

Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 146

January/ February 1994

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Editorial

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Oh! How this world needs the Lord Jesus Christ! Everywhere we look we see disasters. Besides the natural disasters, which are terrible enough, we have man-made disasters; we see the collapse of moral standards; authority counts for very little and rulers are unable to rule effectively.

There was a time of darkness in Israel, when the authority of the priesthood failed, when "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judges 21:25). This state of affairs was ended by God sending Samuel to be their Judge and Priest who ruled for Him, establishing law and order once more. Samuel was the last of the Judges and the first of the Prophets (except for Moses), besides being a Priest. Towards the end of his life he was authorised by God to anoint the first King of Israel who should have built on all the good things that Samuel had done in restoring the Kingdom to God; but King Saul failed.

Let us pray daily that God will end the present sad state of affairs by sending His Son, our Saviour, the greatest Prophet, Priest, King and Judge so that He will restore the Kingdom, in order that God's will may be done in the earth as it is now done in heaven. Even so, Come quickly, Lord Jesus,

My Sincere Love to all, your brother in the Master's service, Russell Gregory.

From your letters:

Brother Leo Dreifuss writes - "Now concerning the letters to the Circular Letter, we cannot agree on everything, if we did the world would be absolutely boring; not worth living. We must agree on essentials, such as the sacrifice of Christ, how He ransomed us from being servants to sin by giving His own free life in His blood. Some elementary understanding of the signs of the times, the return of the Jews to Palestine, men's hearts failing them for fear, the general degeneration of moral standards, etc., etc. But when it comes to controversial subjects, such as Ezekiel's Temple vision, I suggest we let each side have their say and then bring it to an end. It is when they drag on too long that ill feeling might be caused. People may read it like "Oh, on about that again." And let us have practical exhortations... Most of mine are based on the following pattern: some event of Bible history or some prophecy briefly summarised, followed by drawing conclusions of what we can learn from it and how to apply it to our everyday lives."

Brother Leo's letter is typical of others where similar thoughts have been expressed. Another writer says, "In my view the Circular Letter is to keep us in touch with each other and to exhort and edify us, giving us comfort and help when we need it. I enjoy reading the thoughts of brethren and sisters. It is very difficult when one lives alone and there are so few people these days who wish to talk about the Bible, so please let us have discussions - but if we can't agree then let the subject be dropped..."

So after this Circular Letter we will drop the subject of Ezekiel's Temple but as Sister Evelyn Linggood has written at length on the subject we will let her have the last word...

"Dear Russell, your Dad was right to believe that there will be a literal temple at Jerusalem in the future (this in answer to my letter to her), and there is proof to be had from the Scriptures if looked for, but first of all I will say that we believe that Revelation 21 relates to post Millennial times when "God shall be all in all, " and this is why we think so - it follows naturally on from the last judgment of chapter 20; there will be no more sea (of nations) and verses 3 & 4 tell us that God Himself dwells with men and there will be no more death.

Jesus said, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending - it couldn't be the ending until Christ hands over all authority to God His Father again, also, in the 12th verse we see Christ's Bride fully developed inclusive of all the 12 tribes of the children of Israel (the saints are of the tribe of Judah as belonging to Christ) and this could not be until they are made immortal at the end of the Millennium, for the saints while mortal are only espoused to Him, so Israel will be the same; the Glorified saints are spoken of as the first-fruits. Revelation 14:4, which awaits the Harvest - the whole twelve tribes; if this is acceptable, then verse 22 which you quoted becomes irrelevant as regards the literal Temple which has a prominent place in the Kingdom of God, as a place of worship for all people and as we are required to believe the Gospel which is the "Good News" of the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, we should understand it fully, especially as Christ's throne will be in the Temple.

In Ezekiel's vision Jesus was inside the Temple when He addresses him with the words of Ezekiel 43:6,7... "The place of my throne and the place of the souls of my feet..." I may say here that your measurements of the Temple relate to the "inner house," not the overall measurements which were 500 reeds square (a reed being 10 to 12 feet long). Chapter 42, verses 15 to 20. It is a huge building, in fact the Temple and precincts was so large that Ezekiel thought it looked like "a frame of a city" Ezekiel 40:2. I don't think the water that issued from the Sanctuary can be spiritualised either, because there was fish and fishers and places to spread their nets mentioned, and in this connection we can look at Joel 3:18, "A fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord and water the valley of Shittim." This is evidently literal; in fact, none of those chapters 40 to 48 of Ezekiel can be spiritualised. They are literal and future. We must also take into consideration the physical changes that will occur when God, through Christ, will stand upon the Mount of Olives and cause an earthquake it will "cleave in the midst thereof." With regard to the Temple see Micah 4:1-3, - "But in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the House of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountain."

The Temple is to be built on a mountain (Ezekiel 40:2 & 43:12), "and it shall be exalted above the hills and people shall flow unto it, and many nations shall come and say Come, and let us go up to the House of the God of Jacob and He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths, for the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." How plain! Yet some read it without full comprehension. (Also Isaiah 2:2-4, 56:7, 60:14, Zechariah 1:16, 6:12,13, Revelation 7:14,15). You quote the reference that "God dwelleth not in Temples made with hands," that is true but we are talking about Christ who will reign for God, not God Himself, so that does not apply neither should we think that what applies to the saints must necessarily apply to the nation of Israel who are yet to be converted. We must remember that God has yet to make a new covenant with them when He shall take away their sins - (Romans 11:27, Jeremiah 31:33,34, Ezekiel 37:26). We don't know yet the amount of land the future 12 tribes of Israel will occupy but certainly more than they have now, and each of their portions will be in strips from the east side to the west side, which is unlike the first division of the land. (Ezekiel 48:23-35)."

I sincerely thank Sister Evelyn for the above letter. It contains a lot of thoughts and there is much to think about. We have now had a variety of views upon Ezekiel's vision of the Temple and now we will leave it, at least for the time being. One day we shall know all the answers and until that time I'm sure we all

feel very thankful to our heavenly Father and to Jesus Christ for the amount of knowledge that has been given us.

Brother Phil Parry raises two questions. One regarding the Holy Spirit - He writes, "To object or say that the giving of the power of the Holy Spirit died with the Apostles for the simple reason of failure to raise the dead or work miracles, does not stand up to the test of Scripture, and to think such a thing is a lack of faith..."

The second matter regards the Kingdom - "Is the term 'the Kingdom of Heaven' descriptive of a position different from 'The Kingdom of God'? In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus uses the latter phrase and description. Is there a valid reason?"

Brother Harold Dawson writes briefly on a variety of topics. Here are a few extracts: "We have the Holy Spirit in measure - but not as the disciples received it obviously." "Any thesis should not always now delineate the differences of doctrine between the Christadelphians and the Nazarene Fellowship," "The Church of England preaches the substitutionary theory of the Atonement, so newcomers may take our stance for granted." "The Nazarene Fellowship cannot go on writing articles about the nature of Christ and the Atonement indefinitely." "It has not pleased the Lord to lead the Nazarene Fellowship into a strong position, and this may be taken as a sign of the times, and a reminder that only eight souls survived the Flood of Genesis. Frankly it is my personal view that it is too late for preaching results to be expected to be more than perhaps one here and one there. As it has actually always been."

