

Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter 148

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Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord,

Three weeks ago it was our Sister May Lockett's 105th birthday! Brother Arthur Speed wrote to say he and other friends and the staff of the Home where she lives "joined with "Auntie May" to celebrate with her; she received cards and flowers from a number of brethren and sisters as well as from the staff who gave her a delightful day and a lovely cake - with candles! Photo's were taken by a member of the local press. All in all a most wonderful day for her! Sadly, she had a fall on the previous day, so on her birthday she was not too well and this gave cause for concern."

Today (28th), I telephoned the Home and was told that Sister May is very weak, but she is determined to get up each day, at least for a few hours.

The last time I saw her she said, "It is my birthday soon, but please don't wish me many happy returns. 105 is enough!" So we won't wish her many happy returns but we do wish her the peace which Jesus gives, - John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

And may this peace be with us all. With love in the Master's service. Russell Gregory.

From your letters:

Sister Evelyn Linggood writes in reply to Brother Phil Parry's letter in the last C.L.:

"As Brother Phil has invited comments on what he has written, I should like to do so now and perhaps alter his mistaken idea of Israel. There is certainly a difference between spiritual Israel and fleshly Israel in that in the Kingdom the one will be immortal and the other mortal, for Israel after the flesh will be converted after the saints are made immortal "when the fullness of the Gentiles (believers) will be come in" (Romans 11:25), for this heralds the Lord's coming and the time for the immortalisation of His saints.

The Emphatic Diaglott goes on to say, in verse 26, "And then (after this) all Israel shall be saved, as it is written. The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (This name, Jacob, is never used of spiritual Israel). The next verse (27) reveals that God does not make a covenant with

them until He takes away their sins, so how can they be under the New Covenant now, when they don't even know what it is?

It is not yet time for God to favour Zion and she will remain "blind" as to the truth until that time (Romans 11:25). Most of what Brother Phil has written refers to Israel after the spirit, and these are inheritors of the Kingdom, together with Christ, of which they are now heirs; Israel after the flesh then converted, will inhabit the land of Israel and other nations the rest of the earth, but the prophets reveal a blessed future for Israel, who will be in the same sort of position as we are now and "beloved for the fathers' sake" (Romans 11:28). I do not believe that Revelation 7:1-8 refers to the saints. The sealing describes the conversion of those out of the tribes of Israel, roughly a third of the nation (Zechariah 13:8). Revelation 7:9-17 refers to the saints - "a great multitude of all nations, kindreds and people and tongues," spiritual Israel may be seen in Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 - Jews spiritually. The 12 tribes spoken of in James 1:1 and Acts 26:6,7 evidently means those (out of) the 12 tribes, who have believed.

Regarding Brother Phil's remarks that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, I would point out that flesh and blood persons will not inherit, as immortalised saints will, but will be inhabitants of the land. The inheritance of the saints is immortal life and rulership of the Kingdom, not the material inheritance of the land, which will be that of converted Israel."

* * *

Sister Wendy Hancock writes:

"I have agreed with the contributors to the Circular Letter when they have suggested more exhortations could be included and perhaps not so many articles regarding the differences between the Nazarene Fellowship and the Christadelphians. I was also interested in the suggestion that pointers could be included on how to deal with sincere people of other denominations. For instance, how does one deal with those who have their own 'scriptures' - like the Latter Day Saints, who have their Book of Mormon and the Pearl of Great Price. They are taught that "The Book of Mormon is the most correct book on earth, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by any other book." So whatever quotes from the Bible are set before them, their invariable reply is, "Ah, but the Book of Mormon says..." Most of them are very sincere people, but very sadly misguided."

* * *

A Correspondent writes:

"I think there is more to Jesus strength in overcoming than His undoubted legal inheritance, but that He was Himself the Word tabernacling among men whereby "we saw His glory," as well as the Word made flesh. It seems to me that flesh alone could never have managed the wisdom and holiness that He manifested from the earliest. What I am saying is that His strength to overcome was not a diminution of honour to Him but the glory of the divine Person that He was which was the glory of the Father also."

I thank our correspondent for his letter and in reply I would say that no one wants to fail to give to Jesus Christ the honour which is due to Him. However we must not overlook the full meaning of the words regarding Jesus who "was in all points, tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15).

By birth Jesus Christ was heir of all things and His destiny was to be King of all the earth, but it was His ambition and determination to do right which earned Him His title King of Righteousness.

Every temptation which came to Jesus, He countered with an appeal to the Word of God, that higher authority, by following which He overcame all temptation and was without sin and perfect in all His ways. Also He had temptations which we can never have, such as being able to cast Himself from the pinnacle of the Temple without harm, but these greater temptations were balanced with greater determination on His part.

In face of these things we should feel very humble for our poor efforts in overcoming our temptations, and be very thankful for His great love for us. We can do as He did and seek the same help that He sought. We can overcome all our temptations as He did; it is not a matter that we cannot, but that we do not. But to say that Jesus Christ had extra strength or power in any way or form, strength which is not available to those He came to save, is a diminution of His honour.

Perhaps others would like to write in with their views? Russell.

* * *

Questions for discussion, posed by Brother Phil Parry:

1) In view of what Jesus said in John 5:28, “Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” Does this mean that all that are in the graves will at some time, come forth? For it certainly reads this way, and we are told not to add to the word, nor take from it.

2) Is the Memorial Service of the Bread and Wine essential to believers, as some teach, for the forgiveness of personal sins? Or is it the antitype of the annual Day of Atonement and its fulfilment in Christ, to be celebrated in the manner Jesus introduced it - a reminder of His one sacrifice for sins forever, and our redemption thereby when He put away Federal Sin by the sacrifice of Himself?

3) It is said by some that the Jews have kept their identity throughout history from Moses until the present time. Seeing that God has made of one blood all nations for to dwell on the face of the earth, what constitutes a Jew’s identity, and of what value is it compared with others who subscribe to the same Old Testament Scriptures and those of the New? Are not the latter also supposed to keep their identity if they are in Christ?

4) If the Kingdom of Jesus and the Kingdom of God (apart from the motivation and principle of Righteousness) are identical or inseparable, why are two thrones mentioned in Revelation 3:21? The angel said of Jesus, “The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” Surely the Kingdom of God existed before Saul and David. Will not the reverse be the case according to 1 Corinthians 15:24-28?

5) Reading 1 Corinthians 13:8-12 recently, [“8. Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. 9. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. 10. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. 11. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. 13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity”] I was struck with the thought that most people may have read into this things that Paul is not really teaching. Perhaps the statement “face to face” leads our thoughts to the coming of Christ and His presence. Revelation 22:4, “And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.” But I think he was talking in the present tense concerning that which was perfect. Isaiah 54:13 speaks of it – “And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children” and Jesus confirms it in the present tense of His time and includes the future from His time (John 6:44,45). A reading of 2 Corinthians 3:1-18 and 2 Corinthians 4:1-7 I find very revealing on this perhaps, assumed conclusion.

2 Corinthians 3:1-8, “Do we begin again to commend ourselves or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the

ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?”

2 Corinthians 4:1-7, “Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

What do others think?

Brother Phil Parry.

JESUS IS WATCHING US

At the time of writing this we are at the beginning of another year. Our daily readings have just taken us, once more, through the account of the first sin, which later came to be referred to as “the sin of the world,” which in due time the Saviour came to take away.

What I want to draw our attention to today is how Adam and Eve reacted when God questioned them about it; how Adam tried to put the blame on his wife, who, in her turn put it on the serpent. This always reminds me of a common occurrence in everyday school life. The class is noisy. The teacher catches a pupil throwing something and jumps on him: “Now what do you think you are doing, John?” Back comes the answer, “Sir, Bill threw something at me.” Then Bill, when questioned, blames Kevin. And so it goes on; and in the end the teacher is rarely any wiser about who sparked off the uproar.

But here the comparison ends. The teacher does not know who started it. God does, and on the occasion of Adam’s disobedience. He knew. But it was still necessary to question the offenders to get it out of their own mouth, just as in a human court, each witness and defendant tell their own version of the crime, or incident, even if it is fairly obvious what had happened.

Putting the blame on others is a common human failure, and if we are honest with ourselves, I think we are all guilty at times in this respect. It’s very similar to the excuse made by the people with no full knowledge of the truth blaming “sin in the flesh,” or “original sin,” for their failings.

Coming back to the sin of Adam, God knew all about it before questioning them had even started. And God and His Son know all about our wrong doings and what led up to it. But this does not absolve us from confessing them to our High Priest, because on this, followed by sincere repentance, depends God’s forgiveness.

