

Correspondence with Grant Pearce

Some of the Nazarene Fellowship have been corresponding with Grant Pearce for some time and here are extracts from those letters:-

This first letter, dated 15th December 1993 was sent to Brother Phil Parry:

“I have obtained your address off the cover of a Nazarene pamphlet... and I thought I would write to ask if you can help me or even refer me to someone in the U.K. who can.

For the last ten years I have been with the Christadelphians and have recently begun to have some serious misgivings about some of their teachings. I have embarked upon a very comprehensive investigation into these matters and I have discovered with some dismay so far that things are no as they should be. The more I looked for answers, the more I found.

What I would like to ask of you is if you could please send me every booklet, pamphlet, that you can ever lay your hands upon. Anything written by A.L.Wilson, Ernest Brady, F.J.Pearce are the sort of things I am after.

One item I would like especially, if it can be found, is a copy of Edward Turney's lecture “The Sacrifice of Christ” which I suspect contains some very relevant information and hopefully some of the missing pieces to my jigsaw.”

Grant then lists some fifteen titles that he asks if possible to be sent him.

“I do have a copy of E. Brady's “The Truth about Clean Flesh” * from where I got the information so far. Any other would be appreciated... anything at all... in fact, everything. Please help, or refer me to someone who can. I could be fighting for my eternal salvation with this project.

Thanking you in anticipation and the sure return of our Lord. B. Grant Pearce.”

* Now published under the title “What God Hath Cleansed”

All the titles Grant asked for were sent and a few others besides. **Then Grant wrote another very refreshing letter, this time to Sister Helen Brady:**

“I'm not sure who I am talking to here but I am pleased to be able to make contact anyway. Mr Phil Parry on your end of things has just sent me a shipment of gear to read and by jingos it's going to take a fair bit of mowing down by the look at it. Your name was in amongst it on a pamphlet “Come now Let us Reason Together” so I thought I would whack a letter in the mailbag and see if you can get me please some of the things listed below that I so far have been unable to get a boo-peep at.....

About twelve months ago I got to the stage where I was having some very serious misgivings about the show, it seemed to me that there were a lot of things that just did not add up to make a full and complete picture, the pieces just did not seem to fit no matter which way round you tried to make them go....

A small bi-annual publication came into my hands by accident, written by two brethren in Queensland and called “The Small Voice.” In this I found a couple of bits that seemed to fill in a gap or two. I wrote to these and found out quite a bit more... Very recently, after a talk on the telephone, a photocopy of “Outrage on Justice” by one E. Brady came in the mailbox and hence my letter to Parry. I spoke to one of the publishers of Small Voice about this “Outrage on Justice” and

while they certainly agreed about the error of the sin in the flesh and changed nature, and died for Himself bunkum, he was not too sure about "Jesus my Substitute"... and I am not either, and so am searching furiously for more clues whatever and wherever they may be... The brethren of Small Voice belong to a small group of renegades who have the guts to buck the party line and endeavour to point out the errors.... This little meeting is a real pain in Australia because of its magazine and the blues they get going with the hierarchy. They will not shut up and go away, even efforts have been made to try and stop Christadelphians from reading "The Small Voice" and cooperating and meeting with them. The hierarchy have not got any answers because they get mowed down every time and instantly retreat into their respective holes of what some brother said or wrote instead of recourse to the Scriptures and even a little common sense. The established orthodox traditional party line is unassailable and must prevail - blind, deaf and dumb!

During the course of the last twelve months or so I have been able to work out a few things for myself and I have been thrilled to bits when I have been able to find agreement with some one else, and elsewhere in things I find to read searching for clues and simple explanations. I feel I must have anything and everything to assist me in my investigations and so I would like to ask if you can please provide for me the following Nazarene information which I have discovered listed but not yet in my possession and not included in any of Phil's gear even though he sent me as much as he could possibly lay his hands on.

Another twelve titles are listed. In addition Grant gives a list of twenty titles of Nazarene literature already in his possession. He continues:

"You might think that if I have all this already then it should be sufficient for me to sort it all out. Yes, that may very well be true but I must not leave one stone unturned, I must have all the evidence, the arguments and the counter arguments, to solve this project to a stage where I just cannot find out any more. I hope I will be satisfied then...

Kind and sincere Regards, in the search for God's TRUTH. B. Grant Pearce.

Again, all the titles Grant asked for were sent to him. **In his next letter to Brother Phil Parry**, Grant covered much of the same ground as in his letter to Sister Helen, but one paragraph, caught my attention:

"One man I wrote to asking for information... ended up giving me a telling off and that I shouldn't be wasting my time messing about in the past. If I hadn't got to looking into the history to prove what was going on I wouldn't have found out anything at all! Anyway, I'm thrilled to bits with what I have so far, and, one step at a time, if the Lord wills, I hope to work out quite a lot more and see if I can get back on the straight and narrow."

Shortly after these letters, at the request of Brother Phil, I started sending the Circular Letters to Grant which he appreciated very much and asked for all the back numbers. I was only able to send numbers as far back as 104, October 1988. I do have a few older ones and hope to send photocopies of these in due course. In his letter to me Grant said how much he liked the Brady/Barling Debate and asked if he could have an advance copy of the complete debate. (Sorry, Grant, but I hadn't typed it all out at that time). This is now complete and in the next few Circular Letters we shall have various comments as a result of the debate. **To continue with Grant's letter, he writes:**

"The Recorder (of Hobart ecclesia) has advised me to "recant" before they have their next meeting or I would be awarded the dubious Christadelphian honour of a highly commended W.D.F.S (Withdrawal from Fellowship)....