Another correspondent writes: "I have never agreed to all the work put in to condemning the Christadelphian beliefs. We who belonged to them know what they believe and that is why we left them and we don't want to be continually reminded of it. What we need is to look forward and not back. If we can help anyone to see the error of their beliefs we can do it personally and not in the C.L."

I agree in some measure, however I feel there is a valid reason for continuing to include writings which condemn Christadelphian beliefs, although I would prefer to use the word 'counter' rather than 'condemn.' It may not be known to all our readers but our Circular Letters are sent to more Christadelphians than Nazarene Fellowship with most Christadelphian Editors receiving a copy. Ever since 1873 when Edward Turney opposed Robert Roberts there have been Turneyites, Clean Flesh Heretics and later the Nazarene Fellowship who have put their case strongly before the Christadelphian community.

Nevertheless I have endeavoured to make the Circular Letter a "reference library" for our readers and more than this I feel the need to fully comprehend every aspect of not only our reasons and arguments, but also of those who would disagree with us. I feel this must be an ongoing ambition, not to promote ourselves but to take the advice of Peter, where he wrote, in his first letter, chapter 3, verse 15, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh of you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." While it is of primary importance that we are able to give our reasons, it is also important that we know how to counter those who would, if they could, convince us otherwise, and for this reason I would like to see in the Circular Letter, pointers of how to deal with sincere people of other denominations, not just Christadelphian, but, for example, callers at the door who tell us that Christ is coming soon, or has already come. If you are like me you will have been at a loss from time to time as to what to say to them. If the Lord will, if there is time before He comes, I would like to go through the beliefs of others and see how we can show them the better way.

In the meantime, starting with this issue of the Circular Letter, we have the first part of the Netherton Debate which will be continued in future issues over the next year, following which there will be summaries of the arguments in the debate. I do hope this doesn't sound too heavy, but there will be also plenty of other articles, especially exhortations.

And with exhortations in mind, there has been a lack of them in recent months so do please send any material you think might be suitable. I have many back issues of the Circular Letters and if necessary I shall reprint exhortation from them, but do please send articles which are new to our readers if you can. Also any articles of general interest to Bible students.

Sister Evelyn and Brother Harvey send “Love and Best Wishes to all the brethren and sisters,” also Sister Edith Howells says “Please give my Love to all Brethren and Sisters.

Brother Alan and Sister Glenys Bate write to say they might try to get over to England this year. At the time of writing the temperature in Ontario was -30°C! I have never known temperatures as low as that in England.

Sister Audrey Bundy writes, “My Love to all the brethren and sisters. May this year be the one when our Lord returns and may we all be found waiting and watching.”

With Sincere Love to all, in the Master’s service.

WHY ME ?

Yes, “Why me? Often asked by people when things go wrong. When some misfortune suddenly befalls us, the usual saying goes “Why should this happen to me?” “What have I done to deserve this?”

But has it ever occurred to anybody to ask this same question when something has gone exceptionally well, when some unexpected blessing has come our way?

Let us turn this question round and ask in a positive way “Why should this blessing have come to me? Why me? What good have I done to deserve this?” I wonder how many ever asked this question when things have turned out well; and as for the second part, “what good have I done?” how many can answer this truthfully?

When we look back on our lives, we all had our ups and downs. But we all had one experience in our lives when we could truthfully ask the question “Why me?” in a positive way. That was when God opened our minds to the great truth of the mission of Jesus, and we responded by accepting Him in baptism.

As we have all learned, we were born in Adam, out of Christ, out of the commonwealth of Israel, It is entirely through God’s mercy, that some are called out, one here, one there. None of us know what good we have done more than our neighbour to bring upon ourselves this blessing. But here we are. It is up to us now to walk in the light of the truth and hold fast to the end.

So let us conclude with a practical proposition. Next time we receive some unexpected blessing, or we experience a happy outcome of some dreaded event, let us not forget to thank God and ask “Why Me?” in the positive way:

“What good have I done to deserve it?”

It is a little spiritual exercise worth trying; we won’t come off the worse for it, it is worth a recommendation.

Brother Leo Dreifuss

The Netherton Debate

WHY THE CROSS?

PREFACE

The debate here recorded took place in May 1949, and although the Netherton Ecclesia claim the right to publish it, they have not done so, and have, in fact, done their utmost to prevent anyone doing so.

My reason for reproducing it and an examination of some of the replies of W. F. Barling are as follows:

- 1) Because I am convinced of the Truth that Jesus was uncondemned, without spot or blemish from Original Sin.
- 2) The debate proves both from Scripture and from Christadelphian writers that this is the only view which justifies God and is consistent with common-sense and reason.
- 3) It is evident that man-made constitutions have made the Word of God of none effect.

The report which follows was taken by an independent reporter and only minor corrections have been made, to which W. P. Barling and the Chairman agreed according to the Compiled Report. It could have been published years ago apart from the obstructive tactics of the Christadelphians. Even now we are unable to include Mr Barling's Opening Speech as they have refused to let us have a copy of it on the grounds that it is illegal for us to reproduce it. Perhaps readers will be able to get a copy for themselves.

The word "debate" itself indicates that there are two sides, and the fact that clearly stated doctrines are not involved should help the reader keep an open mind. In fairness to both sides it should be said that debating is not always the best way to bring out the truth, as there are many points which need explanation, but questions and answers produce evidence from which thoughtful people can draw their own conclusions.

Apart from my efforts there would never have been a debate at all, and neither, apparently, would there have been a report. I shall certainly get no financial benefit from it. All I want is the satisfaction of knowing that the work is solely for the Truth, and to enable those who are interested to read and judge for themselves.

Arguments will still go on, but the important question is: have we a conscience void of offence towards God and man?

F. J. PEARCE.

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WHY THE CROSS?

Controverted Aspects of the Nature And Sacrifice of Christ

Debated by

Mr E. BRADY of Birmingham (Nazarene Fellowship)

&

Mr W. F. Barling of London (Christadelphian)

Under the Chairmanship of Mr R. A. Overton

In Netherton. 7th May 1949

ORDER OF DEBATE

30 minutes Address by E. Brady
30 minutes Address by Mr W. F. Barling
15 minutes questioning by Mr E. Brady
15 minutes questioning by Mr W. F. Barling

INTERVAL FOR TEA

15 minutes questioning by Mr E. Brady
15 minutes questioning by Mr W. F. Barling
15 minutes questioning by Mr E. Brady
15 minutes questioning by Mr W. F. Barling
15 minutes questioning by Mr E. Brady
15 minutes questioning by Mr W. F. Barling

TEN MINUTE INTERVAL

15 minutes questioning by Mr E. Brady
15 minutes questioning by Mr W. F. Barling
15 minutes questioning or concluding Address by Mr E. Brady
15 minutes questioning or concluding Address by Mr W. F. Barling

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The Netherton Debate

Opening Speech by E. Brady

Why The Cross

In 1944 I was at a lecture given by a Christadelphian in the Midland Institute in the course of which and exposition of the Sacrifice of Christ was given which I considered to be false and unscriptural and dishonouring to God. Believing that a Christian is required to uphold and defend the Scripture as the inspired revelation of God and that to love and honour God is the first Commandment, I felt it my duty to challenge the speaker to defend his assertions in a debate.