It is the same as with a naughty child committing some misdeed. The father or teacher may know exactly what he has done by having watched him. But he still questions him to get it straight from the source so that the child and all witnesses know why he is being punished.

There is a well-known novel with the title “1984” and one of the main characters is “Big Brother.” The phrase in this novel “Big Brother is watching you” has become part of our language. And we must be conscious of Jesus, much more than “Big Brother,” for our Lord and Master is watching us. Let us never forget this in our thoughts and conduct. What is more to the point than what we read in Psalm 139:5-7? “Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid Thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for

me, it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence?"

When reading this account of the fall we also learn of the first law. The impulses by themselves, including hunger to satisfy our appetite, are not sinful. They only become sinful when used wrongfully. And this is what happened here. It is very probable, but we cannot be dogmatic on this, that the serpent, as well as Adam and Eve, saw animals eating of the tree without coming to any harm. All it needed was a mischief making serpent to point this out, and so entice Eve's curiosity.

To make another comparison with a disobedient child: father says, "Don't touch that kettle, it's hot." The child has seen his father and mother touching it many times, but unaware that it was cold, and not coming to any harm. So he gets curious. He asks himself, "Why not? Just let me see what will happen." And what will happen is that he burns himself, and father punishes him besides. But let us get the right sequence of events. First, the law. Then temptation, be it from outside, or just from our own curious and questioning mind. Then sin. How right what we read in Romans, "Where there is no law, there is no transgression." We all know how Adam was reprieved by God's merciful scheme of begetting a second Adam, who would pay the penalty incurred by the first Adam, by giving His life in His blood. And let us never forget to appreciate this supreme love, and realise that we have no reason for high-mindedness.

Let us walk worthy of God's mercy on us, who has shown us this truth which came to us through His mercy and not by our own goodness. Let us always bear in mind that Jesus is watching us.

Brother Leo Dreifuss.

No. 8 in a series of Bible Essays.

THE HEAVENLY THINGS OF HEBREWS 9:23

What are the Heavenly Things?

The ninth verse of this ninth chapter of Hebrews gives the clue to the answer to our question. There we read concerning the Tabernacle and its worship, "which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;" then reading on to the 14th verse we learn that the blood of Christ obtains for us an eternal redemption and purges our conscience, too. The first three verses of the tenth chapter tell us that the law was a shadow of good things to come, and could not make the comers thereunto perfect, as there was a remembrance made of sins every year. Verses 12 to 14 tell us that Jesus "made one sacrifice for sins for ever," and "perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

From these verses, we gather that the ordinances of the Law of Moses with the Tabernacle and its services were symbols, shadows, or figures of that which is referred to in this ninth chapter at verse 23 as "the heavenly things."

The Tabernacle itself symbolised two states, or orders of priesthoods. The first Tabernacle, or tent, which was the largest, was fitted for the service of the priests; those men who did the service of God, and they were types of all the believers of the Gospel in these days, as Paul says, "Ye are a royal priesthood." In other words, we are called to serve God in holy places in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, serving, as it were, in the first Tabernacle, where we find the "Light-stand," or Candlestick, speaking to us of the Light of God's word, the shewbread, speaking to us of the Bread of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ on whose words we feed, and the Altar of Incense, which we are told represents the "prayers of the saints," or believers. These are the Holy, or Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus.

The second Tabernacle, or “Holy of Holies,” or “Holiest of all,” was the place into which the High Priest alone was allowed to enter, and that only once a year, on the Day of Atonement. The High Priest was a type of Christ, the other priests were types of the believers. It is of note that the priests entered the Holy Place daily ministering (see chapter 8, verses 4 and 5). They were never allowed to enter the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies represents heaven itself into which Jesus alone has entered, as the Great High Priest, there to appear in the presence of God for us.

This is a brief statement. Let us consider the question more carefully. In these chapters we have both a comparison and a contrast.

We will find the details of the Tabernacle in the 26th chapter of Exodus, which the reader is advised to study. We intend to confine our remarks almost entirely to these chapters in Hebrews, with one or two other quotations to illustrate or confirm our conclusions.

From the three last verses in the sixth chapter to the 30th verse of the tenth chapter, we have three orders of priesthoods described to us.

Firstly, we have the Priest Melchisedec. Secondly, the Priests after the order of Aaron. Thirdly, the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ and that of Melchisedec have certain characteristics in common. That of Jesus being the first and last of its kind is said to be after the order of Melchisedec, who was described as being without father, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but “abideth a priest continually.”

When trying to understand this description of Melchisedec’s priesthood, we must remember that, as we are told in Hebrews chapter six, we have left the first principles of the Truth and are going on to the deeper things of the Spirit of God; going on, as the Apostle says, “unto perfection.”

The main characteristics of the Priesthood of Melchisedec are:

a) He was the only priest who was also a king. His name is composed of two words. MELCI - king; and SEDEC - righteous (or righteousness). Therefore King of Righteousness or Righteous King. And we are told, after that King of Salem, which is King of Peace. So is Jesus - King and Priest.

b) The words just quoted provide us with the next characteristic. “Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, abideth a priest continually.”

From this, we conclude that His priesthood was without predecessor and without successor, and therefore is concluded as being still continuing. It is Melchisedec’s Priesthood which is here described, and not Melchisedec himself.

So is the Priesthood of Jesus. Not after the order of Aaron, but after the power of an endless life - abiding a Priest for ever. Thus we have the Priesthood of Jesus typified by Melchisedec.

Now we come to the second order of Priesthoods - the Aaronic. Aaron was chosen as the High Priest and his sons with him as assistant priests (or Common Priests). A clear distinction is made between the High Priest and the priests of the common order. The High Priest had robes of Glory and Beauty over his white robes of Purity and Righteousness; other priests had only the white robes.

The High Priest went into the Holy of Holies once a year; they never were allowed to enter that Holy Place. They were allowed to minister only in the first Tabernacle. Herein we have the comparison with Jesus. Aaron was the High Priest - Jesus is the Great High Priest. Aaron wore robes of Glory and Beauty over his white robes - Jesus is clothed with Glory, Honour, and Majesty over His righteousness. Aaron entered the Holiest of All with the sacrificial blood of animals - Jesus entered heaven itself there to appear in the presence of God for us. Aaron ministered in the Holiest for all Israel - Jesus ministers in Heaven for Believers.

Now the contrasts: Aaron entered the Holiest every year - Jesus once only entered heaven. Aaron died and his son succeeded him – Jesus ever-lives and has a continual Priesthood. Aaron’s offerings and the Law of Moses were a shadow of good things to come - Jesus and His sacrifice were the good things themselves. The Aaronic sacrifices were repeatedly necessary - that of the Lord Jesus once for all.

Thus we see that the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus far transcends that of Aaron and that of Melchisedec, too. Theirs were patterns - His was, and is, the True. The Tabernacle was an earthly building typical of Spiritual, or heavenly things. The Holy of Holies was typical of heaven itself. Aaron alone entered the Holiest place. No other priest was allowed to pass the veil. Jesus alone has entered heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. We are never allowed to follow Him there. “No man has ascended into heaven,” we are told, and “David is not ascended into heaven” (the third chapter of John, and the second chapter of Acts).

Aaron was the High Priest; his sons were common priests of a lower order. Jesus is the High Priest over His house - whose house are we, if we hold fast the truth.

We are allowed to serve in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, but not in the very presence of God in the Holiest of All.

The heavenly things are those to which we are now called; not in heaven but in heaven-like places in Christ Jesus. In the heavenly places to which we are called is the Bread of Heaven, and the Light of the World. Here we are in association with the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus and the True Tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man. Here on earth we are ministers in the House of the Lord.

These, then, are the “heavenly things” to which the Apostle refers in Hebrews chapter nine, and at verse twenty-three.

May God grant that we may serve faithfully and receive that great recompense of reward.

Brother Fred Lea.

EXHORTATION

By way of exhortation Brethren and Sisters, you will remember that the first exhortation in writing, as it were, was given by God Himself through Moses when he went up into Mount Sinai and returned after quite a long time, to the children of Israel who were camped near the Mount and on a journey that was to last forty years.

The exhortation was engraved onto tablets of stone, and was, of course, the Ten Commandments. The way in which the conduct of the Israelites had deteriorated in the absence of Moses disgusted him, especially when he saw the Golden Calf which they had made and were idolatrously worshipping, along with extremes of profligate conduct, which indicated their nostalgic remembrance of the comparatively comfortable lives they had lived and followed while captives in Egypt; and their knowledge of the idolatry also of Egypt, and what must have been affecting many of them, or a Golden Calf would not have been made or set up there in the wilderness.