I feel a lot better now, and at ease with myself, confident I'm on the right track, with bits that add in logically and pieces that fit."

The next letter confirms that the Christadelphians of Hobart withdrew from Grant about which he writes:

“How a majority decision could be made upon scant information they had about my crime is beyond me. To disagree with Thomas or Roberts or the Statement of Faith is regarded as high treason and under Christadelphian law obligates the outfit to implement their law of expulsionism to the full. I could have given them more information... but I reckon the outcome was a foregone conclusion anyway...”

More recently, Grant wrote again to Brother Phil Parry:-

“... However, in answer to your concern and query my position is as follows... I cut myself off from the Christadelphians and completely abandoned that name because of their very bad and erroneous, even God-dishonouring teaching concerning their theories about the nature of man and our Lord's nature and sacrifice... I had the mistaken idea that as I “progressed in the truth,” as they call it, I would get the extra info to fill in the gap which I reckoned existed when I was baptised...”

Nazarene, “The Small Voice” and myself are certainly in agreement as far as nature of man is concerned and also in the fact that Jesus Christ's obedience stemmed from His abstinence from sinning (as we can too, if we try hard enough) and not from any so called “half God, half man” special strength theory that Christadelphians have bunkumised themselves with... That is where “Small Voice” agreement ends as they have (I assume) traditional Christadelphian teaching on the resurrection for judgment theory.

After reading Nazarene information upon resurrection and judgment I find I must agree that it is in agreement with the Scriptures.

Because of Christadelphian brainwashing... I had trouble fitting in Jesus as a Substitute and after re-reading much of the information many times I am now satisfied that this is the satisfactory and proper go of the business... what I wish to clarify, however, is that “Small Voice” and Christadelphians object to substitute for the reason that they look at it in the sense of the apostasy’s teaching of it and not in the sense that Nazarene's have it. There is a big difference and distinction between the two and I think told “Small Voice” as well, I think Nazarene’s prove this point rather well when the types of lessons of the sacrifices under the law of Moses are properly connected and defiled flesh bunkum bias is put aside.

Anyway, I intend being re-baptised. God willing, before the end of the year.

Kind Regards and may the Lord come soon. Grant Pearce.”

Next is from a letter to Brother Harold Dawson; a few more lines from Grant:

“...I started writing to the Nazarene Fellowship when I checked up on an address... from a booklet that got sent to me accidentally by someone from “Old Paths” in Melbourne. This man just doesn't know what he's done and praise the Lord, it has opened up a whole new world.... If E. Brady and F. Pearce and others hadn't been giving the Christadelphians the run around, I don't know where I would have ended up.... I reckon I have sorted out the truth from the rot...”

Thanks and Kind Regards. Grant Pearce.

Most of us gained our knowledge of the Scriptures while we were with the Christadelphians and are grateful for it, but we learned more than our teachers there, for we were taught of God. We saw the truth regarding the atonement, present forgiveness of sins, immortal resurrection for the faithful but we were

mystified when our friends would not listen to us and they quickly became unfriendly.

These letters from Grant Pearce highlight our responsibility to keep our lamps burning brightly and held up high. If we don't who will? We know of no one but ourselves. Surely this is our reasonable service "for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works lest any man should boast, for we are His workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." 2 Ephesians 8-10.

Sister Evelyn goes on to mention Brother Grant Pearce whom she has now written to... "Grant Pearce reminds me of how I was wanting every bit of information on the subject of our differences with the Christadelphians that I could get hold of and I kept going over the literature time and again."

July 1995: -

It is very pleasing to hear again from Brother Grant Pearce who writes:

"I am going over the information again concerning the what's and the why's of our Lord's sacrifice and one thing is for sure, I am very wary of terminology that cannot be immediately and simply matched and lined up with the Scriptures. I am very concerned about this aspect of my investigations because it is a phenomena that sadly occurs on both sides of the fence and brothers and sisters mustn't do it! The so called experts in the field of Christadelphia had a very bad habit of speaking above their listeners, baffling them and everybody else with their own brilliance. I can well remember listening to Bible studies and addresses and wondering to myself, how did the speaker come to that assumption/ conclusion?... and I urge all those from now on who would teach others to be sure they speak strictly in scriptural terms, avoiding at all times Christadelphianisms / jargon...- "

Grant goes on to say how he feels it is so wrong of anyone to "withdraw" from another -

"In my opinion this is wrong. We are brothers and sisters till kingdom come and just because we will not accept the words of a man or creed does not give one the right to be judgmental... In typical judgmental fashion after the tradition of the elders I used to be hard hearted and hard-nosed, too. I have mellowed a lot now and would like to think have learnt a lot since and as a result of my investigations and much of the information that had been sent to me. For which I am very grateful and thankful that there are many many brothers and sisters who are prepared to make the effort.... It would be good if someone else here in Tasmania would see the light... and I would have someone I could spar with face to face! It has been a hard slog in very doubtful and unknown waters at times but thank the Lord I have been able to see clear water ahead in quite a number of areas. I feel a lot better now and more confident that the chains and shackles of tradition are gone and one can use his own brain to think for himself instead of bowing allegiance to a creed and words of man....

Best Wishes and King Regards to all, your brother, Grant Pearce.

I am sure we all feel a certain identity (may I say 'feel empathy'?) with Grant in his views, especially regarding the terminology which all too often is used to baffle rather than enlighten. This is a very serious point and one we must all guard against. As the Apostle Paul, when writing about the speaking with tongues, says; "In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." - 1 Corinthians 14:19. It seems to me Paul's words apply just as much to the use of little understood terminology as to the speaking in unknown tongues.