For nearly twenty years as a Christadelphian I had thought that where Scriptures and truth were concerned Christadelphians feared no man, and you may imagine my amazement when my invitation was declined, not only by the speaker but also every other Christadelphian who was approached. In those days I was new to the so called clean flesh heresy, and there were many things I did not understand, but I felt the position was so unsatisfactory that I inserted a note in one of our pamphlets making the same challenge a general one, and I understand it is this which has led to the present meeting. I must also mention that I debated with a Christadelphian at Portsmouth in 1945 and we hoped to publish a record of what was said, but again you may judge of our astonishment when my opponent (whom I will not shame by naming) blankly refused to release to us the shorthand writer's report of the speeches. No doubt he realised the extent of his own admissions and blunders and the prospect of seeing them in print, appalled him ~ as well it might.

Since then no one has ventured and Mr Philip Hall, after trying by a very questionable stratagem to inveigle a Mr Southall of the Bereans into the fight, confessed that both John Carter and Islip Collyer had been asked and declined and said he had never been so bitterly disappointed and humiliated in his life.

I ask you to believe that my purpose in making that original challenge and in agreeing to debate with Mr Barling is utterly impersonal and for the sake of truth alone. My sole wish is that truth may prevail. I have nothing to lose and everything to gain by the establishment of the truth. A victory or defeat in debate

means nothing besides the truth. If Mr Barling can show that our view of the atonement is false I shall feel nothing but gratitude, because I believe with you that our eternal life depends upon a true knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. On the other hand, it is my earnest prayer that if any of you begin to realise the true implications of the Christadelphian view you will let no consideration but truth weigh with you in deciding your course of action.

Most of the members of the Nazarene Fellowship were originally Christadelphians and we willingly and thankfully acknowledge our debt to what has been a stepping stone to fuller truth. Unfortunately, many people conclude from this that we are simply an offshoot of that body, composed of unusually cantankerous elements who have split off on a few minor matters of interpretation. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is a wider gulf between the Nazarene Fellowship and Christadelphians than there is between the Christadelphians and the Roman Catholics for this reason: that the doctrine of Original Sin, which the Nazarene Fellowship rejects, is held by the Christadelphians in common with all other denominations of Christendom, including the Roman Catholics. That false doctrine of Sin-in-the-flesh enters into every phase of religion and colours and conditions not only doctrines but also behaviour and way of life. If well meaning Christians, whether Catholic or Christadelphian, did not believe they had the devil in their flesh they might be more successful in avoiding the works of the Devil.

Before I go on to outline our answer to the question “Why the Cross? I will indicate the very simple issues which are before us so that you may keep them in mind as we proceed:

1) Christadelphians teach that the Sacrifice of Christ was necessary for Himself. We deny it. We believe He died simply and solely for us.

2) They believe He was physically defiled by sin. We believe He was in every sense pure and undefiled.

3) They affirm that the reason He was the Son of God was to give Him the special strength necessary to overcome temptation. We believe it was in order to give Him the legal freedom necessary if He were to be our Saviour and Redeemer.

These issues are perfectly plain and straightforward, and while in the course of the debate we shall be led into involved arguments and fine distinctions, if you constantly come back to Christ and these simple questions there is nothing but what any ordinary person can easily understand. Robert Roberts once said one needed a prolonged Spiritual education before he can comprehend the Sacrifice of Christ. Don't believe it – it just is not true. If you will have the courage to think for yourself and follow the pure stream right from its source you will be able not only to understand why Christ died but the message of Calvary will give you comfort and confidence and a real purpose and direction in your life.

Why did God choose to associate the Salvation of man with the tragedy of the Cross? Why is forgiveness of sin conditional upon the shedding of blood? I have affirmed, and I repeat it here, where Mr Barling has a full opportunity to refute it, that no Christadelphian can explain it or give a satisfactory reason. You will listen carefully, as I shall, for his explanation. The Christadelphian view is that the Cross is an example of vengeance for sin, a demonstration of God's displeasure and wrath against sinners, that it was a ritual exhibition of the destruction of sinful flesh. We believe that this view is terribly wrong and its implications so dishonouring to God that those who hold it will be disowned by Christ when He returns. If flesh is sinful God made it so: then why should He destroy it? If man is sinful by nature can he help being a sinner? Then how can a just God take vengeance upon him for being what he is? Above all, what diabolical injustice to inflict an awful death upon a sinless man because he had a sinful nature!

The Cross speaks not of vengeance for sin, but of redemption from sin; it tells not of punishment but of forgiveness. The key to the mystery is in John 3:16, “For God so loved...” On the authority of that text alone I would say that a theory which makes ritual destruction and punishment the motive behind our Saviour's Sacrifice is a wrong theory. It was love and love alone which led to Calvary. There will be punishment for the wicked, there will be a time of vengeance, but it is not yet. “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his evil way and live.” When Jesus was baptised John said “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” The first

question is, then, what is the sin of the world? Paul tells us “By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin.” We must therefore go back to that man by whom sin entered and decide what happened to him and how it affected his descendants. We have no need to speculate about Adam’s nature. We are told that he was created from the dust, a living soul, of the earth, earthy, and dependant for his existence upon the natural processes of an animal organism. He was therefore corruptible; the only difference between man and the lower animals was in his endowment with mind, the powers of the intellect, reason and memory.

Now when Adam was placed under law and disobeyed God, what difference did it make to him? Did it change his nature? Did it implant an evil principle in his flesh which was not there before? There is no such suggestion anywhere in Scripture. Adam sinned with the very good nature of his creation, so why suppose that his flesh was changed to give him a bias towards sin? The change was in his relation to God, in his legal position. He came under condemnation; he incurred the sentence of death.

But, you may say, if Adam was corruptible, or capable of dying before he sinned, how could he incur death? Take, for example, the Chairman: he is corruptible and in the ordinary course of nature he will eventually die. At the moment he is not very troubled about it, although it is not a pleasant prospect, and it will come to him as it will come to all of us as surely as tomorrows’ sun will rise.

But suppose he went out and shot a policeman and was sentenced to death, he would feel very much different about the prospect of death, and in fact he would be in a very different position. He would be legally a dead man, and if the law took its course in a few weeks he would pay the penalty and his life would be cut off in a highly unpleasant manner. Now: is that what happened to Adam? Not exactly.

God had said “in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” He certainly incurred the penalty – but did he pay it? Did he die in the day he disobeyed? He certainly did not. He lived his natural life span of over 930 years. Was there implanted in his flesh a physical principle of decay which brought about that ultimate death? The Bible does not say so, and we do not believe it. Was his ultimate death the penalty? It was not for “Thou shalt surely die” means a judicial death. Was he forgiven? He was not: for there was no basis for forgiveness in the law of Eden. Adam was in a desperate position and he knew it. That is why he was afraid and hid himself.

But the love of God was equal to the situation. His wisdom found a way by which His just law could be met and upheld, and yet Adam be delivered, and in the process such a demonstration of love and mercy and self sacrifice as is unique in history. Do not forget if God loves us and does not wish us to perish. He also loved Adam and wished to save him.

Paul says, “By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin.” Yes, Adam brought into the world death as a penalty for sin, but if he had suffered the death he incurred that would have been the end of him and of the human race. If God had inflicted upon him the death he had incurred he would have been cut off, put to death as a criminal there and then, and then you and I would never have had any existence; so that whatever the means by which Adam was saved from the wages of sin we owe our lives to it. It is perfectly true, as Paul says that death came by sin – and whose death was it? It should have been Adam’s; he was the guilty one, but it was actually inflicted upon the animal with whose skin Adam was covered. That was the first sacrifice and the type of the Lamb of God who was to come, slain from the foundation of the world to take away the bondage of sin and death which bars the way to eternal life.