The subsequent effect upon them of the return of Moses into their midst, and the explanation Moses gave about the Ten Commandments, was perfunctory, and Moses became exasperated with them, leading to God’s decree that he, Moses, would not enter the land flowing with milk and honey himself, which must have been more mortifying to Moses, and heartbreaking, too.

There is of course, a parallel between the situation down the ages and the actual time when God gave the law, the Ten Commandments, to the men and women of Israel in the Sinai wilderness. Kept and respected, in the eyes of God or not, the Ten Commandments have survived and are today still extant and still applicable. It is true, of course, that Jesus brought an additional concept through the Sermon on the Mount, delineated in Matthew's gospel, chapter five, and an additional dimension too, as evidenced in the life and words of Jesus in His three year ministry – namely, Love. At the end of His ministry Jesus said to His disciples, “This commandment I leave with you, that ye love one another.”

Jesus was not referring to sentimental love of any kind, but to kindness, forbearance, respect for the rights of others, and above all, respect and love from us towards God, that we also recognise the power of God, about which we should stand in awe; and the Scriptures refer to those who have a form of godliness, yet “deny the power thereof.”

In Jesus we see the characteristics of God and the perfection that He brought to the Cross - the Lamb of God indeed, without spot or blemish. We see in Jesus the power of God, illustrated in all the miracles Jesus performed, and in these miracles also was the compassion and caring, not only of God but also of Jesus Himself.

Jesus was born of a woman under the law, which law He kept perfectly; i.e., the Ten Commandments. There is nothing mysterious about the righteousness and perfection of Jesus. He kept the Ten Commandments and His perfection was illustrated and amplified by the love He had towards all around Him - even towards His murderers at the end of three years, when He cried, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Greater love indeed hath no man, than that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Of course, it is no more than our reasonable service that we keep the Ten Commandments and endeavour to have also love in our hearts towards others.

Jesus knew full well just how difficult this can be, bearing, as He had to, a “contradiction of sinners” against Himself, but we must be thankful that through the work and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our works, at best, cannot and do not save us. Speaking of salvation, the Apostle records, “not by works (are we saved) lest any should boast. By grace are ye saved, and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God.”

God saves and saved the world through Jesus Christ - especially those that believe and are adopted sons and daughters, who are associated through baptism (as Jesus was - to fulfil all righteousness), and associated too, with the righteousness of Jesus and the faith that He had. If we have done our best to do what we could then we must remember each day, whose we are and whom we serve, and wait patiently for the things beyond this life, that God has prepared for those that love Him.

In conclusion, I would refer to the closing words of the prayer Jesus taught us to pray, “For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen,” We would say Amen, indeed, for these words mean so very much more than we may have ever noticed or considered. Was Jesus simply stating an obvious fact when He said, “For thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever”? Or was He drawing our attention to the fact that it was not someone else's? I think so.

Before the temptation of Jesus commenced in the high mountain. He said, “The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” Jesus refuted and beat the Prince of this world, not only during His lifetime (on earth) and certainly the three years ministry, but also in the temptation, when He quoted Scripture, and the tempter departed and left Jesus, and subsequently suffered the ‘head wound’ (mortal wound), whereas Jesus was wounded in the ‘heel’ and will come again to take up the power of God and reign to replace human failure, which sums up the governments of the world today, with Divine success of God's Kingdom, for which we pray.

May we all find favour in the glorious fulfilment of God's purposes, which will be beyond our wildest dreams.

Brother Harold Dawson.

Further extract from

“THE TEMPLE AT THE TIME OF CHRIST”

At Night in the Temple

“Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments” - Revelation 16:15.

Allusions to the Temple in the New Testament

There is a marked peculiarity and also a special charm about the allusions of the ‘beloved disciple’ to the Temple and its services.’ The other New Testament writers refer to them in their narratives, or else explain their types, in such language as any well-informed worshipper at Jerusalem might have employed. But John writes not like an ordinary Israelite. He has eyes and ears for details which others would have left unnoticed. As, according to a Jewish tradition, the high-priest read the Divine answer of the Urim and Thumim by a heavenly light cast upon special letters in the names of the tribes graven upon his breast-plate, so to John the presence and the words of Jesus seem to render luminous the well-remembered services of the Temple. This, as we shall have frequent occasion to show, appears in his Gospel, but much more in the Book of Revelation. Indeed, the Apocalypse, as a whole, may be likened to the Temple services in its mingling of prophetic symbols with worship and praise. But it is specially remarkable, that the Temple references with which the Book of Revelation abounds are generally to ‘minutiae,’ which a writer who had not been as familiar with such details, as only personal contact and engagement with them could have rendered him, would scarcely have even noticed, certainly not employed as part of his imagery. They come in naturally, spontaneously, and so unexpectedly, that the reader is occasionally in danger of overlooking them altogether; and in language such as a professional man would employ, which would come to him from the previous exercise of his calling. Indeed, some of the most striking of these references could not have been understood at all without the professional treatises of the Rabbis on the Temple and its services. Only the studied minuteness of Rabbinical descriptions, derived from the tradition of eye-witnesses, does not leave the same impression as the unstudied illustrations of John.

Fourth Gospel and Apocalypse written before Temple Services ceased.

These naturally suggest the twofold inference that the Book of Revelation and the Fourth Gospel must have been written before the Temple services had actually ceased, and by one who had not merely been intimately acquainted with, but probably at one time an actor in them. The argument may be illustrated by an analogous case. Quite lately, they who have dug under the ruins of the Temple have discovered one of those tablets in the Court of the Temple which warned Gentiles, on pain of death, not to advance farther into the sanctuary. The tablet answers exactly to the description of Josephus, and its inscription is almost literally as he gives it. This tablet seems like a witness suddenly appearing, after eighteen centuries, to bear testimony to the narrative of Josephus as that of a contemporary writer. Much the same instantaneous conviction, only greatly stronger, is carried to our minds, when, in the midst of some dry account of what went on in the Temple, we suddenly come upon the very words which John had employed to describe heavenly realities. Perhaps one of the most striking instances of this kind is afforded by the words quoted at the head of this chapter - “Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.” They literally describe, as we learn from the Rabbis, the punishment awarded to the Temple-guards if found asleep at their posts; and the Rabbinical account of it is curiously confirmed by the somewhat ‘naive’ confession of one of their number, that on a certain occasion his own maternal uncle had actually undergone the punishment of having his clothes set on fire by the captain of the Temple as he went his rounds at night.

Night in the Temple.

For the service of the officiating ministers was not only by day, but also ‘at night in the Temple.’ From Scripture we know that the ordinary services of the sanctuary consisted of the morning and evening sacrifices. To these the Rabbis add another evening service, probably to account for their own transference of the evening service to a much later hour than that of the sacrifice. There is, however, some difficulty about the exact time when each of the sacrifices was offered. According to general agreement, the morning

sacrifice was brought at the “third hour,” corresponding to our nine o’clock. But the preparations for it must have commenced more than two hours earlier. Few, if any, worshippers could have witnessed the actual slaying of the lamb, which took place immediately on opening the great Temple-gate. Possibly they may have gathered chiefly to join in the prayer “at the time of incense.” In the modified sense, then, of understanding by the morning sacrifice the whole service, it no doubt coincided with the third hour of the day, or 9 am. This may explain how on the day of Pentecost such a multitude could so readily “come together,” to hear in their various tongues “the wonderful works of God” - seeing it was the third hour, when they would all be in the Temple. The evening sacrifice was fixed by the Law as ‘between the evenings,’ that is, between the darkness of the gloaming and that of the night.

Such admonitions as “to show forth thy faithfulness every night upon an instrument of ten strings and on the psaltery,” and the call to those who “by night stand in the house of the Lord,” to “lift up their hands in the sanctuary and bless the Lord,” seem indeed to imply an evening service – an impression confirmed by the appointment of Levite singers for night service in 1 Chronicles 9:33 & 23’: 30. But at the time of our Lord the evening sacrifice certainly commenced much earlier. Josephus puts it down as at the ninth hour. According to the Rabbis the lamb was slain at the eighth hour and a half, or about 2.30 p.m., and the pieces laid on the altar an hour later - about 3.30 p.m. Hence, when “Peter and John went up together into the Temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour,” it must have been for the evening sacrifice, or rather half an hour later, and, as the words indicate, for the “prayer” that accompanied the offerings of incense. The evening service was somewhat shorter than the morning, and would last, at any rate, about hour and a half, say till about four o’clock, thus well meeting the original requirement of Numbers 28:4. After that no other offering might be brought except on the eve of the Passover, when the ordinary evening sacrifice took place two hours earlier, or at 12.30 p.m.