Regarding the matter of withdrawing from anyone, this becomes impossible where there is no Creed or Statement of Faith, and 1 John 2:19 applies;- “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us:...”

- Russell.

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May 1996: - Letter from Grant Pearce to the Logos magazine : -

“Cry Aloud, Spare Not, Show My People Their Transgressions”

Dear Brother (Logos), I got your enquiry the other day re payment for Logos and for which I must explain I did not personally authorize any subscription.

It began arriving quite some time ago for some peculiar reason after your Church had excommunicated me and forbade me from associating with the brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ under due Christadelphian tradition of process and standing orders and regulation for the operation of your organization.

I would like to, because of these unscriptural regulations, claim that I have been as your brother most unfairly treated in this system of expulsionism, and along with many other brothers and sisters who have suffered similar, been done a very grievous wrong.

Not only that, but I feel that any religion that expulsionates and expels its members for the sole reason that they will not accept and bow obeisance to the words of men because they cannot find such in the Scriptures of Truth, should jerk itself into gear and have a good look at what is happening.

My right of conscientious objection I exercise because I cannot subscribe to the notions and theories of men as a prerequisite for fellowship so called by your religion, as detailed in your creed the B.A.S.F. and its addendum.

The enforced unscriptural phrases, terminology and straightout jargon as used, and seemingly to be forever perpetuated, by your organization is deplorable. Furthermore, for a group of people who do read their Bibles and are of usually better than average intelligence, to go on accepting this bunk, just like possums dazzled in a spotlight, illustrates simply how much they have not looked into these disputed matters for themselves. Indeed, they do not think for themselves, but instead follow standing orders and tradition of your organization, Just like members of other Churches, without question. As soon as the conscientious objector turns up to argue the toss, they are promptly given the ho if they will not recant, and not through recourse to the Scriptures but according to what some brother or writer said or claimed was the correct theory.

No doubt, dear brother, you have been told all this before, but I feel it is my duty to “Cry Aloud” and provide you with some information about this situation.

In 1985 I was baptised in Riverton, New Zealand, into the Christadelphian Church and certainly not into any B.A.S.F. or creed. I can remember having heard about it but had never sighted it until I came across it in the bottom drawer of a retired Recorder.

Sometime later when I began to wonder about your organization’s terminology and that I could not find it in my Bible, I began to feel some deception had been whacked over everybody by those with the influence and the power to decide who should be allowed to meet with the brothers and sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When I looked seriously at what we are supposed to believe in the B.A.S.F. and other material, there was much that could not be easily and simply as a little child be demonstrated from the Scriptures. Indeed, some of the passages quoted supposedly to support some clauses of the B.A.S.F. for meaning and intent, never even touched upon the subject let alone explain them. Have you noticed this aspect dear brother?? Can a little child explain such?? NO WAY! Confusion confounded!

Doesn't our Lord say the yoke is easy and the burden light? Why this complicated legalistic journalistic terminology dear brother? I have been disappointed and deceived by your organization in that it used such as a weapon to give the conscientious objector the ho.

This situation perpetuated by your religion is very wrong, dear brother, and because of mistakes made early in your history, uncorrected is one of the reasons why there is continual trouble,

Let me tell you another more important reason... When God said "it is not in man to direct his steps," He means just that. What is more, He also instructed the Prophet to write, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for where of is he to be accounted of..." To the Psalmist He commended "Put not your trust in princes or in the son of man in whom there is no help," and, "there is a way that seemeth right to a man..." etc.

Now this is only some of why God sent His Son to show to man, the true and living way and what is more there is not one instance in the Scriptures where He asked counsel of man. You know that! And yet how did Israel of old and Christadelphians today try and solve their problems? A question asked at a Bible class or of the editors... not by recourse to the Scripture for an answer, but instead, to the appropriate Pioneer works. And accepted without question for decades and generations of brothers and sisters as a faithful and reliable solution.

The very last magazine of Logos has an example of this in the letters section where we are referred to Robert Roberts, "Law of Moses." Conspicuously that issue of Logos had seventeen pages that contained either directly or indirectly alluding to other writers of pre-eminence. What is wrong with addressing your problems to the Father of light?? The Provider of the Light that gives knowledge of God and all His ways?? Knowledge of man that he may know himself and the purpose for his creation, and wonderfully so.

God asked men in all ages, Israel, Christadelphians, brothers and sisters, TO ASK HIM FIRST!!! And yet in our very hands is record of man's refusal to do so, and what is more, the dreadful consequences.

Sadly, the Christadelphians in all factions have utterly failed in this regard, even myself on many occasions failed to heed the rigid but simple instruction of God concerning the very source where wisdom dwells and where the ultimate in knowledge and blessing is to be found, the Bible, not the mistakes of the Pioneers.

"Ye shall seek me and ye shall find me when ye search for me with all your heart" Where? "Light is shown for them that seek peace... In Thy light we shall see light."

Surely dear brother, time is long overdue, and wisdom directs that we seek in the place where divine light shines with all its POWER.

A blind leader of the blind and heretic, is the label you place upon me as a conscientious objector to your creed, which is polluted with the Catholic doctrine Original Sin, as accepted sadly and misguidedly by the organization of your Church and with never a thought for your own position that there may be something wrong, and the very reason for the problems Brethren Thomas and Roberts made some tragic mistakes and which cannot be sustained from Scripture, but I doubt if your traditional instruction originating from them can be altered by a burnt out bushie telling you so.

