply and will he not understand them as referring, as the Editor does, to persons who never die, viz. the faithful who are alive and remain.

On page 11, we read,

“Mr Richmond further contradicts the Apostle’s words twice over, objecting to the simultaneous resurrection of just and unjust. He says Paul did not so teach, and we have no warrant for the addition, but in Acts 24:15 Paul did so teach, saying before Felix, “I have hope before God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both just and unjust.”

We reply, It is unfortunate for the Editor that Paul did not say simultaneous in the text. Perhaps he imagines the words “a resurrection” implies one simultaneous resurrection of both classes. If that be so, the Editor is equally wrong with us for we both believe in two resurrections. Paul derived his teaching from his Lord who taught the resurrection of Life, and the resurrection of condemnation. Our view is not contradictory to Paul’s statement and is more in harmony with the Lord’s statement than Mr Walker’s.

Our critic then proceeds (page 11) to charge us with wresting Isaiah 26:19; “Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust.” “Mr Richmond” he goes on to say, “says how premature the singing would be if they had to appear before the judgment-seat in mortal bodies and wait to know if their sins were forgiven.” Mr Walker, Mr Roberts and Dr Thomas teach that those who wake and sing, go before the judgment-seat not knowing whether Eternal Life or everlasting destruction awaits them. If that were true, surely to go to the judgment-seat singing would not only be premature but awfully inappropriate. Imaging a man to be tried on a question of temporal life or death, singing on his way to the Judge! Such would be regarded as ignorant bravado. How much more so when eternal destinies are in the balance! We suggest it would be more enlightening if his recent pamphlet showed us how his view harmonised with Isaiah’s statement instead of charging us with wresting it.

“Resurrection Of The Worthy” Luke 20:35

“They who are accounted worthy to attain to that world and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, for neither can they die any more, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”

On this Scripture the Editor remarks (page 4),

“On the strength of this it is contended that the unworthy will not come forth out of the grave at the same time the worthy come forth to attain that world. The argument is based on a misconstruction of the verse. The resurrection is something more than the act of rising from the grave. Resurrection involves the act of rising from the dust, but comprehends more than this in many parts of the New Testament, For instance, the Sadducees asked Jesus “In the resurrection whose wife shall she be?” (Luke 20:33). How would the question read: Whose wife shall she be in the act of rising from the grave?”

We reply; it would read in harmony with the question. While the woman was dead the Sadducees saw no difficulty; but if she were made alive again, whose wife would she be? The Editor assumes that the state which the risen enter is part of the resurrection of the dead. If resurrection means more than the sleepers being raised to life, then Lazarus was not raised. If it include all the stages of the Dr Thomas’s process then there was no such thing as mortal resurrection, or the resurrection of the unjust, so by his reasoning the Editor destroys his own theory.

The Lord's statement shows that a worthiness is needed in order to attain to the resurrection He spoke of. Such as attain to it die no more and are equal to the angels, being sons of the resurrection. How different from Mr Walker's first resurrection in which the worthy and unworthy come forth! No wonder Paul pressed forward to resurrection spoken of by Jesus. If he believed the Editor's version he would know he could not escape that resurrection whether he pressed backward or forward, worthy or unworthy.

"The Rest Of The Dead Lived Not Till The Thousand Years Were Finished"* Revelation 20:6

Our opponent will not deny that those of the dead who are said to live and reign are to be raised at the beginning of the thousand years. John tells us these reigning ones lived, and the rest lived not till the thousand years were finished. How plain! Lived and not lived. The best Bible students agree that it is a safe rule to allow the literal to interpret the figurative and the parabolic. The Editor evidently feeling his inability to evade the force of literal statements flies to the parables. We are quite willing to follow him but not to accept his private interpretations when they contradict literal statements. He remarks on page 5,

"All that this passage proves is that there is to be no more resurrection of dead people after Christ has come till the end of the thousand years. It is certain that it is not intended to teach, and as we have seen does not teach, that there will be no resurrection of the unjust at the Coming of Christ. No one part of the Scriptures can violate the unequivocal testimony of other parts. To admit of the common interpretation of Revelation 20:6 would be to abandon the doctrine of the judgment."

We gladly admit we reject the Editor's doctrine of the judgment, which is a frustration of the Gospel of the Grace of God.