Change of Priests.

We can conceive the laborious work of the day over, and the rest and solemnity of ‘night in the Temple’ begun. The last notes of the Temple music have died out, and the worshippers slowly retired, some after lingering for private prayer, or else tarrying in one of the marble porches. Already the short Eastern day is fading out in the west. Far over the mountains of Gibeon the sun is sinking in that ocean across which the better light is soon to shine. The new company of priests and Levites who are to conduct the services of the morrow are coming up from Ophel under the leadership of their heads of houses, their elders. Those who have officiated during the day are preparing to leave by another gate. They have put off their priestly dress, depositing it in the appointed chambers, and resumed that of ordinary laymen, and their sandals. For such, although not shoes, might be worn in the Temple, the priests being barefoot only during their actual ministry. Nor did they otherwise wear any distinctive dress, not even the high-priest himself, nor yet those who performed in the Temple other than strictly sacrificial services. As for the Levites, they had no clerical dress at all, but only wore the white linen, till they obtained from Agrippa II permission to wear priestly garments – as Josephus rightly remarks, ‘contrary to the laws of our country.’

The Farewell on the Sabbath.

We know that on the Sabbaths at least, when one company gave place to another, or, rather, as the outgoing course left the Temple precincts, they parted from each other with a farewell, reminding us of Paul’s to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 13:2), “He that has caused His name to dwell in this house cause love, brotherhood, peace, and friendship to dwell among you.” Each of the twenty-four courses into which not only the priests and Levites, but also all Israel, by means of representatives, were divided, served for one week, from Sabbath to Sabbath, distributing the daily service among their respective ‘families’ or ‘houses.’ For the Sabbath the new ministrants came earlier than on week-days. As the ‘family’ whose ‘daily ministration was accomplished’ left the Temple, the massive gates were closed by priests or Levites, some requiring the united strength of twenty men. Then the Temple keys were hung up in a hollow square, under a marble slab in the ‘fire-room’ (Beth-ha-Moked), which may also be designated as the chief guard-room of the priests. Now, as the stars were shining out on the deep blue Eastern sky, the priests would gather for converse or the evening meal. Pieces of the sacrifices and the ‘prepared’ first-fruits (the Therumoth) supplied the needful refreshments. Though the work of the day was over, certain arrangements had yet to be made. For the Levites in charge of collecting the tithes and other business details were wont to purchase in large quantities what each who brought any sacrifice needed for meat- and drink-offerings, and to sell it to

the offerers. This was a great accommodation to the worshipper, and a source of daily profit to the Temple. On payment of a price, fixed by tariff every month, the offerer received his proper counterfoil, in exchange for which a Temple official gave him what he needed for his sacrifice. Now, the accounts of these transactions had to be made up and checked every evening.

The Night-watches.

But already the night-watches had been set in the Temple. By day and night it was the duty of the Levites to keep guard at the gates, to prevent, so far as possible, the unclean from entering. To them the duties of the Temple police were also entrusted, under the command of an official known to us in the New Testament as the "captain of the Temple," but in Jewish writings chiefly as "the man of the Temple Mount." The office must have been of considerable responsibility, considering the multitude on feast-days, their keen national susceptibilities, and the close proximity of the hated Romans in Fort Antonia. At night guards were placed in twenty-four stations about the gates and courts. Of these twenty-one were occupied by Levites alone; the other innermost three jointly by priests and Levites. Each guard consisted of ten men; so that in all two hundred and forty Levites and thirty priests were on duty every night. The Temple guards were relieved by day, but not during the night, which the Romans divided into four, but the Jews, properly, into three watches, the fourth being really the morning watch. Hence, when the Lord saith, "Blessed are those servants whom' the lord when he cometh shall find watching," He expressly refers to the second and third watches as those of the deepest sleep.

The Rounds of the Captain.

During the night the "captain of the Temple" made his rounds. On his approach, the guards had to rise and salute him in a particular manner. Any guard found asleep when on duty was beaten, or his garments were set on fire - a punishment, as we know, actually awarded. Hence the admonition to us who, as it were, are here on Temple guard, "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments." But, indeed, there could have been little inclination to sleep within the Temple, even had the deep emotion natural in the circumstances allowed it. True, the chief of the course and 'the heads of the families' reclined on couches along that part of the Beth-Moked in which it was lawful to sit down, and the older priests might lie on the floor, having wrapped their garments beside them, while the younger men kept watch. But then the preparations for the service of the morning required each to be early astir. The priest whose duty it was to superintend the arrangements might at any moment knock at the door and demand entrance. He came suddenly and unexpectedly, no one knew when. The Rabbis use almost the very words in which Scripture describes the unexpected coming of the Master, when they say, "Sometimes he came at the cock-crowing, sometimes a little earlier, sometimes a little later. He came and knocked, and they opened to him. Then said he unto them, All ye who have washed come and cast lots." For the customary bath required to have been taken before the superintending priest came round, since it was a principle that none might go into the court to serve, although he were clean, unless he had bathed. A subterranean passage, lit on both sides, led to the well-appointed bathrooms where the priests immersed themselves. After that they needed not all that day to wash again, save their hands and feet, which they had to do each time, however often, they came for service into the Temple. It was, no doubt, to this that our Lord referred in His reply to Peter; "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit."

Casting Lots for the Services.

Those who were prepared now followed the superintending priest through a wicket into the court. Here they divided into two companies, each carrying a torch, except on the Sabbaths, when the Temple itself was lit up. One company passed eastwards, the other westwards, till, having made their circuit of inspection, they met at the chamber where the high-priest's daily meat-offering was prepared, and reported, "It is well! All is well!" Thereupon those who were to prepare the high-priest's offering were set to their work, and the priests passed into the 'Hall of Polished Stones,' to cast lots for the services of the day. This arrangement had been rendered necessary by certain painful scenes to which the eagerness of the priests for service had led. Altogether the lot was cast four times, though at different periods of the service. It was done in this manner. The priests stood in a circle around a president, who for a moment removed the head-gear of one of their number, to show that he would begin counting at him. Then all held up one, two, or more fingers - since it was not lawful in Israel to count persons - when the president named some number, say seventy, and

began counting the fingers till he reached the number named, which marked that the lot had fallen on that priest. The first lot was for cleansing the altar and preparing it; the second, for those who were to offer the sacrifice, and for those who were to cleanse the candlestick and the altar of incense in the Holy Place. The third lot was the most important. It determined who was to offer the incense. If possible, none was to take part in it who had at any previous time officiated in the same capacity. The fourth lot, which followed close on the third, fixed those who were to burn the pieces of the sacrifice on the altar, and to perform the concluding portions of the service. The morning lot held good also for the same offices at the evening sacrifice, save that the lot was cast anew for the burning of the incense.

The First Lot.

When the priests were gathered for 'the first lot' in the Hall of Polished Stones, as yet only the earliest glowing of morning light streaked the Eastern sky. Much had to be done before the lamb itself could be slain. It was a law that, as no sacrifice might be brought after that of the evening, nor after the sun had set, so, on the other hand, the morning sacrifice was only to be slain after the morning light had lit up 'the whole sky as far as Hebron,' yet before the sun had actually risen upon the horizon. The only exception was on the great festivals, when the altar was cleansed much earlier, to afford time for examining before actual sunrise the very numerous sacrifices which were to be brought during the day. Perhaps it was on this ground that, on the morning of the Passover, they who led Jesus from Caiaphas throned so 'early' 'the judgement hall of Pilate.' Thus, while some of the would be preparing in the Temple to offer the morning sacrifice, others were at the same moment unwittingly fulfilling the meaning of that very type, when He on whom "was laid the iniquity of us all" was "brought as a lamb to the slaughter."

Dr Edersheim

Continuation of -

The Netherton Debate

Chairman: It is your opportunity now.

Brother Brady now the Questioner.

193. Do you agree that, if Jesus had not died in obedience to the command of God, he would have perished?

A. Yes, He would have been disobedient.

194. Then if His death accomplished, or was contributory to His own salvation, is it not a gross misrepresentation when He says He gave Himself for us?

A. The sole purpose of Christ's existence — His death included — was for our sinfulness.

195. Then why do you say that He died for Himself?

A. I do not say it in an isolated way — that He had to die for Himself. My view was misrepresented in your opening address. I do not believe that God said to Jesus "You must die for yourself."

196. But you are defending the Christadelphian point of view.

A. I have given you plenty of opportunity to answer my questions. I ask you, too, as a gentleman, to accord me the same fair rights to express myself. This is a fundamental matter. There is associated with it so much prejudice and misunderstanding that I do wish to clarify it.