Christadelphians make my heart ache and I cry aloud that some one within the organization can find the guts to attempt to correct things before it is too late.

And yes, I would like to continue to receive Logos. It is the only contact I have with any Christadelphians and I know you will send it to me even though I would not like to pay for it as it supports the out of kilter foundation established and built upon since the beginnings of your organization over a century ago.

I remain your brother, B.G.Pearce.

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January 1997: - The following letter is from our Brother Grant Pearce who writes in his own inimitable way:-

Dear Russell, Thank you for all the info and literature that has been sent throughout the year. This must be a mammoth task and you must be getting a bit sick of it by now. I know what it is like sitting here trying to get a page done by two-fingerism, let alone write a whole book and the C.L.s as well.

Firstly I would like to draw your attention to the last two or three pages in the final part of your reprint of "The Ecclesias of God Down the Ages and Today" (Stallworthy and Wille).

Now it is my opinion now after much research that this angle is very relevant to all the Brothers and Sisters in Christ today, and a point that all should consider.

It appears to me that organizations, institutions, democratically elected hierarchy and political humbug and tomfoolery of such institutional intentions by way of creeds, confessions and statements of faith and B.A.S.Fism, etc, was not the indications of the Scriptures.

During my previous jaunt with the Christadelphians, and of experience too by yourself I bet, there was the execution of Christadelphian standing orders via Christadelphian democracyship; the majority always wins even if it is wrong and for the wrong reasons.

The innocent party maybe was legislated against, etc. etc., rules made and put into effect and the Arranging Brothers went happily on their ways patting each one on the back 'we hauled that bloke over brother, that'll teach him to get the stitch with us, it's in the rule book set out by the founding fathers and ain't we done a good job in the name of the Master...'

Oh yes, I thought to myself, where says so in the Scriptures of truth?

I remember one time, the Hobart Christadelphian Ecclesia suggested as per scriptural example "the drawing of lots" for direction of business and election of hierarchy, for lack of resolve or confidence maybe, the matter lapsed. Maybe it didn't like the chance that "Providence" for want of a better word, might provide them with a king not to their liking and not of comely feature and stature... or maybe the decision that ole bushie Pearce might be allowed to stay in the meeting when his heretical and heinous crime being his claim that clauses 5-12 of the B.A.S.F, was a cartload of bunk! Like Ernest Brady, I too could write a book of the days of our lives of Christadelphery, and like Ernest Brady, too, it would all be best left unsaid and left to the dusty archives of our lifelong experiences in memory. I too, I hope am a little wiser...

In connection with the reprint aforementioned, sometime ago I got a letter and a small booklet (poor photocopy enclosed) from a Sister and so I determined to copy it best I could before it was returned to her. I thought the theme of it was very good and an aspect that should be given a fair

bit of thought by the brothers and sisters, and closely connected to Stallworthy and Wille points made.

It was noted of course, that the author was tainted with standard Christadelphian indoctrinations human sacrifice of Christ, sin in the flesh, and unable to be obedient, and evil and obnoxious to its Creator naturism, and a couple of odd things about the devil which I can't remember at this moment.

However, I think it proves the point that Sister Helen Brady made to me some time ago, that only two or three brothers and sisters here and there may be the real ones who make up the true ecclesia. Anyway see if you can decipher the copy - sorry it's so poor but the bowevils got into the middle of it and ate the centre out of the middle pages which is a pity. I know of an old bloke in Melbourne who was Old Paths librarian but I don't think he would have a copy anyway.

I am pleased you were able to fire a shot at the Logos machine. I reckon they've got a cheek and more front than the Commonwealth Bank. Their misrepresentation and misinformation and lack of facts is deplorable. It appears to me their info must have come from the Christadelphian magazine, and even then they've got that muddled. Clean flesh is not Nazarene but an epithet termed years later by C.C.Walker referring to Brother John Bell of Australia early this century. Of course their minions will never know any better because no one is allowed to debate them through their magazine. Such is democracy and organization and institutionalism of the Christadelphian phenomena!

I wrote the editor some time ago and while he did not reply to it personally, one of his workers did, not even touching on any of the questions or criticisms rendered at them and their doctrines. The conscientious objector is just of no account. Never mind, it's a long road that ain't got a bend in her ole mate...

The Logos Editorial for December made me wild again too, and I reckon they'll have to get another flea in their ear about that. Their pathetic bleatings about the B.A.S.F. and consequent threatenings about members who break vows in this connection before God are nothing short of intimidation.

I was baptized after an interview with a cow-cockie, a retired railway fitter, a stock and station agency branch manager, two sheep farmers and a auto-motive electrician, all well-read of the Scriptures and of reasonable intelligence and brains. I told them the way I saw it, orally - no written bunk or anything like that. At the conclusion one of them exclaimed he was surprised at what I did know about certain things and aspects of their doctrines. This B.A.S.F. bunk I never came across until while clearing out a drawer of a retiring and transferring Recorder. Even before this there was some grey areas in my knowledge that I could never seem to get the pieces to fit. One thing led to another and the ferocious thirst for more information and come flood or famine I wasn't going to back down and the rest is history.

While still not sure about some things I committed Christadelphian high-treason and informed them some of their teachings was bunk! Then excommunicated for telling them the truth! See what I mean about the majority that cast me out being wrong!