Who Are The Rest Of The Dead? Revelation 20:6

"I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne (verse 12) and the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them and they were Judged every man according to their works" (verse 13).

R. Roberts says, in "Twelve Lectures" page 112;

"The rest of the dead cannot apply to the unfaithful amenable to the judgment-seat of Christ,"

and of course, he would admit that it cannot include the faithful, so we ask, of whom does this vast multitude consist? R. Roberts says;

"If the words apply to a specific class it is a class not amenable to the judgment which Jesus brings on His household. Possibly it may refer to men like Nero and others great in wickedness. May they not be dealt with at the end of the thousand years? This may be the significance of the language under consideration. It may only be intended to teach that the remainder of the dead, divided from this dispensation by the Advent, and related entirely to the dispensation of the Kingdom, will not be dealt with till the close of the Kingdom when possibly the resurrection will be confined to those who live and die during the reign of Christ."

We reply; that by these remarks we are asked to believe that the rest of the dead who lived not when the Blessed and Holy did, are the living and some of them unborn at the time, and that this vast multitude may all be persons who died during the thousand years, or may be men like Nero. The fact

is that Christadelphian Resurrection raises so many of the cursed and unholy with the blessed and holy that they are at a loss to find the multitude which John saw.

We utterly refuse to accept this interpretation with its four maybe's, two possibly's and one if, as the teaching of this sublime and awful picture seen by John. Further we ask, Did ever a Christadelphian believe that such a multitude will die during the thousand years reign of peace, blessing, health and long life? When as the prophet says, "A child shall die an hundred years old." Such a view would make sin and death as prevalent as ever. What a blighted Millennium'

"The Dead Shall Be Raised Incorruptible" I Corinthians 15:52

On page 5 the writer speaks of this statement as the greatest stumbling block with those who deny the judgment of the Saints.

We do not deny any scriptural statement on that subject; and have never felt this text a stumbling block since we held our present view. Nearly forty years ago we believed the dead would be raised corruptible, which the Christadelphians taught us, though we never accepted the theory of Saints not being permitted to know their sins were forgiven. In trying to convert others to mortal resurrection we found Paul's statement a great stumbling block; now we find it beautifully expresses our faith. Certainly a believer in mortal resurrection did not write 1 Corinthians 15.

On page 6 the Editor remarks,

"Restricting these words to the mere act of emergence from the ground they naturally seem an express affirmation that the body is incorruptible, spiritual and immortal from the first moment of its restoration; and that, therefore, judgment is anticipated and superseded by the silent proclamation of acceptance, and that nothing lies between those thus rising incorruptible, and perfect salvation, but a joyous re-union with their Lord. The mistake consists in construing Paul's words too narrowly and reading them as if he were dealing with the dramatic incidents of the resurrection."

We here remark. We are not speaking of the drama but the reality, and we object to the Editor drifting away from the resurrection of the dead. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15 mentions the dead eight times and all through the chapter he is speaking of what happens to the dead. He tells us some have fallen asleep. We ask, When they awake, will that not be resurrection? In Daniel 12; "Many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake." Will not their awakening be the resurrection? If not, what will it be in the case of those who awake to everlasting contempt? Many other texts in fact, all others, present the same meaning to the word resurrection. We advise the reader to accept this "unequivocal testimony" and cast away such unscriptural expressions as "emergence" and "springing into being." As such phrases Christadelphians find unnecessary when showing their hearers that resurrection is the way from death to life; but they must be brought in to deny Paul's unequivocal testimony that the dead (not the living at the judgment) shall be raised incorruptible.

Mr Roberts, in the "Twelve Lectures" says,

"The dead are unconscious till the resurrection."

Does he mean till they appear at the judgment-seat to complete the last stage of the Dr's process? In John 5:28 we read, "Marvel not at this, for the hour cometh in the which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice and shall come forth, they that have done good to the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done ill to the resurrection of judgment." Does this take place at the judgment-seat, or at the tomb? Is it merely emergence, or resurrection of the dead? Is it something that could be experienced by "such as were never in the grave at all"? "Tell John" says the Saviour, "the dead are

raised.” “No,” says Christadelphian teaching, “tell him they have experienced only the first stage of the process.”