197. You have your time to utilize to the best advantage. Use it in explanations in your own time.

Chairman: Would it be an advantage if you could take that time now?

Mr Barling: If the Chairman is agreeable.

Chairman: I shall take it off your time, of course.

Mr Barling: When you accuse me of saying and preaching that Christ had to die for Himself, you are putting an altogether false accent on aspects of my teaching in my introductory address. The fact that Christ was born was due to the fact that we are sinners; the fact that He lived a sinless life had the same reason and cause; His death — more than His death. His resurrection, too, was fundamentally essential to our justification, and, therefore, it is an incorrect way of expressing the truth to say that He had to die for Himself. First, there is no question of an historical sequence of events where Christ had to die for Himself and God said, ‘Now you can die for other people.’”

Mr Brady: If Christ was under condemnation, it follows that He needed redemption. Then was not His death for Himself?

Mr Barling: I accept the Scriptures and try to base all my teaching on Scripture which says, “The God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.’ If you mean, does that prove that Christ died for Himself? I should say, Yes, categorically — provided you appreciate that I’m using legal language in discriminating.

Mr Brady: You don’t think that that is in the same sense that I say that one died for all others’ sins?

Mr Barling: This verse says to me that God brought our Lord Jesus from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant. I don’t see that that is...

Mr Brady: Well, you see, you are defending the Christadelphian case that ‘He abrogated the law of condemnation for Himself;’ and that is the root of our objection to Christadelphianism; that is why we left and have been re-baptised, because we believe that people who hold that view will have to answer to Christ when He returns. Now are we redeemed with a price?

Mr Barling: Yes. Jesus purchased us.

198. He did? Did Jesus pay the price?

A. Yes.

199. Is there any real sense in which Jesus purchased us?

A. Yes.

200. Was the blood of Jesus in any way different from ours?

A. No.

201. How then, was His blood precious?

A. Because He had come to be a propitiation for our sins. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself. The shedding of blood was the means whereby God could be just in crediting to sinners the righteousness of His Son, who died for them.

202. Was the flesh of Jesus condemned?

A. I want to know what you mean by condemned.

203. Is our flesh condemned?

A. Condemned by what?

204. Condemned under the bondage of sin, condemned in Adam?

A. We are in the bondage of corruption.

205. Was Jesus in the bondage of corruption?

A. Yes.

206. His flesh, then, was evil; would you say that?
A. Yes, His flesh had evil propensities, such as ours.
207. Was that sin in His flesh, or His blood, or both?
A. I have no idea.
208. Did Jesus receive back the price that He paid?
A. I have read nothing of the kind in Scripture.
209. Was His death a penalty due to Himself, personally?
A. I have explained already, the term ‘penalty’ is quite incongruous in this context.
210. Was Jesus the Good Shepherd?
A. Yes.
211. Did He give His life for the sheep?
A. Yes.
212. Was He one of the sheep?
A. In what sense do you use that term?
213. Flock of sheep. Is the shepherd one of the sheep?
A. In Isaiah, the figure is of Moses, and figure of God coming up from out of Egypt. So from the bondage of...
214. We are not dealing with Moses; we are dealing with “I am the Good Shepherd, and I lay down my life for the sheep.” Now, was Jesus one of the sheep?
A. The allusion in Hebrews 13:20 is the prophecy which is drawn between the redemption of Christ and with His brethren, and the salvation of Moses and the people. In that sense, yes.
215. Did you say that He was one of the sheep?
A. In that sense, yes.
216. Did Jesus give His life a ransom for many?
A. Yes.
217. Did Jesus ransom Himself?
A. Yes.
218. Did Jesus offer first for Himself?
A. Remembering that we are using the legal and technical language of the law, yes.
219. Did Jesus lay down His life voluntarily, or had He no choice?
A. He had the choice to refuse, but He laid it down in obedience to a specific command: “This commandment have I received of my Father.
220. Do you believe that Jesus was specially strengthened to overcome sin? If so, was He tempted like as we are?
A. There is no ‘if.’ He was strengthened, and tempted like as we are.
221. You can harmonise the two?
A. The Scripture does.
222. But can you? Suppose I gave a man a load to carry up a hill, and I say to another man; All right, you carry the same load up the hill, but you are much stronger. Is there any credit to the strong man in carrying up the load?

- A. The credit is to the one who gives him the strength, and that is the one to whom Jesus gives the credit.
223. Was Jesus the seed of the serpent?
A. No.
224. Was Jesus of serpent-nature?
A. Yes. He had a serpent-nature. He Himself indicated as much in the raising of the serpent in the wilderness,
225. Did Jesus belong to God?
A. Yes, and so do I, I trust.
226. Are we sold unto sin?
A. Physically, yes.
227. But we belong to God?
A. Yes.
228. Was the wrath of God upon Jesus?
A. I don't understand that language.
229. Is the wrath of God against sinners?
A. Against those who are morally sinners.
230. Was the wrath of God against Jesus?
A. Jesus was not morally a sinner, so I must deduce, "No."
231. Was He a physical sinner?
A. That is unscriptural language.
232. He was, in some sense?
A. He had a sinful nature.
233. Which required His death?
A. You are giving ideas which I do not propagate.
234. Was the purpose of His death to destroy His flesh?
A. His death condemned sin in the flesh.
235. Therefore He had sin in the flesh?
A. Yes.
236. But you agreed that sin could be put upon the head of the animal; but you don't agree that any sin was transferred?
A. I am not committing myself to that view; I am simply saying that when you asked me the question, I did not agree. I wanted to make myself clear.
237. Now I want you to suppose, on your view, that Jesus had to die for His own salvation. You agree that He did, but you admit that His death was necessary for His own salvation?
A. It is an entirely false emphasis. His free release was our release. He died to sin, and we died to sin in that sense. We must identify ourselves with Him, and He is the representative of mankind; and I think I can give a beautiful analogy.
238. If you will suppose, on our view, that Jesus did not have to die for Himself, but voluntarily took the sinner's place, can you conceive of that? Do you think that would have shown a superabundant love towards us, if He loved us and gave Himself for us? He said, "Greater love hath no man than this; that a man lay

down his life for his friends.” Now if Jesus was free from condemnation to make His choice, do you think that when He chose to die for us He showed the love of God and His own love towards us?

A. I am glad you quoted the words of Galatians 2:20, because in that scripture Paul says two things which you make the basis of attack upon us, which can be reconciled: 1. “I am crucified with Christ;” 2. “Who loved me and gave himself for me.” Those are the two sayings which explained the death of Christ. We are crucified with Him, and yet He gave Himself for us.

239. In your opening address you said the Scripture said we were buried with Christ.

A. I don't. The Scripture does.

240. You've just said that Paul was crucified?

A. Paul said that we are crucified with Christ, in symbol.

241. Was Paul literally crucified with Christ?

A. In symbol. Not literally.

242. Did Jesus suffer the reality of a literal death, and do we require to go through it in symbol, both morally and spiritually, in baptism?

A. Yes. And the symbol of the new life is baptism.

243. Is baptism a symbol of crucifixion? You give your case away completely. If Christ suffered literally, and we require to go through it in symbol, did He not do for us what we don't have to do for ourselves?

A. I'm afraid you are demolishing your own case in this evidence; you are forgetting that Paul said, in Romans 6, that we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that the body of sin might be destroyed. The more strongly you argue that Christ suffered the reality, that the body of sin was destroyed in our case, then you have to admit that the body of sin was destroyed in Christ. You are completely demolishing your own case.

244. It destroys yours. You affirm that the body of sin is our literal physical nature; is that destroyed in baptism?

A. Precisely. In Romans 6 Paul says that we are destroyed, in our sense. You know that as well as I do.

245. You said that our members - our limbs, our flesh, serve sin, did you not?

A. I don't say it, Paul does.

246. Can those same members serve God?

A. Yes.

247. Well, where is your case? You argue that we, by nature, are evil; you admit that the same members that can serve sin can serve God (or that Paul says it). Did they serve God in the case of Paul? Show me where Paul committed a sin after he was in Christ.

A. I'll use one scriptural figure; “Receive with meekness the engrafted word.” Out there are apples trees, the basic stock is a wild apple; on the top of which is a cultivated shoot. The purpose of our life of discipline is that the cultivated shoot should take the strength of the native evil stock, and make it bring forth fruit to righteousness. And so there is conflict within us; the members naturally tending to serve sin, but ourselves being called upon to compel them to serve righteousness.