When Adam sinned he incurred death and legally he died. Scripturally he forfeited his life and became servant, or debtor, to sin. He had left the house wherein he was a Son and sold himself into slavery to a new master, and since he was no longer free, his life was no longer his own but pledged to sin, all his children to whom he transmitted that life were equally in bondage and slaves to sin; not necessarily sinners, but belonging to sin. This changed position is purely a legal matter involving alienation from God. Adam’s nature was not changed, ours is not changed; it is still the same as when it was created, and we are today as capable of obedience, good and evil, as was Adam when he was first formed, but we are “sold under sin” because Adam forfeited his life and ours in his. This is what is meant by the declaration “God hath concluded all under sin” – not in order to punish all, but in order that He might have mercy on all.

Now, man, by his own action, having chosen to serve sin – thus becoming Sin’s bondservant and earning the wages of sin – how could he be set free from his bondage and reconciled to God? Nothing he could do himself would help him; even perfect obedience from that day forward was utterly useless to effect his liberation. His life was forfeited to the law and only payment of the exact price would liquidate the debt. If he had paid it himself his life would have been taken and he would have perished. No child of Adam could redeem him by paying it for him because the life of every child of Adam was lost in his. No child of Adam could redeem himself let alone another. God alone could help Adam “when there was no man, no intercessor. His own arm brought salvation,” or, as Job prophesied, “deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom.” God came to the rescue by bringing His own Son into the world. The second Adam, and gave into His charge the task of delivering the human race from the bondage of sin and death. And this plan was carried out strictly and perfectly in accordance with the legal principles of ransom and redemption which had been so carefully laid down in the law of Israel.

In order to meet the necessities of the situation and to be in a position to carry out His Father’s purpose, it was necessary first that Jesus should be of the same flesh and blood as Adam; that is why he was the seed of the woman. Then He had to be free from the condemnation which covers all descended from Adam, otherwise His own life would have been forfeit and He would have been in the same bondage as all others. This was the reason He was the Son of God. He received His life, like Adam, direct from the Source. The difference was that Adam was the created Son of God, while Jesus was the Begotten Son of God, related to Adam but not descended from him. Lastly, it was necessary that He should be put on trial, like Adam, and prove Himself perfect in character, for had He failed in His probation He would have lost His own life and would have been unable to help. So we have a parallel and a contrast. Adam lost his life by disobedience – and remember his life was the life of the race. Jesus kept His by obedience – and remember His life was His own, and that is why He was in a position to buy us back. That is how He was rich whereas we are poor. The Father had given Him to have life in Himself, that is how He was strong whereas we are weak. Who need ask the question, then, “Why the Cross?” “But whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister... for even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and give His life a ransom for many.” What can we say of the perversity and the ingratitude which will turn round and tell our loving Saviour “Your life was a ransom for yourself.?” “Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor that we through His poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9), “For while we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6).

We think then of the lowly Jesus, reared by the holy mother in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, reading in the Jewish Scriptures the account of man’s creation, how Adam came under condemnation, incurring a debt which therefore was still outstanding. Realising perhaps from hearing the doctors in the Temple and asking them questions the meanings and the limitations of the Sacrifices which He saw offered every year, and then learning from His mother the strange circumstances of His birth. He came at length to the knowledge that He was in a position to do what no other member of the human race could do – redeem His brethren by laying down His own life in payment of their debt.

Could He have sinned? Of course He could, for He was made in all points like us and tempted as we are. But had He sinned He would have failed. He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities and He learned obedience by the things that He suffered. How, then, did He overcome? By the exercise of His own will, the same power that God has given to every one of us, if we would exercise it, to resist temptation.

If you assume that because He was God’s Son He was specially strengthened to overcome sin, you rob Him of all His honour. He may as well have been a puppet worked by strings. His victory over sin was His own – “Therefore I have set my face like a flint and I know I shall not be ashamed.” The belief that the purpose of His birth was to endow Him with special power to resist sin is the most disastrous misconception of Scripture, for not only does it rob Christ of His honour and make God’s ways unjust, but it leads to the entirely false conclusion that we are physically incapable of obedience. Further, it draws attention away from the true reason for the Virgin Birth, which was that His life came direct from God and not via the condemned channel, and puts in its place a fallacy which makes Christ’s death nothing but a display of meaningless bloodshed.

Jesus, then, voluntarily and of His own free choice, determined to do His Father’s will and take His place in the arrangement which was foretold and prefigured in Eden and again on Mount Moriah. He went

voluntarily to the death of the Cross and gave up His life for the sake and in the stead of His brother Adam, a life for a life, the Just for the unjust, the innocent victim bearing the penalty of the guilty sinner.

Was it substitution? Of course it was. Do you reject it on that account? If so, you reject Salvation, for unless Christ died for you, you are yet in your sins. If, because you dread the false conception of substitution as the punishment of an innocent man instead of the guilty, you accept the view that Christ died for His own defiled nature. You are treading underfoot the blood of the Covenant and counting that wherewith you should be sanctified an unholy thing.

Was it unjust for Christ to bear our sins and die for us? It would have been unjust if He had been under compulsion – or under condemnation. But He was not. It was a case of paying that other Lord Sin the price for our release, and He voluntarily undertook His task for the joy that was set before Him. We are not so foolish as to believe that it would have served any good purpose for God to punish Jesus instead of us, nor would it have been right. But is not the Christadelphian view as bad or worse? Would it not have been unjust for God to require His death, an innocent sinless man, because He was human nature, a thing over which He had no control? It would be as unjust to inflict death upon a sinless man because he possessed a defiled nature as it would be to punish the innocent instead of the guilty.

But Calvary speaks not of punishment, but of love and forgiveness; not a simple act of remission, because that while showing, love would not have established the principles of justice and truth. It was a very carefully conceived plan of redemption, designed to excite the interest and the love and enlarge the minds of all succeeding generations of mankind, and if, as I believe Christadelphians have done, the true principles of ransom is lost, the Cross becomes an insoluble mystery, it loses its regenerative influence upon the mind and becomes a hindrance to our faith rather than the foundation of it.

We have no fear of the taunt of Substitution. We believe our Saviour died for us and we love Him for it. We believe that apart from the love of God in giving His own Son to be the Saviour of the world we would never have had life at all and therefore could never have received that life more abundant, which is the gift of God to those who love and honour Him. We believe that had we been put on probation like Adam we should have failed, but we know that we can only blame ourselves and confess that we are sinners because Jesus was tried just the same and He overcame. And we believe that had He chosen, or had His courage failed in the supreme moment. He could have claimed eternal life as His right, called to His aid more than twelve legions of angels and passed into eternity alone, leaving us and all mankind outside to perish as sinners deserve to perish. But how, then, should the Scriptures have been fulfilled: who would then have justified the forbearance of God in passing over the sins done afore-time in order that man might be saved? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, for the joy that was set before Him in bringing many sons unto glory. He did not flee in the face of evil. He gave His back to the smiter and hid not His face from shame and spitting. For Himself? – shameful thought! He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed.