Resurrection Of Lazarus

In our pamphlet on the Resurrection and Judgment of the Saints, the following remarks are made;—

“But we have in John 12:1 what is even more conclusive than any translation - “Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead.” This word “raised” is from the same Greek as the word “raised” in 1 Corinthians 15:52. So we have at the grave of Lazarus our Lord’s demonstration of the meaning of the word. What took place? Jesus cried, “Lazarus, come forth; and he that was dead came forth;” So the coming forth was the raising.”

Apply this divinely demonstrated meaning of Paul’s statement, “The dead shall be raised” (come forth) incorruptible,” and the question is settled.

In reference to our remarks above quoted, the Editor says (page 9),

“That the reference to Lazarus is singularly inappropriate when we consider that Lazarus rose mortal.”

Surely our friend has sufficient intelligence to see that we are not so blind as to suppose that Lazarus rose incorruptible. Our reference to Lazarus was merely to show the meaning of the word “raised,” and what happened in his case was what Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 15:52 with this additional fact that the word incorruptible modifies the verb raised. Thus, the Editor cannot escape the conclusion that the coming forth of Lazarus from the tomb was Bible Resurrection. Our friend goes on to say that Paul taught that the dead in Christ will be raised before the living are changed. In accordance with his teaching he should have said “partly raised” before the living are changed. According to his crowning absurdity “those who have never died will then have part in the first resurrection,” the dead will have passed all the stages of the Drs process, and the living all but the first stage, when both classes appear at the Judgment-seat.

“How Are The Dead Raised?”

“How are the dead raised, and with what manner of body do they come?” 1 Corinthians 15:35.

Mr Walker (page 6) takes the liberty to say

“This latter statement should read “for” or “to” what manner of body do they come.”

So we are asked to believe that the dead come for, or to, a body. We wish he would give the best Greek authority he can for this construction. Young’s Translation leaves out the words “with what body do they come.” Rotherham’s, The Syriac, Macknight, Tishendorf, and the Revised are opposed to this version. We are justified in demanding authorities of greater weight to defend his assumption before we accept his reasoning. It would be interesting if he would publish them in his Magazine.

On page 10 he informs us that the word Resurrection in Philippians 3:2 is from the Greek word *Exanastasis*. He states that this word conveys not only the coming out of the grave, but also of change of our vile body. Will he give good Greek authority for this statement? Further, if the faithful come forth for an incorruptible body, which is to be theirs at the judgment seat, then the unfaithful will come forth for a body which they already possess. Thus showing the dilemma of his supposed improved translation.

On page 4 the Editor tells us

"That Lazarus and the widow's son rose from the grave, but not to the resurrection state preached by Paul."

We reply, It is a pity we do not find the phrase, nor the idea of resurrection state in Paul's teaching. The two instances above-mentioned overturn his own theory of the meaning of the word resurrection. He has told us that resurrection means something more than rising from the grave. How much more is it in the case of the wicked? When Paul taught a resurrection of just and unjust, did not the word mean the same in each case, although the results would be vastly different? Further, he tells us that resurrection involves the act of rising from the dust. If so, when we read the words: "The rising of the dead," we ought to say that it is not the resurrection, but something involved in it. If the word involved the act of rising from the dust, how can we believe that some will have part in the first resurrection who were never in the dust? Seeing that the Editor is so involved in the contradiction of himself in respect to this supposed saving truth, what must be the condition of the great mass of his brethren?

On page 6 we are told that;

"Paul is dealing with the broad question proposed by an objector, how, as a question of possibility, are the dead raised, for, or to, what body do they come?"

We ask, Is the objector concerned about what happens after the dead are raised? His objection was to the possibility of the dead being made alive. Paul's purpose was to prove that the dead would be made alive. Mr Walker says:-

"Paul was speaking elliptically when he said the dead would be raised incorruptible."

He wishes us to see that the mortal emergence was elliptically embraced in Paul's statement. An orthodox believer would have us believe that the reunion of the immortal soul with the body was elliptically embraced. But we should require him to prove that such an idea was revealed before assuming that it was embraced. So we require the Editor to first prove that his theory is taught in the Scriptures. He proceeds to teach us that the previous life of Jesus was elliptically embraced in the statement "the last Adam was made a quickening spirit," and thus his resurrection theory was elliptically embraced in Paul's statement. We reply the cases are not parallel. The life of Jesus is plainly recorded but the Editors theory is not.