248. If a man brings forth the fruits of righteousness and serves God, has he still sinful flesh?

A. Oh yes.

249. Can he help sinning?

A. In the absolute sense, no. But he has also to say that when he does good, he does it, not himself, but “by the grace of God which is in me.”

250. You quote the example of Jesus who, you admit, was made in all points like as we, and yet was without sin.

A. Yes.

251. Then what is your explanation in how He succeeded in overcoming sin, when you say that it is impossible for us to overcome sin?

A. I shall answer your question...

252. Did Jesus do for us what we cannot do for ourselves?

A. Yes.

253. Dr Thomas says that Jesus was the same flesh as sinned in Eden. Do you agree that the implication is that Jesus, when He came, was the same flesh as Adam before he sinned?

A. Is the interpretation valid?

Chairman: Where does that appear?

F. J. Pearce, in the audience:- In the Christadelphian Magazine, August 1873, page 364.

254. Did Dr Thomas say that the ram offered on Mount Moriah was a substitute for Isaac?

A. He did say so, but what he said is irrelevant to this discussion, because I'm basing my personal teaching — which I am now defending — on my own personal beliefs. I am speaking and defending it, as a Christadelphian, by my personal convictions, prepared as a consequence of those — not of any statements others may make out of their context.

Brother Barling now the Questioner:

90. Paul says; “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin. Kindly define the term “death” in that quotation,

A. I don't define it; I accept it, as death by sin.

91. Yes, but do you know that we disagree in our interpretation of that which terminates our ordinary human life? How, exactly, do you interpret it?

A. I understand that death is a penalty for sin, and I don't regard natural death as a penalty for sin.

92. What is the penalty? What does Paul mean — what is he referring to when he says, “death by sin”?

A. I think that death was illustrated by the violent death of animals, by sacrifices under the Law, and finally, by the death of Jesus on the Cross.

93. I was correctly interpreting your belief; that ‘death’ is a violent death?

A. Or inflicted death; death as a punishment.

94. Not if you are referring to the death which normally terminates life. Will you turn to 1 Corinthians 15? I want you to be particularly careful when you answer my preparatory questions. Verse 21; “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.” “By man came death;” what does “death” mean in that verse? Is it the death which normally terminates life?

A. No.

95. Now verse 26; “the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” Is that the death which normally terminates human life?

A. It is difficult to answer that question, because death is spoken of as an enemy.

96. Which enemy is it, the one that will take you to the grave?

A. No, it is not that, because that is not an enemy. That will be no bar to eternal life to anybody who accepts Christ.

97. So you are quite explicit that that verse which says “the last enemy is death” is not another way of saying that mortality will be brought to an end?

A. Yes, I should say so.

98. It doesn't mean that eventually the earth will be populated with undying people?
A. It results in that, because when...
99. Does it specially refer to it?
A. No, I don't think so.
100. Now verse 54: "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." What 'death' will that be?
A. That is death in the wide sense — all death, death, whether it is by sin, or death as the result of natural corruption, or death of any kind.
101. It can therefore refer to the death which terminates our human life?
A. Yes. I would say so, off-hand, in a general way.
102. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin." You have said that the 'death' that is to be swallowed up comprehends the death which takes us to the grave. When it says that "the sting of death is sin" (to explain the quotation from Isaiah and from Hosea), why does it say "the sting of death is sin"? Where is the connection between Adam's sin, and death which takes us to the grave, according to your theology? Why should that connection be made which you say is unscriptural and an artificial one?
A. Well, the second death ends in the grave just as much as the first death, does it not?
103. This is referring to the return of Christ and to that time when a transformation will take place in our natures.
A. No; there will be those who will be corruptible.
104. In this verse, at the return of Christ, when there is a change in our nature, "death is swallowed up in victory." You agree that that is the reverse of our natural condition of being subject to death?
A. No. I said it comprehends death in all its forms.
105. You have committed yourself. Does it include that aspect of death that takes us to the grave?
A. Yes.
106. Very well. Does that statement "the sting of death is sin" apply to that aspect?
A. No.
107. Now we will retrace our steps. Verse 17, "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." Paul is referring to believers. They are "in Christ." Now they "have fallen asleep;" What sort of death have they suffered?
A. A natural death.
108. In this life all men are most miserable. What terminates life?
A. Natural death.
109. "But now is Christ risen from the dead." What does the term 'death' mean in that verse?
A. From the state of death. Jesus has risen from among those who have suffered a natural death.
110. "And become the first fruits of those that slept." Now you appreciate that that is an illusion to the "first fruits" of the law?
A. Yes. The first fruits of them that slept.
111. And the first fruits of the harvest?
A. Yes.
112. So that Paul is saying that Christ is part of the harvest — the harvest of salvation from death?
A. Yes, the harvest of the resurrection which is...

113. Which is salvation from death?
A. No, I don't agree.
114. "Now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept." What has happened to "them that slept" at this stage?
A. They are dead.
115. And the emphasis that, he supports it, he sustains it, by saying, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Is there a connection between those two verses - verses 20 and 21?
A. Yes. In the...
116. Those in Christ are dead?
A. Yes.
117. Why?
A. Because the time for their deliverance has not come.
118. They have naturally died; which Paul explains by saying, "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." Can't you see the perfect balance? You, yourself, admit that, in verse 20, they are dead because they have suffered natural death; therefore they 'sleep' because of that. And to demonstrate that Christ is the first fruits of "them that slept." Paul says, "For by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."
A. But this is the point; that the resurrection did not come by Christ, the death that naturally ends our life would have ended our existence as certainly as it would have ended Adam's.
119. You are compelled to hold that view — but let us look at the first clause; "By man came death." You are now arguing, from the second part of the verse, that, unless Christ had redeemed us, that death normally terminates life — that, and 'natural' death — would have meant the end. Now, the first part of the verse says about that 'death' which He suffered. But it came by man. How did it come by man? How does 'natural death' come by man?
A. Let us suppose that Adam had not sinned...
120. No supposing. Death has come — has death come by man?
A. Death passed upon all men.
121. How has it come by man? What sort of death is being mentioned in verses 20 and 21?
A. This is natural death.
122. Verse 21 — is that natural death?
A. No, not natural death, because it wasn't natural death that came by sin.
123. Is there any connection between verses 20 and 21? If there is, what is it? What is the connection between these two statements?
A. Because had Christ not come and paid the price, had he not been raised from the dead, the death that ends our natural existence would have ended our existence, because Christ...
124. That is a purely gratuitous assumption, which is not at all relevant to the cogent argument developed by the Apostle. Answer my questions please. We will recapitulate here. Verse 20, "Now is Christ risen from the dead." What have they suffered?
A. They have suffered nothing.
125. They have fallen asleep?
A. Yes.
126. "Become the firstfruits of them that slept." "For as by man came death..." All the rules of logic require that that death which has come by man is the death mentioned in the previous verse which, on your

own admission, is natural death; and you are now asking me to accept some purely unrelated explanation and to throw all logic overboard — the cogency of the argument which demonstrates, beyond all doubt that natural death came by man?

A. No, it doesn't, because death is all one. However death comes to take place, whether natural or violent — the man who dies is in the death state.

127. Does the natural aspect come by man?

A. Had Adam not sinned...

128. There is no hypothesis; it is a reality, this experience of natural death. Does it come by man?

A. No.

129. Paul says it does: "By man came death," which is quite clearly the death mentioned in the previous verse which, on your own admission, is natural death. Did natural death come by man?

A. No.

130. Therefore the word 'for' is incorrectly used and there is no sequence in this argument? There is no sequence of thought to be established by using it?

A. The sequence of thought is this; that Christ having risen from the dead, death now has no dominion.

131. Now sir, I will ask you one or two quick questions. Would a superficial reader come to the conclusion, from this argument, in this verse in particular, that natural death comes through Adam's sin?

A. A superficial reader might have reached a false conclusion from any passage.

132. Would he draw that conclusion in the first interpretation?

A. No, you would not draw that division, having that idea in one's mind.

133. If a man read this, what general impression would he get from it?

A. He would get the impression that by His resurrection from the dead Jesus had opened the way out of death; but he would not conclude that the death that ends the life of animals and plants and irresponsible people was the penalty of sin.

134. Would he be a logical person in drawing that conclusion?

A. No, he would be utterly illogical to draw such a conclusion from 1 Corinthians 15, because Paul is there proving the resurrection of the dead.

135. "Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept," and he illustrates that; "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead." You can see readily that in verse 20 'death' is a natural death. When Paul connects that with the next statement by the word 'for' you are asking me to say there is no connection between the 20th and 21st verses, and it does not prove that natural death comes by man. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." What does "Die" mean here?