To summarise – He found us like treasure hid in a field, and He went and sold all that He had and bought that field. The field is the world that God so loved. The treasure hid is whosoever will, that shall not perish, and the price that Jesus paid to buy that field was His own life.

We see the mercy of God when we see that He regards the first sin of Adam as the sin of the world, covering and including the many sins that we have committed, because we see that if our sins had not been covered by Adam's then we could not have been covered by the Sacrifice which redeemed him. This is the hidden wisdom of God, whereby one perfect offering has been sufficient to ransom a multitude whom no man can number. If we had been put individually upon probation requiring perfect obedience, then we failed we would each have perished or else we should have required an individual Saviour, on the principle of life for life, eye for eye, blood for blood. The federal principle whereby all are legally included under the One Sin can also legally include all under the One righteous act which made atonement for that Sin. When we discover by the light which has come into the world that we are by nature in Adam and in bondage to sin and death, all we need to do is to accept what Jesus freely offers – a receipted bill, a passport back into the glorious freedom of the sons of God, which He has purchased for us with His own blood, thus, when we look toward the Cross and see Jesus hanging there, enduring the awful pains of a criminal execution, we can

thankfully and lovingly say “He suffered that for us.” He endured literally the suffering of that dreadful death which was justly due to rebels against God, so that we might not suffer it; so that we might not perish.

Because Jesus loved us and gave Himself for us, all that is required of us is that we signify our belief and acceptance of Him as our Saviour, by going through the symbol, in baptism; to signify that we have come out of the Adamic bondage of sin, that we have been bought by God and paid for with the precious blood of His beloved Son, and become adopted Sons in the house of our heavenly Father.

SUMMARY. Our view is that the Cross was not an act of retribution, it was not an example of punishment, its purpose was not the ritual destruction of sinful flesh, and it was emphatically not necessary for Jesus’ own salvation. We reject utterly and completely the idea that human nature is essentially evil, or that sin is a fixed principle in the flesh, or even had it been so, that it would either be just, or serve any good purpose whatsoever to put to death a sinless man for no other reason than that He was possessed of such supposed sinful flesh.

It is our characters which are at fault, which require cleansing and perfecting, and the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ, with the revelation that He died there upon the Cross for us has a far higher regenerative power upon the mind than would the infliction of pain upon the body.

It is the effect upon the mind of man which caused God to choose the way He did. He could have punished Adam for his sin. He could have simply forgiven him. He could have prevented him from sinning, but had He taken any of these courses, where would have been displayed the supremacy of law, the beauty of justice, the depth of His mercy, or the wideness of His love?

Brother Ernest Brady.

We are disappointed that the opening speech by W.F.Barling has not been made available to us and regretfully we have to proceed without it.

The first part of the Debate will be published in our next Circular Letter

No. 6 in a series of Bible Essays

The Forgiveness of Sins, the Resurrection of the Body, the Life Everlasting

Probably these words will be quite familiar to many people, or at any rate awaken a memory of having heard them before, for they are Scriptural and they are here quoted in the right order,

Of the three ideas, forgiveness of sins is the foundation upon which the other two depend. There can be no everlasting life without a resurrection, and no resurrection without the forgiveness of sins.

Let us consider each point separately.

Forgiveness of Sins.

Every time we repeat the Lord’s Prayer we pray to God to forgive us our trespasses or sins, thus admitting that in some way we have sinned against God, and are consequently sinners in need of forgiveness.

It is not our purpose in this article to discuss how sin came to be in the world (that has been dealt with in "The Plan of Redemption" - essay No. 1 in this series) but we will accept the fact that "all have sinned." In this respect not one of us is better than another. We are all servants of Sin and, to quote Psalm 49, "No man can redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him," because it is not possible for one who is held to ransom to pay the ransom-price for another who is also held to ransom. The one who pays the price must himself be free. It is not our liability to sin but our sins that are an offence to God; not our weaknesses in regard to temptation but our yielding to temptation which incurs the wrath of God. Jesus "was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). A reconciliation was not required between God and His Son. It is we, the people in the world, who are in need of reconciliation, so that we may be at one with God. How then, can this Atonement (At-one-ment) be accomplished?

Here then is the position: we, as sinners, are alienated, estranged from God who in His great mercy has provided the means by which we can be reconciled to Him. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Jesus was the only one free from sin who could, and did, give Himself as a ransom (1 Timothy 2:6). "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." "And you who were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind, yet now hath He reconciled, in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy/ unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight, if ye continue in the faith..." (Colossians 1:21, 27). And in Hebrews 10:17 we read that God says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." God means what He says. It is impossible for Him to lie. Read now Isaiah 53, where the prophet foretold that Jesus should be "wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows."

The realisation of sins forgiven and that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1), brings a deep joy and an increased and overflowing love to God the Father and to His Son, Jesus our Saviour. We feel impelled to do our utmost to continue to "walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. In other words, to please God.

Perhaps it would be profitable to pause here and consider what is meant by the words "to them that are in Christ Jesus." We read that, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away (2 Corinthians 6:17). It is necessary to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 13:14). How can we do this? The Apostle Paul, writing to the Galatians, very clearly and simply says, "so many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). The Apostle Peter mentioning how in the days of Noah a few persons were saved by water, goes on to explain, "The like figure, even baptism doth also now save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience towards God," or, in other words, not only the washing away of our sins, but also a regeneration - living a new life. Did not Jesus tell Nicodemus "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God"? "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Christ were baptised into His death? Therefore are we buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection" (Romans 6:3-5).

The Resurrection Of The Body.

Very little is mentioned in the Old Testament about resurrection, for it was Jesus who brought life and immortality to light.

Many people do not realise that there are three great epochs connected with the subject of Resurrection. They are summarised by the writer to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 15:23,24), "Every man in his own order"

- 1). Christ, the first-fruits. This event is passed, when Jesus rose from the dead.
- 2). Those who are Christ's at His coming. This has not yet taken place. In the near future we expect the words of Paul to be fulfilled "The dead in Christ shall rise first and those who are His at His coming will be caught away with them to meet the Lord."

The just are those who, having put on Christ, have been justified, sanctified and redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus.

Those included in this class are given great confidence by the words of the Apostle in 1 Corinthians 15:15-58, "Behold, I show you a mystery, we shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed, in a moment... for the dead shall be raised incorruptible." These words are confirmed in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, where we learn that at the coming of the Lord, "The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive shall be caught away with them... and so be for ever with the Lord." All in this class will have been changed - will have been made incorruptible. They can die no more, but will have eternal life, everlasting life. This is the promise He has promised us, even eternal life (1 John 3:13 & 5:13).

Many foolish and unscriptural notions have been brought forward at different times about the state of the dead and a future life. It is stated in several passages in the Bible that the dead are unconscious, in the grave. The first resurrection is at the commencement of the Millennium reign of Christ on earth, during which period the redeemed, who have been made equal to the angels, and are the children of God (Luke 20:36), will live and reign with Christ.

The Life Everlasting,

Referring to this Kingdom, the Apostle Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:9,10). We are permitted a glimpse of some of the blessings; for example, in Isaiah 35:45:12,13; & 65. An understanding of these scriptures conveys to the mind the assurance, which is corroborated by other inspired writers, of freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the abolition of sin with all the blessings, joy and happiness which will accrue from the beneficent rule of a Righteous Ruler. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years (Revelation 20:6).