Criticism Of Our Pamphlet

On page 8 the Editor refers to the persistent circulation of our pamphlet on "The Resurrection and Judgment of the Saints." As we have for forty years been earnestly teaching truths held by Christadelphians we also feel it our duty to contend earnestly for truths on which they are sadly astray. Further, he charges us with unfaithfulness because, while we say they believe an awful blighting error, we do not pronounce them aliens from saving truth. He remarks, we are charitable to a fault. We have no doubt that if we had made that pronouncement we should have been told to judge nothing before the time. Perhaps we are too charitable, which in Christadelphian controversy is a rare characteristic. We believe that those who hold the theory that Saints are not permitted to know their sins are forgiven till appearing at the judgment seat are in a dangerous and unscriptural position.

An Awful Blighting Error Tested By The Scriptures

Let the reader add the Christadelphian statement "that the Saints are not permitted to know their sins are forgiven" to the following Scripture testimony:

“We know we have passed from death unto life.” (1 John 3:14) - but we are not permitted to know our sins are forgiven till the day of Judgment.

“The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God” (Romans 8:16) - but we are not permitted to know our sins are forgiven till the day of judgment.

“We rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Peter 1:8) - but we are not permitted to know our sins are forgiven us till the day of judgment.

“Henceforth there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me, and not for me only,” (2 Timothy 4:8) - but we are not permitted to know our sins are forgiven till the day of judgment.

“In Him we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins” (Ephesians 1:7) - but we are not permitted to know our sins are forgiven us till the day of judgment,

“Beloved, if our heart condemn us not then have we confidence before God” (1 John 3:21) - but we are not permitted to know our sins are forgiven till the day of judgment

“Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered” (Romans 4:7) - but he is not permitted to know his sins are forgiven till the day of judgment.

Many such passages as the above no doubt will occur to the mind of the reader.

Israel Under Law In A Better Position Than Christadelphians Who Profess To Be Under Grace

In Leviticus we read of sacrifices for the whole congregation, for rulers and for individuals with this result; “The priest shall make atonement, and he shall be forgiven” (Leviticus 4:20,26,35; also Leviticus 6:7). Just imagine a devout Israelite returning from his offering, saying, “God told me if I offered according to the commandment I should be forgiven. I have seen the one goat slain for sin and the other bear it away into a land of forgetfulness and it made my heart rejoice; but I have been told that I am not permitted to know of my forgiveness; and that the faithful and merciful God who made this gracious arrangement will bring all my sins to remembrance in a future day of judgment.” If we ask the unhappy man whether these people gave any word of the Lord for such a statement, no doubt he would reply, “No, but they said it was elliptically embraced in His Word, and that such an idea was contrary to their latest edition of the whole counsel of God.

If we had met this man we would say, “Banish such God-dishonouring thoughts from your mind, lest you be enslaved with the sin of unbelief. Take God at His word and rejoice in His pardoning mercy.

The Return Of The High-Priest

This Scripture is often quoted as a strong proof of the Editor’s doctrine. In Anastasis, page 28, Dr Thomas writes:

“But when are venial sins forgiven? As soon, says Protestant tradition, as they are repented of and confessed.

Here, the Dr. rails at what he calls Protestant tradition. If the reader will search the Scriptures on the forgiveness of sins he will find that what is called “Protestant tradition” is Bible truth of the highest importance. Would to God Protestants were as scriptural in other matters as in this. On the same page, referring to the return of the High Priest from the Holy Place, the Dr. says;

"While the Advocate or High Priest was in the Holy Place, the people were without engaged in confession and prayer. They were waiting and looking for the appearance, and they knew not whether their confession of sin and supplication for forgiveness were favourably responded to or not until the Advocate came forth to bless them in the appointed form."

This, Dr. Thomas calls the Mosaic pattern. We prefer to call it the pattern of things in the heavens. We are not aware what Scripture states "The people were without engaged in confession and prayer." Let us see how far this Scripture supports the Christadelphian theory of the judgment. In Exodus 28 we read of the golden bells attached to the skirt of the High Priest. "And it shall be upon Aaron to minister and the sound thereof shall be heard when he goeth into the Holy Place before the Lord and when he cometh out, that he die not."