A New Zealand brother that baptized me rang up in a flap after my heinous crime had been advertised (another Christadelphian crime - advertise the sin of another...) for all the world to see and wanted to know what in the earth I'd done. When I told him he was shocked and said, "Oh well, the Lord will judge." I thought he might have went in to bat for me. "An Australian problem" he said... so much for democracy and organization. Such is the blind and defeatist attitude we are all familiar with via Christadelphia. Don't make waves or rock the silly lookin' boat, doesn't matter if the kings got no clothes on, I told Hobart the condemned nature business was bunk and that our nature is as God made it for His good plan and purpose, as in the beginning; for good or for evil, choice and freewill, either God's ways or...??? and that the world about us is still perfect for just that, and that I see multitudes of wonderful things everyday. Oh no, they says,

it is all corruption and decaying; take skin of an apple and it begins to turn brown and corrupt. So what says I? That's the way it was made to be in the beginning. Christadelphia - a wonder of the world!

Kind Regards, Russell and all the gang, Grant Pearce.

We continue our correspondence with Brother Grant Pearce regarding his views on the Atonement. Although he has written very extensively in his previous letters, I feel his letter, which follows mine to him, is concise and covers all the main points of his views:

My letter dated 2nd October 2000 ;-

Dear Grant, Greetings in Jesus' Great Name. I have been meaning to write to you for a long time now and at last have settled down to write this short note.

I enjoy your writings and can sympathize with your views up to point. No one wants to think of Jesus Christ having to die in our place, and if we can find some other reason for His crucifixion then we must do so. However, the one serious point on which I differ is where you suggest that if Jesus took the sin of the world upon Himself then He became polluted and therefore unfit for a sacrifice.

But let me start with Adam in Eden. When he sinned, an animal was slain to provide a covering for his sin. This is substitution. The animal died instead of Adam. It also provided, in symbol, the necessary covering for his sin. This was also a type of a future reality. Genesis 3:15 - "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Sacrifices constituted the very core of Old Testament teaching and the fundamental idea of sacrifice is that of substitution. Indeed, all the sacrifices for sin the Old Testament were symbolic and typical, and all sinners are saved by the substitution of the One to whom they pointed - Jesus Christ - who was not a sinner.

The laying on of hands, heavily on the sin offering was done to symbolically convey or transfer the offerer's sins to the victim to be slain. Likewise in Isaiah 53 we read "and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

The very purpose of and reason for Atonement (or Mercy-Seat - covering over) is that God looks upon the covering instead of that which is covered over. Thus one substitutes for the other and so we find that substitution is the very essence of sacrifice. In the Old Testament the Mercy Seat covered over the Law which condemned the sinner to death. In like manner in the New Testament, the Covering - Jesus Christ - is accepted by God in the place of the sinner - whose sins are forgiven by Christ. He is our propitiation or Mercy-Seat - 1 John 2:2 and 4:10. Jesus became the perfect Substitute and the perfect Mediator and perfect High Priest in Heaven - Hebrews 10.

God declared to Moses what should be the acceptable sacrifice under the Law, knowing what was to follow when His Beloved Son gave His life for us to fulfil that Law. God did not offer His own Son in sacrifice neither did He kill Him. The parable of the Householder in Matthew 21:33 - 39 confirms who killed Jesus.

Perhaps I shall write more on this subject in the next Circular Letter. Until then I will send my love and best wishes in the Lord, Russell.

* * *

In reply to the above Brother Grant wrote the following letter, dated 14th October 2000

Dear Russell, Thank you for your note and can I reply too with a short comment. You mention Adam and the sacrifice that was made to cover his sin. It was here we observe and learn of very first exhibition of the character of the unchanging, always the same, Almighty God, and his infinite mercy and forbearance as a loving Father.

Adam's sin was forgiven exactly as a loving father would treat his son or daughter today. A lesson was learned by Adam but not without some penalty being imposed in that he was removed from the Garden to different conditions and circumstances outside, etc.

Here is Stage One enacted and fulfilled in a huge 'Human Resources and Property Development encompassing the whole of Creation where the Great Architect, Designer and Civil Engineer, knowing the Beginning and the End from its inception and in full control of the Great Plan which would extend forward into the future for a period which would take some 7000 years...; for the multiplication of the people He had created and for the replenishment of the Earth which had just previously been in darkness and lifeless.

A plan that would go forth and be fulfilled stage by stage just like the multi-hectare subdivisions on the western suburbs of Melbourne. Detailed clearly in the Scriptures is an ongoing historical account of the Creation development for its culmination when those believers who by testing and trial and for development of character, have been sufficiently moulded and shaped and scraped and polished just like precious stones to make up what the Great Architect's Revelation describes as "jewels in the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven." This is the ultimate end of the Architect, Designer and Engineer of all things. Stage by stage, piece by piece it would all be built and developed with not one thing not done that was to be done. John 1:1-3.

As to Adam's sin, I say, "So what?" He was on trial for the development of character and testing. It was no more heinous or wicked than those of King David and yet an all loving and merciful Father forgave both of them beyond measure. The death sentence in both cases and in God's infinite mercy as a loving father was remitted absolutely. When God forgives, He does just that. End of story.

Yet what a heap of ostracism and scorn and blame and the fabrication of absolute fables that have confused and deceived has been put upon poor Adam down through the ages. Who dare say that our first parent Adam, will not be in the Kingdom? There is no such thing as a debt that must be paid 4000 years later or that a loving Heavenly Father required satisfaction" by a man's death for the infringement of His Law. Adam's sin was forgiven. Any claim to the contrary is a denial and slander of the loving merciful character of our God - Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18, Psalm 86:15, Look at Psalm 103!!!

Right from the beginning we note the principle - recognition of sin by the offender. Then comes repentance, reparation and amends; afterwards comes forgiveness and atonement.