3). Perhaps you are now wondering about the fate of the wicked, or unjust. This is the third order. They have been reserved unto the day of judgment (2 Peter 2:9; Job 21:30). At the end of the thousand years they will be raised, but to a resurrection of judgment, and become subject to the second death. The sentence is inevitable and conclusive (Revelation 20:6).

After this, when all the earth has been cleansed from all sin and wickedness and when Jesus has delivered up the Kingdom to His Father (1 Corinthians 15:24), into this new order God shall come and dwell with men. "God will wipe away all tears, there shall be no more death, no sorrow or crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things have passed away."

Many other texts could be quoted in support of each section in this essay but enough has been brought forward for the present occasion, to show that if we confess our sins "God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). God is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. If we have put on Christ in the appointed way, we can rejoice greatly in the knowledge of sins forgiven; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God (2 Peter 3:12) - our bodies changed from natural to Spiritual, from corruptible to incorruptible (1 Corinthians 15:53,54). "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2).

Now as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead be ye reconciled to God. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found. Call ye upon Him while He is near" (Isaiah 55:6).

"The Spirit and the Bride say Come, and he that heareth says. Come," "The Lord direct your hearts into the patient waiting for Christ."

Brother K.H.

Further extracts from

“ THE TEMPLE AT THE TIME OF CHRIST ”

The Idea of substitution.

“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.” (Hebrews 10:11,12).

The question whether or not sacrifices were to cease after the coming of the Messiah is differently answered in the Jewish synagogue, some arguing that only thank- and peace-offerings would then be brought, while the majority expect a revival of the regular sacrificial worship. But on one point the authorities of the old synagogue, previous to their controversy with Christianity, are agreed. As the Old Testament and Jewish tradition taught that the object of a sacrifice was its substitution for the offender, so Scripture and the Jewish fathers also teach that the substitute to whom all these types pointed was none other than the Messiah.

It has been well remarked, that the difficulties of modern interpreters of the Messianic prophecies arise chiefly from their not perceiving the unity of the Old Testament in its progressive unfolding of the plan of salvation. Moses must not be read independently of the Psalms, nor yet the Psalms independently of the Prophets. There are not so many unconnected writings of different authorship and age, only held together by the boards of one volume. They form integral parts of one whole, the object of which is to point to the goal of all revelation in the appearing of the Christ. Accordingly, we recognise in the prophetic word, not a change nor a difference, but three well-marked progressive stages, leading up to the sufferings and the glory of the Messiah. In the Proto-Evangel, as Genesis 3:15 has been called, and in what follows it, we have as yet only the grand general outlines of the figure. Thus we see a Person in the Seed of the woman; suffering, in the prediction that His heel would be bruised; and victory, in that He would bruise the serpent's head. These merely general outlines are wonderfully filled up in the Book of Psalms. The “Person” is now “the Son of David;” while alike the sufferings and the victory are sketched in vivid detail in such Psalms as 22, 35, 69, and 102; or else in Psalms 2, 72, 89, 105, and 118 - not to speak of other almost innumerable allusions.

Christ Our Substitute.

One element only was still wanting - that this Son of David, this Sufferer and Conqueror, should be shown to be our Substitute, to whom also the sacrificial types had pointed. This is added in the writings of the prophets, especially in those of Isaiah, culminating, as it were, in Isaiah 53, around which the details furnished by the other prophets naturally group themselves. The picture is now completed, and so true to the original that, when compared with the reality in the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can have no difficulty in recognising it; and this not so much from one or other outline in prophecy or type, as from their combination and progressive development throughout the Scriptures of the Old Testament, considered as a connected whole.

As already stated, such early works as the ‘Targum Jonathan’ and the ‘Jerusalem Targum’ frankly adopt the Messianic interpretation of these prophecies. The later Rabbis also admit that this had been the common view of the Jewish fathers; but, on account of “the sages of the Nazarenes, who apply it to that man whom they hanged in Jerusalem towards the close of the second Temple, and who, according to their opinion, was the Son of the Most Blessed, and had taken human nature in the womb of the Virgin,” they reject that interpretation, and refer the prediction of the suffering either to some individual, or mostly to Israel as a nation. But so difficult is it to weaken the language in which the Messiah's vicarious sufferings are described - not less than twelve times in Isaiah 52:13 to 53 - that some of their commentators have been forced to admit it, sometimes almost unconsciously. The language of Isaiah has even crept into the following Messianic hymnal prayer for the Passover:-

“Haste, my Beloved; come, ere ends the vision's day;
Make haste, and chase Thyself the shadows all away!

Despised is He, but yet extolled and high shall be;
Deal prudently, sprinkle nations, and judge shall He.”

Thus, if by the universal consent of all who are unprejudiced sacrifices point to substitution, substitution in its turn points to the Person and Work of the Messiah.

It has already been explained that all sacrifices were either such as were offered on the ground of communion with God - the burnt- and the peace-offering; or else such as were intended to restore that communion when it had been dimmed or disturbed - the sin- and the trespass-offering. Each of these four kinds of sacrifices will now have to be separately considered.

Symbolism of the Burnt-offering.

The burnt-offering - ‘Olah,’ or also ‘Chalil’ (In Deuteronomy 33:10 and Psalm 51:19 literally rendered “Whole burnt-offering”). The derivation of the term ‘Olah,’ as wholly ‘ascending’ unto God, indicates alike the mode of the sacrifice and its meaning. It symbolised the entire surrender unto God, whether of the individual or of the congregation, and His acceptance thereof. Hence, also, it could not be offered “without shedding of blood.” Where other sacrifices were brought, it followed the sin- but preceded the peace-offering. In fact, it meant general acceptance on the ground of previous special acceptance, and it has rightly been called the ‘*sacrificium latreuticum*,’ or sacrifice of devotion and service. Thus day by day it formed the regular morning and evening service in the Temple, while on Sabbaths, new moons, and festivals additional burnt-offerings followed the ordinary worship. There the covenant-people brought the covenant-sacrifice, and the multitude of offerings indicated, as it were, the fullness, richness, and joyousness of their self-surrender. Accordingly, although we can understand how this sacrifice might be said to “make atonement” for an individual in the sense of assuring him of his acceptance, we cannot agree with the Rabbis that it was intended to atone for evil thoughts and purposes, and for breaches of positive commands, or of such negative as involved also a positive command.

The burnt-offering was always to be a male animal, as the more noble and as indicating strength and energy. The blood was thrown on the angles of the altar below the red line that ran round it. Then “the sinew of the thigh” (Genesis 32:32 - the sinew of the thigh was neither allowed to be eaten nor to be sacrificed), the stomach and the entrails, etc., having been removed (in the case of birds also the feathers and the wings), and the sacrifice having been duly salted, it was wholly burned. The skins belonged to the ministering priests, who derived a considerable revenue from this source. The burnt-offering was the only sacrifice which non-Israelites were allowed to bring (if they brought a peace-offering, it was to be treated as a burnt-offering, and for the obvious reason that there was no one to eat the sacrificial meal. Of course, there was no imposition of hands in that case.)

The Emperor Augustus had a daily burnt-offering brought for him of two lambs and a bullock? and ever afterwards this sacrifice was regarded as indicating that the Jewish nation recognised the Roman emperor as their ruler. Hence at the commencement of the Jewish war Eleazar carried its rejection, and this became, as it were, the open mark of rebellion.