Now we ask, would not Israel, when they heard the sound of the bells, know that the High-Priest lived; and that his offering had been according to the Commandment; and therefore Yahweh was bound by His own gracious promise to forgive? In Exodus 28:29, we have the type of our High Priest, whose one offering perfected for ever all them that are sanctified, "And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he goeth in unto the Holy Place for a memorial before the Lord Continually... And thou shalt bear the judgment of the Children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually." (Exodus 28:28 to 30).

Does not this testimony clearly show that Israel was incorporated in the High Priest and in his offering accepted before the Lord? Shall we say that the Heavenly things themselves are inferior to the pattern of those things, or that the substance is inferior to the shadow? Were not Apostolic believers representatively crucified, buried and exalted in their great High Priest within the veil?

Now we ask, Did the High Priest come forth to hold an inquiry into the life's history of Israel and require them to give an account of the sins of a lifetime, or any sins whatever? Certainly not! Thus, the coming forth of the High Priest utterly destroys instead of supporting Christadelphian theology.

Manifestation Before The Judgment Seat of Christ

"For we must all be manifest before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body according to what he hath done whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10).

It is assumed that this text teaches the simultaneous resurrection of just and unjust, but as the word simultaneous does not occur in the text it is a mere supposition. It is also inferred that the faithful give account of deeds, both good and bad; if so, the man to whom the Judge says "Well done" will give account of bad deeds. Righteous Noah will give account of the sins of 900 years. The man to whom the Lord will not reckon sin will have to be "gathered for the one great and dread purpose of inquisition, and not until he hears the word spoken will he know how it is to fare with him. All depends on the account" - Page 109 of "Twelve Lectures."

We, in our simple reading, thought something depended on the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Jesus, which makes and keeps the faithful believer accepted in the Beloved. We fully believe that we shall be manifested before the judgment seat and that the faithful are now made manifest before our Heavenly Father on the heart of the High Priest within the veil, and He according to the pattern of things in the heavens bears our judgment before God continually; or, as John says, 1 John 4:17, "As He is, even so are we in this world." We understand that to receive "in body" signifies in a bodily condition in contrast to the heathen notion of recompense in a disembodied condition. If our bad deeds or sins are forgiven there is no account required. "None of his transgressions that he hath committed shall be remembered against him" Ezekiel 18:22. The faithful receive Eternal Life as a free gift and not earned by works. The man who dies on the day of union with Christ will have Eternal

Life with Paul: but not the same honour in the Kingdom; nor to reign over five or ten cities. *
(footnote: It is felt by some that here the writer is claiming too much)

Dr. Thomas Contradicts R. Roberts and Himself

In Anastasis, page 16 the Dr. says;

“Paul knew he had done well and that such would be accepted.”

Surely if Paul knew this he must have known his sins were forgiven. If the Apostle had that knowledge, why not Peter, James and John? Perhaps the Editor will tell us where to draw the line.

Thus the Dr. contradicts his own teaching, viz. That believers cannot know their sins are forgiven until the High Priest comes forth. He also nullifies R. Robert’s statement that they are not permitted to know of their forgiveness until they appear at the judgment seat.

Resurrection Of The Lord Jesus

Referring to the above, and the Lord’s statement to Mary, “Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended unto my Father,” (John 20:17), the Editor remarks, Page 9,

“Mr Richmond’s objection has no weight, for if we consider the ascent to the Father to be the Lord’s actual ascent to heaven, the ascent to the divine nature is still implied.”

Our objection is, to this Scripture being made to teach that Jesus rose mortal. Further on the same page, he speaks of a presumption that the Lord experienced the change in the interval. There is not a single text for such a supposition; so we are not surprised to find him floundering in implication and presumption. We read; “Tell my brethren I ascend to my Father...” We ask, Would the disciples understand these words to mean that His resurrection was not completed and that it would be by a subsequent change from flesh to spirit? Would Jesus require them to tell his disciples something they could not comprehend? He is risen. Blessed words! Yes, risen very early in the morning. We will refer to the tomb of Jesus as we did in the case of Lazarus, to see what the Bible means by the resurrection of the dead. What did the disciples see and hear? :-

- 1st. The angels said, He is risen.
- 2nd. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.
- 3rd. Go, tell His disciples, He is risen from the dead.