I remember writing before how atonement is a state of mind, a mental and moral condition of well-being and of good conscience before God and nothing anywhere near the complicated gobbledegook mistakenly written by brethren and the churches. What is it that God requires of His sons and daughters? - "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise" Psalm 51:17.

What did the animal offerings portray? Here we find in the law that the emphasis was in the selection of the animal, not the slaying. Everything that blood touched became holy. The lesson being that the offerer was saying in his mind - "From now on I must dedicate my whole being, heart, mind, body and soul, completely to the service of God. This is true atonement. Romans 12:1. Micah 6:6-8.

In other words, the entire life of the believer, not only the Jew of those times, but the believer today, just like Jesus' life was a living offering. The offerings represented holiness and righteousness, doing what is right and the offerer setting himself apart as a servant, just like Jesus did. This is the sweet smell savour that ascends to the Most High. This is the true Burnt Offering that is pleasing to God. A Jew will tell you that sacrificial blood represents life given in dedication in service to God, never death.

Furthermore nowhere in Scripture can we find that sin, either symbolically, representatively, or in type, is put on or in the offerings. Such a tenet would have defiled it. What is more, sin offerings were detested by God. Proverbs 21:3, Isaiah 1:16,17, Jeremiah 7:23, 1 Samuel 15:22.

Only the free-will voluntary offerings (even the believers in this day and age "doing thy will O God") arose as a sweet smell savour. These are the Burnt Offerings - Rom. 12:1.

The Lord Jesus Christ being the antitypical true Burnt Offering, "Lo I come to do Thy will O God" and so He did and turning the other cheek, suffering the evil until it killed Him. He indeed was the anti-typical *Olah* or 'continually ascending offering.'

Did Jesus' murderous death on a Roman torture stake arise a sweet smell? No way! What does Scripture say? "...and there was darkness over the whole land."

Any tenet of "sacrificial death" or "expiatory" sacrifice for something Adam did or owed is Church doctrine and we should avoid it like the plague. This tenet has its origin in paganism.

Kind Regards. Grant Pearce.

* * *

My comments in "Who Killed Jesus Christ" were prompted in part by this correspondence and are in some way a response to Grant.

Brother Grant would welcome the views and comments of other readers and says he "will hold on to his present views until defeated by Scripture"!

Since these letters, Brother Grant has sent me another ten page article explaining his views in greater detail. This article is available to anyone who wishes to have a copy. (Sadly, this article has been mislaid but I am still hopeful of finding it and will make it available - RVG)

Russell Gregory.

Brother Eric Cave writes:-

Dear Russell, Further to your correspondence with Brother Grant Pearce. My attention was caught by the following paragraph in his letter wherein he makes certain claims:

"Furthermore nowhere in Scripture can we find that sin, either symbolically, representatively, or in type, is put on or in the offering, such a tenet would have defiled it. What is more, sin offerings were detested by God."

On the contrary, **1.** Sin is symbolically put upon a sacrifice, **2.** It does not defile the sacrifice, and **3,** the sacrifice is not detested by God,

To support his claims brother Grant offers the following passages:-

(a) Proverbs 21:3, “To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to YHWH than sacrifice.”

(b) Isaiah 1:16,17, “Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before your eyes, cease to do evil, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.”

(c) Jeremiah 7:23, “But this thing commanded I them, saying, obey my voice and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you that it may be well unto you.”

(d) 1 Samuel 15:22, “Samuel said, Hath YHWH as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of YHWH? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

Only two of the above quotations even mention the word sacrifice, and neither of those mention sacrifices for sin. None of them mention the word defile, or anything to do with God’s detestation. Brother Grant says that he will hold on to his views until defeated by Scripture. Let us see what Scripture says.

The specific chapter which appertains to sin offerings is Leviticus 4 which describes the occasions when a sin has been committed by 1), an anointed priest (verse 3); 2), the whole congregation (verse 13); 3), one of the rulers (verse 22); and 4), one of the common people (verse 27). In every case the sinner, the priest, or the elder of the people on their behalf, or the ruler, or the individual sinner among the common people was required to lay his or their hands upon the head of the animal presented for sacrifice before it was slain.

The same necessity to lay hands on the animal of the herd or the flock for a burnt offering, Leviticus 1:4, or a peace offering, Leviticus 3:2, applied and any Jew will confirm that the symbolism transferred the guilt of the offerer to the animal which was slain instead of the sinner. The burnt offerings and peace offerings whether by individuals or daily in Temple worship memorialised that divine mercy extended to Adam when he yielded himself servant to Sin together with all in his loins, but was spared the penalty of death that day and permitted to live out his natural span when He slew that lamb or lambs whose skins were fashioned by the angel into flesh covering ‘*kathonahs*.’ The flesh of the sin offerings was specifically required to be eaten by the priests, Leviticus 6:25, “Speak unto Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the sin offering. In the place where the burnt offering is killed shall the sin offering be killed before YHWH. It is most holy. The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, In the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.”

Does YHWH Instruct his anointed priests to eat defiled and detested flesh brother Grant?

And there is more. When John the Baptist began to preach, we read, “Then went out to him all Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, confessing their sins” (Matthew 3:5,6). They went to John burdened with sin, desirous of having those burdens washed away into Jordan. They arose from the water cleansed from sin. Verse 8, even Pharisees and Sadducees amongst them but who failed to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. But what a difference when Jesus came to John without any burden of sin, without any inherited alienation by reason of having been in Adam’s loins when Adam sinned, His life came direct from God, not by the will of the flesh. John Baptist saw and protested “I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest thou to me?” So why did Jesus say, “Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”?