A. It means all in Adam suffer the penalty of death for sin.

136. "In Christ shall all be made alive." When?

A. When Christ shall come to raise the dead.

Brother Brady now the Questioner:

254. Producing this argument knocked your case to atoms; that Christ, by His resurrection, has destroyed death. Now He hasn't destroyed natural death, as there are those who still die a natural death, not death as a penalty, because there will be those raised from the dead who will suffer the penalty of sin.

A. Is that so?

255. Yes, the second death.

256. Now then, if those who have died naturally have suffered the penalty of sin, how can a just God raise them from the dead to punish them with the second death?
- A. As I explained, you are attributing to me an idea of ‘penalty.’ You are arguing in the terminology of your own theology. I say that the bondage of corruption is the unhappy inheritance that we have from Adam. It is an indication that our flesh is under the bondage of sin; and that ‘bondage’ will be vanquished in the glorious resurrection.
257. You have affirmed that sinful human nature is the result of the sin of Adam and the corruptibility which came by Adam’s transgression.
- A. I am using your own language. The ‘bondage’ of corruption is to be vanquished of the body. I am using your own terms.
258. I don’t accept that the bondage of corruption is a physical principle of flesh or that it brings about natural death. It is a law, a rule that is passed upon men when they come to enlightenment. As it says in Romans; “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Death reigned from Adam to Moses — even over them that had not sinned, and death is still reigning in the same sense as the law of Britain reigns over us. When we become amenable to that law, then we’ve got, by the sacrifice of Christ, to transfer ourselves from bondage of that law to the freedom which is in Christ. Then Christ says we have “passed” from death unto “life.” Now what death have they passed from?
- A. Well, Paul tells me; “In Adam all die;” it’s a present experience, “but in Christ shall all be made alive.” Your theory requires that all men die “in Adam,” but that as soon as they become “in Christ” they are made alive.
259. Men who live their lives on probation and remain in the Adamic relationship will be held responsible. An Apostle says, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”
- A. You say that when a man is enlightened he becomes in Adam?
260. On the basis of all just laws of judgment, Yes. Can God hold men responsible for sins they are ignorant of?
- A. No.
261. How do you hold that He can punish the whole of mankind with the penalty of death, or with death however you regard it, because Adam sinned? You admit they are not sinners?
- A. He is not ‘punishing’ them. That question does not require an answer.
262. But you admit there is a punishment?
- A. In the case of Adam the punishment was; “Unto dust shalt thou return.” We have inherited that physical condition.
263. We’ll go back to Genesis 3:17. “Cursed is the ground for thy sake.” Did that make any change in Adam’s physical condition or nature?
- A. Certainly in his condition.
264. “Cursed is the ground...
- A. It wasn’t Adam...
265. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat of the herb of the field.” Did that change his physical nature? Did it implant sin?
- A. It subjected him to entirely new physical conditions.
266. Did those conditions change his nature? Did they cause him to become corruptible?
- A. These verses undoubtedly establish that. They have a symbolic significance also, inasmuch as they describe the spiritual significance of the physical experience of man,
267. Do you agree that “the animal nature of man shall dissolve. It was not constituted to continuing life independent of any further modification. We admit the corruptibility and consequent mortality of their nature, without saying that they are mortal”?

A. I could counter it with others.

268. We recognise that Dr Thomas has contradicted himself and made mistakes, and we are pointing out why those mistakes occurred, because they have, basic in their belief, the idea that human nature is inherently evil. I want to read you the ninth article of the Church of England Prayer Book; “Original Sin standeth not in the following of Adam, but it is the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam: whereby man is very far gone from the original righteousness and is of his own nature inclined to evil.”

You will agree with that?

A. I would like notice of that.

269. It is in the ninth article of the Church of England Prayer Book, defining the doctrine of Original Sin. It is identical with the Christadelphian doctrine.

A. That may be correct; but I am not going to make a rash statement.

270. In Genesis 3:19 it says; “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.” Was this the change in Adam’s nature?

A. Clearly something occurred to him within that...

271. But don’t you think that he could sweat before he sinned?

A. Quite probably, but there is a measure that is quite irrelevant. You have started with “because thou hast done so-and-so, these are your experiences;” you are asking me to say that these experiences are nothing to do with the clause.

272. No, I am not. But I disagree with your interpretation of what these experiences mean.

A. I have not said that they involve a change in his nature or condition, but there is a change here involved, of some other character.

273. But you can’t define it?

A. In this case it is the conditions under which he lives legally.

274. You would admit in effect that he was corruptible beforehand?

A. I made no...

275. You admit that he was the living soul, “of the earth, earthy”?

A. Yes.

276. Would you admit that he was corruptible — capable of dying before his sin?

A. I would say, speaking out of my own convictions, that it was the nature that is called the body, to rescue in a state of equilibrium before he sinned, and his sin determined which way the bias would be set in motion which would cause him to decline.

277. You don’t think a miracle took place?

A. I must say that, from the fact that they ate and their eyes were opened something fundamental happened within them (that is scriptural evidence) but the actual mechanism, or ‘modus operandi,’ I cannot attempt to explain.

278. Now God said; “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

A. Yes.

279. Now Adam was dust before he sinned; we have Dr Thomas’ admission that this must have been corruptible at his creation,

A. What Dr Thomas says doesn’t commit me at the moment. I am answering from my own convictions.

280. You stated that there were two natures?

A. Yes; I accept, in general, the body ‘celestial’ and the body ‘terrestrial.’

281. Now if Adam was in that state of equilibrium, was his a different nature?

A. No, not necessarily.

282. Then his nature was not changed?

A. It would be a kind of condition. May I give you an illustration? There is one mediator between God and man: He is the man Christ Jesus. If you ask me 'What kind of nature had Jesus Christ?' I could say (with your peculiar kind of logic) that because He is a man He has a corruptible nature. He is the same individual, but quite clearly He has undergone a change. You can use the term 'man,' or 'Adam.' In this condition you are agreed that His is an incorruptible nature, because of the conditions of his life and being.

283. Was His being changed? In this you profess a belief in the implantation of a physical law of decay; I am bound to bring you back to the Christadelphian point of view. That is why we are here tonight. Now then, how did the sentence justify a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being? I want to know if you believe that?

A. The body is dead because of sin. There is a similar paraphrase in the New Testament...

284. You admitted that when a man is in Christ he can be obedient?

A. Yes.

285. The same physical evil constitution, with its implanted physical laws, can be obedient. Doesn't it prove there is no such physical implanted law?

A. At this stage your statements lack sequence. It is, of course, for you to accord me the time to point out that you have just said that you agree that all this is contingent upon the term 'because;' the cursing of the ground, eating in sorrow, the thorns and thistles, in the sweat of the face — you cover all these expressions by the term: but when you come to the expression "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," you say, quite airily, that that was true of Adam before the curse.

286. I take that as the time limit set, during which Adam was going to suffer under these conditions. He goes on to say "For out of the ground wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Doesn't that prove that he was not changed? He was out of the ground; why not return to the ground in the natural course?

A. But it was his sin which determined that he should return because of the curse. When you come to this statement you say this is a gratuitous statement and has no relation to the sin; all the previous statements in the sequence, you say, are due to the sin, but quite capriciously and arbitrarily you say this is nothing to do with it.

287. If you say so-and-so there is a limit; and this limit was set when God said, 'Thou shalt suffer these things until thou return to the ground.'

Now I quite admit that, had Adam been obedient, he would have required a change in nature; He would have required deliverance from His corruptibility before He could have lived for ever. You admit the same?

A. I have made no such admission. We have got the record of this debate for the purpose of publication, so that we can have the thing straight and see where the contradictions are in our views. If there are contradictions in our views, well, we will have them out,

288. I wasn't able to justify what you said were four or five of our fundamental beliefs. They are not fundamental points. The fundamental of our belief is that Jesus gave Himself for the ungodly: the Just, for the unjust; and we can justify that on the basis of sustained scriptural argument — reasoning and Scripture together.

A. Singularly unscriptural.

289. Well, that is your view. We have got the record now, and it will be for the public to read and come to the conclusion where the truth lies. We maintain that Jesus was not under condemnation, and had He been so He would have been unable to redeem the world; the purpose of God would have been a failure. God would have been convicted of fraud, because He paid to sin what already belonged to sin, according to your theory. Jesus, because of His virgin birth, received His life direct from God, and therefore He was in a position...