The Editor’s teaching on the word resurrection is opposed to all these statements.

- 1st. He teaches, Jesus had only emerged, or experienced something which is involved in resurrection, or that He had partly risen.
- 2nd. When invited to see the place where the Lord lay, they might have replied, “The empty tomb is only a proof of what we call emergence,” had they held the theory taught by Mr Walker.
- 3rd. We cannot tell the disciples “He is risen” because resurrection involves much more than has taken place.

No Reason For The Mortal Resurrection Of Our Lord

We read in Hebrews 2:9 that “He was made a little while lower than the angels for the suffering of death.” Therefore, we ask, Why should He again be made lower than the angels after having died?

He was also made in our nature that He might be our example, and endure temptation. When that was accomplished, why should He again appear in the flesh by mortal resurrection? If, as Christadelphians teach, that believers are raised corruptible, because they will have to give account of sins at the Judgment, why should Jesus rise corruptible seeing He had no sins to account for?

We challenge our opponents to give a Scriptural text or reason for their theory that Jesus was raised corruptible.

The Judgment Of The Nations Matthew 25:3

This Scripture is supposed to teach the Christadelphian theory of the Judgment.

Let us see how far such is the case. We read “Before him shall be gathered all nations.” These are alleged to be the Household of Christ. How would it be to read Psalm 2:1; “Why do the Household rage and the Church imaging a vain thing?” But Mr Walker suggests that the text means “out of the nations” and to support his view quotes 2 Timothy 4:17, where Paul speaks of all the Gentiles hearing his testimony. Now we ask, Did Paul go to preach to all nations as the Apostles were commanded, or did he preach to persons out of the nations? Undoubtedly the former. The Taking out followed as the effect of his preaching. The quotation from Timothy is in accordance with Matthew 25. Clearly all nations are referred to in both texts.

In the passage “These my brethren,” no information is given as to whom the term applies. Some hold they are the saints, others, that they are Israel. We know that in the past there have been Nations who were enemies to Israel, and some friendly to them. Such is the case today and will be, till Jehovah gathers all nations to the Valley of Jehoshaphat or Judgment, when Christ’s brethren according to the flesh will; be delivered and the nations who come against them will be destroyed. Will there not be nations blessed in Abraham’s seed who will inherit the Gentile’s land on similar conditions to those on which Israel will inherit the land of their fathers, and will not such nations enjoy the life of that age?

It may be more easy to criticize this view of the Judgment than to produce one in harmony with the Editor’s teaching. We have no inspired interpretation. The foregoing is not brought forward by us to prove our position but is often used by our opponents to prove theirs. All that we can be required to do is to show that it does not support the view we oppose.

1st. We notice that it is a Judgment of the nations; not those taken out of the nations.

2nd. There is no mention of the dead,

3rd. Neither class give account of sins.

4th. The approved are pronounced blessed without giving account.

5th. Is there a Christadelphian living who would expect to receive immortality on the ground of being kind to Christ’s brethren, either natural or spiritual? Yet such would be the verdict of the Judge if this were a judgment of believers.

Parable Of The Talents

We regard this as the Judgment of the faithful and unfaithful believers, but here again, Christadelphian features are omitted:

No giving account of sins by the faithful.

No terrible suspense for them.

No mortal resurrection of the Saints

The only decision as regards the righteous is the degree of honour in the Kingdom.

The Editor says that such a view as the above sets aside judgment. The parables certainly sets aside his theory. He argues a decision of degrees of rewards would not be judgment but simply a joyful union of Saints with their Lord. We find Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 5, seems to have such a joyful union in view. We know that Jesus will decide the measure of honour due to all His Saints, and to say that such will not be a judgment is absurd.

The Man Who Hid His Talent

This will be taken to prove that both classes appear together at the Judgment-seat. If there were no other Scripture on the subject we might think so too. Parables should not be too much strained in details. In the Parable of the Virgins we find that the foolish came after the wise had entered into the marriage. In the Parable of the Wheat and Tares we read "Gather up first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them." The Editor's theory does not agree in details with either of these parables.