There is only one possible explanation. Jesus went down Into Jordan and took to Himself those burdens that the people had cast off. He arose clothed upon with the iniquities of the people which He carried to Calvary 3Vi years later. “YHWH hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” “He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” “But now once in the end of the

world (Greek *aion* = age. the Jewish dispensation) hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” “And he is the propitiation (mercy seat) for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”

“Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.” Before the ministry began, before one single miracle had been performed to confirm the truth of the gospel message we have this remarkable parable, this sign of the divine purpose In providing an only begotten Son to take away the sin of the world, a work which began when He took our sins upon Himself by baptism and completed at Calvary.

Brother Grant is correct when he says that sin cannot be put into an offering but wrong when he says that it cannot be put on an offering, It can and was. Alleluia, Praise be to YHWH.

Brother Eric Cave.

* * *

Brother Phil Parry also writes in response to Brother Grant Pearce:-

Dear Russell, Warmest Greetings in Jesus' Name. I found Bro. Grant Pearce's comments on Adam's sin very surprising and a little confusing. He writes: "As to Adam's sin, I say, So what? He was on trial for the development of character and testing. It was no more heinous or wicked than those of king David and yet an all loving and merciful Father forgave them both beyond measure. The death sentence in both cases and in God's infinite mercy as a loving Father was remitted absolutely. When God forgives, He does just that. End of story."

I have to disagree with Grant's statement "remitted absolutely," for in fact a life was taken by the shedding of blood of a lamb, not for the provision of meat for sustenance (the trees of the garden were for this purpose), but for a covering of the sin or figurative nakedness before God of Adam and Eve and foreshadowing one who would give His life to cover their debt (forfeiture of life) to the violated law. God is seen therefore to be just and the Justifier of those who believe in the antitype Jesus. God provided the lambs and the coverings, it was for Adam and Eve to put them on and receive atonement.

This lesson of faith in the Grace of God continued even to Moses.

Grant should first consider therefore the beginning of the story and the central figure of God's plan and purpose, and not rule out what he appears to be doing, that is redemption and atonement first, through the blood of Christ, from personal sin in Adam's case and Federal sin in our case. Personal forgiveness is when related to God by faith under whichever dispensation we live. And yes, in this relationship when God forgives, He does just that, as Brother Grant says. I ask him then to consider Leviticus 17:11, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls for it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul."

It did this typically for Adam and Eve, any digression later from God's way depended on forgiveness in the Love and Mercy of God.

It is impossible to ignore the words of Jesus in Matthew 20:28 "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. This refers to past, present and future.

We are told by the Apostle, "It was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin," also that though sins were confessed under the rituals of the Law, a remembrance of sins was made every year, this signifying that sins had not been taken away absolutely, but must be ratified

by human blood. Hence the Apostle's words to the Hebrews chapter 9 and especially verse 15, "And for this cause he is the mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption (or purchase) of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." 1 Timothy 2:6 and 2 Timothy 1:9,10.

Brother Phil Parry.

Further to the article published in our last C.L. Brother Grant Pearce wrote the following letter; however, I would point out that at the time of writing he had not seen the above letters:-

At the conclusion of my note (See C.L.186, page 11) I asked the question, "Did the Lord Jesus' murderous death on a Roman torture stake arise as a sweet smell savour" to His heavenly Father? The Great God of Israel with significant attributes of Himself of infinite mercy and extending forgiveness to thousands. A loving Father of His Beloved Son, who was holy, harmless and undefiled, whom He led by the hand and with whom He was well pleased... was this abominable incident what a loving Father wanted, to be 'satisfied' before He would extend mercy and condescend to mortal man? An incident our religious teachers termed a 'sacrificial death,' or 'in sacrificial death,' an 'expiatory sacrifice'? Was this what a loving merciful God of the wonderful attributes listed above wanted in contradiction, when He previously expressly forbid any form of human sacrifice and abhorred such as abomination, not once asking for, nor requiring and warning Israel against it... EVER? That our loving heavenly Father actually required this grotesque spectacle of His dearly beloved only Son, a mangled tortured body hanging on a Roman torture stake?

Such an idea is preposterous, insane, defames and slanders the name of God and tears Psalm 103 completely out of the Bible! It is paganism of the worst kind.

Does not Scripture say "YOU, you Jews killed the Prince of Life? "...and there was darkness over the whole land"? There has to be a better answer.

Yet this grotesque tenet is the basis of the Christian world today. The emphasis being on the death of a man hanging on a Roman torture stake. Was this what a loving merciful God wanted before He would be satisfied? No, No, No, a thousand times No'

The point is a foreordained plan was in operation, stage by stage, set by set, proven by the fact that John 1:1-3 precedes Genesis 1 and verified by Ephesians 1:5-9, "we were chosen before the foundation of the world" God simply allowed the wickedness of man in its enormity to prevail as a further stage in the progression of the Divine Plan.

Jesus died because He would not deny His faith, turning the other cheek, suffering the evil until it killed Him, setting His face like flint towards Jerusalem, Isaiah 50:5-9, knowing full well a terrible end awaited there; for the purpose of bringing many sons to glory. Was Jesus a sacrificial offering "instead of us" as a representative or even a substitute or was He the PATTERN man, that we should walk in His steps?

It was His life of sacrifice which Paul said He presented to God as OLAH; the continually ascending burnt offering in figure on our behalf. Why was it needful on our behalf? Because God said He would give Him for a Covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles. That is saying that a LIFE of sacrifice - yielding to God His most prized possession which is life, heart, mind, body and soul, was completely dedicated, devoted to God.