Symbolism of the Sin-offering.

The Sin-offering. This is the most important of all sacrifices. It made atonement for the person of the offender, whereas the trespass-offering only atoned for one special offence. Hence sin-offerings were brought on festive occasions for the whole people, but never the trespass-offering, (Comp. Numbers 28 and 29). In fact, the trespass-offering may be regarded as representing ransom for a special wrong, while the sin-offering symbolised general redemption. Both sacrifices applied only to sins “through ignorance,” in opposition to those done “presumptuously” (or ‘with a high hand’). For the latter the law provided no atonement, but held out “a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.” By sins “through ignorance,” however, we are to understand, according to the Rabbis, not only such as were committed strictly through want of knowledge, but also those which had been unintentional, or through weakness, or where the offender at the time realised not his guilt. The fundamental difference between the two sacrifices appears also in this - that sin-offerings, having a retrospective effect on the worshippers, were brought at the various festivals, and also for purification in such defilements of the body as symbolically pointed to the

sinfulness of our nature (sexual defilement, those connected with leprosy, and with death). On the other hand, the animal brought for a trespass-offering was to be always a male (generally a ram, which was never used as a sin-offering); nor was it lawful, as in the sin-offering, to make substitution of something else in case of poverty. These two particulars indicated that the trespass-offering contemplate chiefly a wrong, for which decided satisfaction was to be made by offering a male animal, and for which a definite, unvarying ransom was to be given

In all Cases Repentance was Necessary.

However, in reference both to sin and to trespass-offerings, the rabbinical principle must be kept in view - that they only atoned in case of real repentance. Indeed, their first effect would be "a remembrance of sins" before God, (Hebrews 10:3). All sin-offerings were either public or private (congregational or individual). The former were always males; the latter always females, except the bullock for the high-priest's sin of ignorance (Leviticus 4:3), and the kid for the same offence of a "ruler" (Leviticus 4:22). They were further divided into fixed, which were the same in the case of rich or poor, and varying, which 'ascended and descended' according to the circumstances of the offerer. 'Fixed' sacrifices were all those for sins through ignorance against any of the prohibitory commands (of which the Rabbis enumerated 365); for sins of deed, not of word; of else for such which, if they had been high-handed, would have carried the Divine punishment of being 'cut off (of which the Rabbis enumerate 36). The 'varying' sacrifices were those for lepers (Leviticus 14:21); for women after childbirth (of which concession to poverty Mary, the mother of Jesus, availed herself - Luke 2:24 and Leviticus 12:8); for having concealed a 'thing known' (Leviticus 5:1); for having unwittingly sworn falsely; and for having either unwittingly eaten of what had been -consecrated, or gone into the Temple in a state of defilement. Lastly, there were 'outer' and 'inner' sin-offerings according as the blood was applied to the altar of burnt-offering or brought into the inner sanctuary. In the former case the flesh was to be eaten only by the officiating priests and within the sanctuary; the latter were to be wholly burnt without the camp or city. In both cases, however, the 'inwards,' as enumerated in Leviticus 4:8, were always first burned on the altar of burnt-offering. Neither oil nor frankincense were to be brought with a sin-offering. There was nothing joyous about it. It represented a terrible necessity, for which God, in His wondrous grace, had made provision.

The Sin-offering differed with the Rank of the Offerer.

It only remains to explain in detail two peculiarities connected with the sin-offering. First, it differed according to the theocratic position of him who brought the sacrifice. For the high-priest on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:3), or when he had sinned 'to the rendering guilty of the people (Leviticus 4:3), that is, in his official capacity as representing the people; or if the whole congregation had sinned through ignorance (Leviticus 4:13); and at the consecration of the priests and Levites a bullock was to be brought. This was the highest kind of sin-offering. Next in order was that of the "kid of the goats," offered for the people on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16:5), and on the other festivals and New Moons (Numbers 28:15); also for the ruler who had sinned through ignorance (Leviticus 4:23); for the congregation if aught had been committed by any individual 'without the knowledge of the congregation' (Numbers 15:24); and, lastly, at the consecration of the Tabernacle (Leviticus 9:3,15). The third kind of sin-offering consisted of a female kid of the goats for individual Israelites and of a ewe lamb for a Nazarite and a leper. The lowest grade of sin-offering was that of turtle-doves or young pigeons offered at certain purifications; or else as a substitute for other sacrifices in case of poverty - in extreme cases something resembling to, or 'as a meat-offering' being even allowed.

Secondly, the blood of the sin-offering was sprinkled, not thrown. In cases of a private Israelite, it was sprinkled, that is, either jerked or dropped successively on each of the four horns of the altar of burnt-offering - beginning at the south-east, thence to the north-east, then the north-west, and finishing- at the south-west, where the rest of the blood was poured at the bottom of the altar through two funnels that conducted into the Kedron. On the other hand, when offering bullocks and goats, whose carcasses were to be burned without the camp, the officiating priest stood in the Holy Place, between the golden altar and the candlesticks, and sprinkled of the blood seven times towards the most Holy Place, to indicate that the covenant- relationship itself had been endangered and was to be re-established, and afterwards touched with it the horns of the altar of incense. The most solemn of all sacrifices were those of the Day of Atonement, when the high-priest, arrayed in his linen garments, stood before the Lord Himself within the Most Holy

Place to make an atonement. Every spot of blood from a sin-offering on a garment conveyed defilement, as being loaded with sin, and all vessels used for such sacrifices had either to be broken or scoured.

Quite another phase of symbolic meaning was intended to be conveyed by the sacrificial meal which the priests were to make of the flesh of such sin-offerings as were not wholly burnt without the camp. Unquestionably Philo was right in suggesting, that one of the main objects of this meal was to carry to the offerer assurance of his acceptance, "since God would never have allowed His servants to partake of it, had it not been a complete removal and forgetting of the sin" atoned for. This view entirely accords with the statement in Leviticus 10:17, where the purpose of this meal by the priests is said to be "to bear the iniquity of the congregation," Hence, also, the flesh of all sacrifices, either for the high-priest, as representing the priesthood, or for the whole people, had to be burnt; because those, who, as God's representatives, were alone allowed to eat the sacrificial meal were themselves among the offerers of the sacrifice.

The Symbolism of the Trespass-offering.

The trespass-offering was provided for certain transgressions committed through ignorance, or else, according to Jewish tradition, where a man afterwards voluntarily confessed himself guilty. The Rabbis arranged this class into those for 'a doubtful' and for 'a certain' trespass. The former were offered by the more scrupulous, when, uncertain whether they might not have committed an offence which, if done high-handed, would have implied being 'cut off,' or, if in ignorance, necessitated a sin-offering. Accordingly, the extreme party, or Chassidim, were wont to bring such a sacrifice every day! On the other hand, the offering for 'certain' trespasses covered five distinct cases (Leviticus 5:15; 6:2; 19:20; 24:12; and Numbers 6:12), which had all this in common, that they represented a wrong for which a special ransom was to be given. It forms no exception to this principle, that a trespass-offering was also prescribed in the case of a healed leper, and in that of a Nazarite, whose vow had been interrupted by sudden defilement with the dead, since leprosy was also symbolically regarded as a wrong to the congregation as a whole (hence the leper was banished from the congregation), while the interruption of the vow was a kind of wrong directly towards the Lord. But that this last was, at the same time, considered the lightest kind of trespass appears even from this - that, while ordinarily the flesh of the trespass-offering, after burning the inwards on the altar of burnt-offering, was only to be eaten by the officiating priests within the Holy Place, the lamb offered for such a Nazarite might be eaten by others also, and anywhere within Jerusalem. The blood of the trespass-offering (like that of the burnt-offering) was thrown on the corners of the altar below the red line.