- A. And yet you have given me not one scriptural proof to attribute this significance to the virgin birth.
290. What more significant than the message to the Virgin: “That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”?
- A. But there is nothing there about free life whatsoever.
291. I don’t care about ‘free life’ at all.
- A. I’m glad of that, because you should; you are quoting the Virgin Birth now.
292. I don’t require that phrase ‘a free life;’ I am quoting it to prove that Jesus was free and the Son of God.
- A. That is an interpretation. There is nothing in that quotation to support the idea of ‘free life.’
293. It is a statement of fact.

Brother Barling questions Brother Brady:

137. Corinthians 15:22. As I now see it, then, on your own admission, it says that the dead are dead because they have suffered natural death. They that sleep have had the same experience. But the use of the conjunctive ‘for’ to connect the following verse with the previous verse is irrelevant, because the ‘death’ in verse 21 is an entirely different sort of death. Verse 22: “For as in Adam all die.” The audience is well familiar with your understanding of that statement. It is connected with the previous verse. When do they all die “in Adam.”?
- A. They either die symbolically in baptism and therefore pass into Christ, or they die in the Day of Judgment.
138. When he says, very precisely; “In Adam all die,” using the present tense, is there any significance that with equal precision he uses the future instead of the present, in contrast? Can you explain why “all die in Adam” now, by “in Christ shall all be made alive”?
- A. Because it is in the present that we need to die to the old man, ‘in Adam,’ and it is in the future that we shall be made alive in Christ in the resurrection. There is a sense in which we are made alive in Christ now: we have passed from death to life; but we have to wait for the resurrection.
139. But note the context; “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.” How is that demonstrated? “Even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” It is the physical experience of men that is being described, without a doubt. “In Adam all die;” I say that it is clearly understandable; it means that men go to the grave because of Adam’s sin. Logic demands that.
- A. I say No, it doesn’t. “All die;” it’s a matter of present experience. I don’t agree.
140. Its a matter of present experience based on the preceding argument by the double use of the conjunction ‘for,’ but it says that in Christ shall all be made alive.
- A. I don’t agree; all die in Adam when they are buried in symbol, and rise unto Christ.
141. You notice, following this verse, ideas which are irrelevant to the theme of the Apostle in this place, and yet earlier in the debate you admitted that the superficial reading of this verse would suggest that we go to the grave in the normal course, because of sin. In other word we have again the peculiar position of what may be called, the obvious meaning which isn’t the real meaning; it is always something else.
- A. The obvious meaning is often not the correct meaning,
142. In the case of my reading of the scriptures that seems a peculiar thing to say. The scriptures are for men’s enlightenment, and they are able to enlighten without divination, and you are here to explain the connection in the Apostle’s argument.
- A. If you jumble the death which came by sin with the death which is natural corruption (and which existed before Adam was culpable — before he sinned) then you are jumbling up things that differ. “Death came by sin” and “death passed upon all men.”

143. The simple issue is this: Paul says “By man came death” in a context where he has just explained that “in Adam all die;” he is using the term of present experience. Then he demonstrates that in the mercy of God there is hope of something better, because “Christ is the first fruits. . . In Christ shall all be made alive.” “But every man in his own order.” Now then, we will go to the end of the chapter, to verse 53; “For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality.” 54; “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. Death is swallowed up in victory.” You will agree that that is a change from a corruptible condition to an incorruptible one, and that it will fulfil the scriptures “death is swallowed up in victory.” What ‘death’ will that mean for those in Christ?

A. Repeat the question please.

144. What ‘death’ is swallowed up in victory?

A. It will mean the death which would have held them eternally, had Christ not come.

145. When will corruptible put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality? When will it be brought to pass? Will that happen to men in Adam?

A. No. Obviously not

146. Only to men in Christ?

A. Yes.

147. For those already in Christ — they that are fallen asleep in Christ — the scripture will be fulfilled, “Death is swallowed up in victory.” What sort of ‘death’ is that?

A. The death that they are going to be raised from.

148. They die a natural death.

A. They are asleep in natural death.

149. For them, it can be one death only?

A. No, because from the first death, the death that came by sin, they passed in symbol, in baptism.

150. So they are now ‘in Christ’ and they shall be made alive?

A. Yes.

151. This is described in detail?

A. You haven’t come yet to those who haven’t died,

152. I’m not concerned with them who are changed by nature. “Death will be swallowed up in victory.” What death? They died a natural death.’ Is natural death swallowed up in victory?

A. No. It says “When they shall have put on immortality” we come to a certain time when Christ is returned and we are raised from the dead. Then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. That death is the death which reigned from Adam.

153. Will you agree with this: that it is the change of nature that will be the victory over death?

A. No. It will be the resurrection.

154. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. When he says that, he is not intimating that the change of nature is the swallowing up of victory. On the other hand, he is intimating that death of a legal kind that came by Adam will be repudiated?

A. Yes.

155. Again, the verse doesn’t say what it seems to say, but what you consider...

A. You are taking the chapter which is proving the resurrection and you are applying it to prove what Paul proves in the Epistles to the Romans.

156. You will agree that the resurrection is the reversal of natural death, because natural death only takes you to the grave and the resurrection brings you up?
 A. No, I do not say so, because some will receive eternal life that don't receive a resurrection.
157. Christ calls it "the resurrection unto condemnation," for some. In John 5, He says; "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." 26; "For as the Father hath life in Himself; so has He given to the Son to have life in himself;" 27; "And He hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." 28; "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice," 29; "And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." What does the resurrection do to the good and evil?
 A. Brings them out of the tomb.
158. That resurrection is the reversal of going into the tomb?
 A. In the case of the resurrection of life.
159. In the case of those who have the resurrection of life, it will involve a transformation of nature?
 A. No. They have come forth.
160. It will involve a transformation of nature; the time doesn't matter.
 A. They will come forth.
161. It doesn't matter when it will happen, whether then or after judgment; will it be a fundamental transformation of nature? Will this corruptible put on incorruption?
 A. Yes.
162. When the transformation has taken place, that saying will be brought to pass: Death is swallowed up in victory? That is the death which takes them to the grave? We will continue. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the law." And now will you turn with me to Hosea 13? I want you to answer a very important question: What does 'ransom' redeem us from sin that comes from Adam, or the 'death' which terminates life?
 A. It redeems us from bondage.
163. So that where redemption is involved, sin is involved?
 A. No. It is a state of bondage. The very use of the term 'redemption' implies sin and its consequent slavery.
164. What brings about that state of bondage?
 A. Adam's sin.
165. So bondage is an indication of the presence of sin and its consequences?
 A. No. People who are not necessarily sinners by their own actions are in bondage, and by ransom and redemption escape from...
166. Where the terms 'ransom' and 'redemption' are involved is the sin of Adam and its consequences involved?
 A. Yes.
167. Now let us look at the 15th chapter of the 1st of Corinthians, verse 54; "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This is a quotation from the latter part of Hosea 13:14; "O grave, I will be thy destruction." It is a quotation, I think you will agree?
 A. Yes.
168. Why does God say, in verse 14 (in the early part); "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death"?
 A. Because they needed redemption from that power.

169. Where are they at this time; the people involved?

A. They are in the power of the grave.

170. In the grave itself?

A. No, not necessarily in the grave.

171. Why, then, does Paul apply fulfilment of this quotation to the time when the dead come out of the grave and are transformed in nature, if it is nothing to do with going into the grave?

A. I didn't say it wasn't anything to do with going in, as death (as death), is all one. If death comes as a penalty of sin, that is one thing, but...

172. Is this the death that takes us to the grave that is reversed when there is the resurrection and transformation of nature? This is the death, the natural death, that is involved in Paul's arguments?

A. No, I should say not, because this death that takes us to the grave is not necessarily final. Those who are responsible are to be brought forth to give an account; which proves, you see, that the death which you regard as sin's penalty is only one thing...

173. That is pure quibble. When the change of nature occurs, then shall be brought to pass the saying. Therefore, it can only concern people who go into the grave.

A. But it also concerns people who are living.

174. This transformation will occur in the case of both living and dead, so that Paul is indicating quite clearly that the living in Christ are likewise in the power of the grave and of death. But when the transformation of nature takes place, the scripture will be fulfilled, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory." The living and the dead will experience that, and the scripture will be fulfilled. Therefore the redemption, according to Hosea, does concern the nature which takes them to the grave.

Tea Interval.

The Debate will be concluded in the next Circular Letter.

* * * * *

Beautiful faces are they that wear the light of a pleasant spirit there.
It matters little if dark or fair. Beautiful hands are they that do
Deeds that are noble, good and true. Busy with them the long day through.
Beautiful feet are they that go swiftly to lighten another's woe,
Through summer's heat or winter's snow. Beautiful children, if rich or poor,
They walk the pathways sweet and pure that lead to the mansion strong and sure.