In Isaiah 61 we have a prophecy which was partly fulfilled over 1900 years ago, and part is yet unfulfilled; yet no indication that the whole was not to be fulfilled simultaneously. The same applies to Zechariah 9:9,10. Another supposed strong proof of simultaneous resurrection and judgment is found in Daniel 12:1, "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth up for the children of Thy people, and at that time shall Thy people be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the Book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to Everlasting Life, and some to shame...." The phrase "At that time," points back to what is stated in the last verse of the eleventh chapter. A time when the enemy of Israel plants his tabernacle in the Holy Mountain. Verses 2 and 3 are independent statements to which the phrase "at that time" does not apply.

Zechariah 14 speaks of the time of Jacob's trouble, which is the same period as referred to in the last verse of chapter eleven of Daniel, when the Lord goes forth to fight those nations. Now we ask, Does the Lord go forth alone? Certainly not; as the following testimonies prove:

"The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee." Zechariah 14:3-5.

"Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints to execute judgment." Jude 34.

By these testimonies we see that the sleeping Saints must awake previous to the deliverance mentioned. They must come from the dust in order to come with their Lord, for the deliverance of His people. Thus the phrase "at that time" cannot mean the time of their awakening to Everlasting Life because they awake before the deliverance. The awakening of the dead though stated after the time of trouble really occurs before and is no more remarkable than the fact that the time of trouble is stated after the deliverance. From the foregoing references it will be seen that Daniel 12 does not prove the simultaneous resurrection of both classes, but would be of equal force though an interval were to transpire between the awakening of the Just and unjust. Revelation is progressive. Details and elaborations follow broad statements. The following texts show that the Just rise before the unjust;

"Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just," Luke 14:14.

"Christ, the first-fruits, afterwards, those that are Christ's at His coming." 1 Corinthians 15:23.

"The dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

"They who are accounted worthy to attain to the resurrection..." Luke 20:35.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. On such the second death hath no power. Revelation 20:6.

This Mortal Must Put On Immortality

In Anastasis, page 29, Dr. Thomas says,

“Where are these bodies now? Nowhere. Only a little dust of them remains.”

Further he tells;

“That mortal bodies must first be formed from the dust.”

If any man speak let him speak as the oracles of God. Paul says. “We that are alive and remain” and so classed himself with such. He did not wish to die or to be unclothed, but to be “clothed upon.” He identified himself with the living, 1 Corinthians 15, “The dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed,” thus, in harmony with his manner of speaking he says, “this mortal must put on immortality.” Paul spoke in harmony with his Lord in Luke 12:36, “Be ye, yourselves like unto men looking for their Lord when he shall return from the marriage feast, that when he cometh and knocketh they may straightway open unto him. Blessed are those servants...” The reader will remember that the Apostles spoke of the Lord’s return as probable in their life-time. R. Roberts says,

“The Apostle James spoke of the coming of the Lord as an imminent event.”

With this Scriptural manner of speaking we can understand the statement (1 John 2:28), “Now, my little children, abide in Him, that if He shall be manifested we may have boldness and not be ashamed at His coming.”

If it could be proved that both just and unjust rise together it would be no proof that both rose corruptible. If it could be substantiated that both rose corruptible, it would not follow that they appeared at the judgment-seat corruptible; and if it could be proved that they appeared at the judgment-seat corruptible, there would be no proof that they had to give account of sins.

They that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. That blessing was the “Blessedness of the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered.” The household of Christ has the privilege of the beginning of confidence, and holding it fast with the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end. We do not know whether we shall be faithful to the end. We do not know if we shall be alive tomorrow. Are we for that reason, to say, we do not know whether we are alive today? So each succeeding day we may abide in Christ and know that in Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. Christadelphian teaching is opposed to this all-important truth. We are thankful to know that some in their community do not hold such error. It is our heart’s desire and prayer that others may be delivered from the blighting error that the Saints are not permitted to know their sins are forgiven, and that they may be enabled to say with Paul, “We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry “Abba Father.”

In order for such to be our experience, we must daily endeavour to walk with God and live in whole-hearted consecration. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we shall have fellowship with the Father and the Son, and know that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

Wm. Richmond.
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