The Peace-offering.

The most joyous of all sacrifices was the peace-offering, or, as from its derivation it might also be rendered, the offering of completion (it always followed all the other sacrifices). This was, indeed, a season of happy fellowship with the Covenant God, in which He condescended to become Israel's Guest at the sacrificial meal, even as He was always their Host. Thus it symbolised the spiritual truth expressed in Revelation 3:20, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." In peace-offerings the sacrificial meal was the point of main importance. Hence the name 'Sevach,' by which it is designated in the Pentateuch, and which means "slaying," in reference to a meal. It is this sacrifice which is so frequently referred to in the Book of Psalms as the grateful homage of a soul justified and accepted before God. If, on the one hand, then, the 'offering of completion' indicated that there was complete peace with God, on the other, it was also literally the offering of completeness. The peace-offerings were either public or private. The two lambs offered every year at Pentecost were a public peace-offering, and the only one which was regarded as 'most holy,' as such they were sacrificed at the north side of the altar, and their flesh eaten only by the officiating priests, and within the Holy Place. The other public peace-offerings were slain at the south side, and their 'inwards' burnt on the altar. Then after the priests had received their due, the rest was to be eaten by the offerers themselves, either within the courts of the Temple or in Jerusalem. On one occasion (1 Kings 8:63) no less than 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep were so offered. Private peace-offerings were of a threefold kind: "sacrifices of thanks-giving," 'vows,' and strictly 'voluntary offerings.' The first were in general acknowledgement of mercies received; the last, the free gift of loving hearts, as even the use of the same term in Exodus 25:2; and 35:29 implies. Exceptionally in this last case, an animal that had anything defective or superfluous might be offered (Leviticus 22:23).

What constituted Peace-offerings.

Peace-offerings were brought either of male or of female animals (chiefly the former), but not of pigeons, the sacrifice being, of course, always accompanied by a meat- and drink-offering (Leviticus 7:11). As every other sacrifice, they needed imposition of hands, confession, and sprinkling of blood, the latter being done as in the burnt-offering. Then the 'inwards' were taken out and 'waved' before the Lord, along with 'the breast' and the 'right shoulder' (or, perhaps more correctly, the right leg). In reference to these two wave-offerings we remark, that the breast properly belonged to the Lord, and that He gave it to His priests (Leviticus 7:30), while Israel gave the 'right shoulder' directly to the priests (Leviticus 7:32). The ritual of waving has already been described, the meaning of the movement being to present the sacrifice, as it were, to the Lord, and then to receive it back from Him. The Rabbinical suggestion, that there was a distinct rite of 'heaving' besides that of 'waving,' seems only to rest on a misunderstanding of such passages as Leviticus 2:2,9; 7:32, 10:15, etc. The following were to be 'waved' before the Lord: the breast of the peace-offering; the parts mentioned at the consecration of the priests; the first 'omer' at the Passover; the jealousy-offering; the offering at the close of the Nazarite's vow; the offering of the cleansed leper; and 'the two lambs' presented 'with the bread of the firstfruits,' at the Feast of Tabernacles. The two last mentioned offerings were waved before being sacrificed. After the waving, the 'inwards' were burnt on the altar of burnt-offering, and the rest eaten either by the priests or worshippers, the longest term allowed in any case for the purpose being two days and a night from the time of sacrifice. Of course, the guests, among whom were to be the Levites and the poor, must all be in a state of Levitical purity, symbolical of 'the wedding garment' needed at the better gospel-feast.

Meat-offerings.

We close with a few particulars about meat-offerings. These were either brought in conjunction with the burnt- and peace-offerings (but never with sin-offerings) or else by themselves. The latter were either public or private meat-offerings. The three public meat-offerings were: the twelve loaves of shewbread, renewed every Sabbath, and afterwards eaten by the priests; the omer, or sheaf of the harvest, on the second day of the Passover; and the two wave-loaves at Pentecost. Four of the private meat-offerings were enjoined by the law, viz. 1) the daily meat-offering of the high-priest, according to the Jewish interpretation of Leviticus 6:20; 2) that at the consecration of priests; 3) that in substitution for a sin-offering, in case of poverty; and 4) that of jealousy. The following five were purely voluntary, viz. that of fine flour with oil, unbaken? That 'baken in a pan;' 'in a frying-pan;' 'in the oven;' and the 'wafers.' All these offerings were to consist of at least one omer of corn (which was the tenth part of an ephah). But any larger number under 61 omers might be offered, the reason of the limitation being, that as the public meat-offerings enjoined on the Feast of Tabernacles amounted to 61, all private offerings must be less than that number. In all baken meat-offerings, an omer was always made into ten cakes - the symbolical number of completeness - except in that of the high-priest's daily meat-offering, of which twelve cakes were baken, as representative of Israel. Finally, as the Rabbis express it, every meat-offering prepared in a vessel had 'three pourings of oil' - first into the vessel, then to mingle with the flour, and lastly, after it was ready - the frankincense being then put upon it. The 'wafers' were 'anointed' with oil, after the form of the Hebrew letter כ , or the Greek letter K, as they explain, 'to run down in two parts.'

When presenting a meat-offering, the priest first brought it in the golden or silver dish in which it had been prepared, and then transferred it-to a holy vessel, putting oil and frankincense upon it. Taking his stand at the south-eastern corner of the altar, he next took the 'handful' that was actually to be burnt, put it in another vessel, laid some of the frankincense on it, carried it to the top of the altar, salted it, and then placed it on the fire. The rest of the meat-offering belonged to the priest. Every meat-offering was accompanied by a drink-offering of wine, which was poured at the base of the altar.

Large Number of Priests needed.

So complicated a service, and one which enjoined such frequent sacrifices, must always have kept a large number of priests busy in the courts of the Temple. This was especially the case on the great festivals; and if the magnificent Temple could hold its 210,000 worshippers - if the liturgy, music, and ritual were equally gorgeous - we cannot wonder that it required multitudes of white-robed priests properly to discharge its ministry. Tradition has it, that on the Day of Atonement no less than five hundred priests were wont to

assist in the services. On other feast-days even more must have been engaged, as it was a Rabbinical principle, 'that a man should bring all his offerings, that were either due from him or voluntarily dedicated, at the solemn festival that cometh next.' In other words, if a man incurred a sacrifice, or voluntarily promised one, he was to bring it when next he came to Jerusalem. But even this provision showed 'the weakness and unprofitableness thereof,' since in all ordinary cases a long time must have elapsed before the stain of guilt could be consciously removed by an atoning sacrifice, or a vow performed. Blessed be God, the reality in Christ Jesus in this, as in all other offerings, far out-distance the type! For we have always "liberty to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus;" and "if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God!"

Dr Edersheim

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Go, give of your best to the Master today,
For giving is living, the angel did say.
And must I be giving again and again?
My peevish and pitiless answer ran.
Oh, No, said the angel, piercing me through;
Just give till the Master stops giving to you.