In Leviticus 27:29 we read, "None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall, surely be put to death." Jesus voluntarily devoted His LIFE in sacrifice to God; it was a freewill offering, but being devoted for a cause it could not be terminated at the wish of the offerer.

It must be put to death. Not sacrificially slain as set out at the beginning of the burnt sacrifice, but put to death; into the ground, it remains alone, but if it die it brings forth much fruit.” That is saying plainly the achievement of the presentation of the OLAH, which needful in itself benefitted no-one until the offerer died.

I John 3:16, Ephesians 5:2 and Romans 12:1 precisely refer to Jesus’ Life of sacrifice; presenting an example for us to follow. 1 John 3:36 relates specifically to laying down His LIFE in service on our behalf, even as a soldier lays down his life for King and country - die if need be, but that is beside the point being discussed.

Both Ephesians 5:2 and Romans 12:1 are examples to follow in offering ourselves to God as a burnt sacrifice, the *OLAH* the continually ascending offering, the sweet smell savour. John 10:17,18 applies to every one of us, we can please ourselves what we do with our lives, offer it to God or use it for our own self; the reward will be for service rendered, either to self or to God. Each of us is required to lay down our lives for our brethren, not to gain something for ourselves which is erroneously claimed in some quarters Jesus did (“He did it for Himself that it might be for us”). God will reward us for our labour in His vineyard.

Dedicated LIFE, devoted LIFE of the sacrifices under the law, the animals, for the poor, the turtle doves, or as little as the half *ephar* of fine flour, Jesus life, our lives... YES! Expiatory sacrificial death...NO! The emphasis that is placed upon the death of the offering is wrong and leads us into terrible danger; it is church doctrine and we must get rid of it out of our thinking. What is the atoning factor in the offerings? The dead lamb or the contrite, repentant heart, soul and mind of the offerer? The answer is obvious

Kindest Regards, Russell, and sorry to be so argy bargy, I must speak my mind now.

Brother Grant.

* * *

In response to the above letter I wrote to Brother Grant on the 7th January as follows:-

Dear Brother Grant, Greetings in Jesus’ Great Name. We all feel that the murder of Jesus Christ on Calvary was an abhorrent evil and we wish there had been some other way, however, Jesus Himself knew there was no other way to save God-fearing sons of Adam when He said “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.” While the killing was totally undeserved, Jesus’ willingness to save His dying kinsmen reveals His great love towards us reflecting perfectly that of His Father’s.

When Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden with the possibility of eternal life as the reward for keeping God’s Law perfectly, it seems evident that even the smallest misdemeanour would disqualify them. God is perfect in all His ways and if they were to aspire to share eternity with Him then perfect obedience was the necessary part of their probation. So it was that when Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden tree it disqualified them from their reward of eternal life. They had not been told they would be offered forgiveness; they had been told the penalty - “in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” However, in the event of disobedience the penalty of dying that day was not imposed on them but an animal was slain which provided them with a covering. I believe this has two aspects. Not only a covering for their sin but also a covering for their bodies as a constant reminder of their sin and need of God’s mercy and loving kindness as day by day they wore those garments. Yet even though their sin was covered over and they were forgiven, the sin was not yet taken away.

We read in the letter to the Hebrews (9:22) that there is no forgiveness of sins without the shedding of blood. All the sacrifices for sin from the time of Adam up to the time of Jesus were only a covering over of sins, a temporary arrangement; for we are again told that the blood of animals can

never take away sin. (Hebrews 10:4). However, Jesus came to take away the sin of the world. That is the difference - in Jesus Christ, sin is not covered over but taken away. Hence because Jesus took away sin it is through Him alone that forgiveness is given. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12).

Going on to the book of Revelation we are told that Jesus was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8). In what way was He the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world? The answer I believe is that Jesus died because Adam didn't.

To explain further - it was in the Father's plan from the beginning that Jesus should take away Adam's sin, and with this in mind God allowed Adam to live out his days, in which time Adam also passed on life to his posterity. In effect, ever since the events in the Garden of Eden sin has been forgiven through Jesus Christ, for by the grace of God we are all concluded under the sin of Adam, and thereby we can have forgiveness through the one offering of Jesus Christ. However much we wish there was some other way than for Jesus to suffer, I very reluctantly can't see how there could have been.

A further comment regarding your point about human sacrifice being abhorrent to God, this was and is indeed the case but the main reason is that no one else could redeem his brother, no one else could purchase us to God, no one else could give his life a ransom for others. No one else could take away our sins and offer us forgiveness. Only Jesus was free to do this for us and this was due to His Sonship. Any other human sacrifice was a useless murder and waste of human life. At the very best, the deaths of martyrs such as Stephen's - Acts 7:59,60, "And they stoned Stephen, calling on the name of the Lord saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he fell asleep," were not pleasing to God, though they are a witness to God's love and grace. All such as these will receive greater reward as Hebrews 11 tells us.

You also say that sin offerings were detested by God, but this was not always so. The ones that were detested were those made without any change of heart, performed merely as a ritual ceremony. There was no reason why God should want or accept these offerings which were not performed in the right spirit. It was the response in people's hearts and minds to a loving Father that He longed to see and which, in these cases, was not forthcoming. Little wonder that God detested them.

You say you "will hold on to my present views until defeated by Scripture." I wonder, do you feel any of the Scriptures used above go any way to defeating your view? I look forward to hearing from you.

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (Proverbs 27:17).

May we be such friends in the Lord Jesus, Russell Gregory.
