

# The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 157

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## Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends,

Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

It was October 1988 when I took over the compilation and distribution of the Circular Letter from Brother and Sister Linggood. It has been a busy seven years and for me a very fruitful one in gaining much knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. When I was turned out of Erdington Christadelphian ecclesia in March 1986 for asking questions for which Christadelphians had no sensible answers, I knew almost nothing of the Nazarene Fellowship and had never heard of their Circular Letter, but thankfully God answered my prayers and all my questions regarding the Atonement. I only wish that many people I left behind would prayerfully seek for answers as to why Christ died rather than be satisfied with stones for bread, and by the Grace of God I shall continue to work to this end.

And now after seven happy years as Editor of the Circular Letter I would like you to welcome Sister Helen Brady as our Joint-Editor:

Russell Gregory.

Dear Fellow Members,

The assassination of Yitzhak Rabin, the Prime Minister of Israel, has thrown the Middle East into turmoil. We do not know if this is the event that will lead to the upheaval that will precipitate the return of Jesus to sit on the Throne of David.

It would seem likely that if an Arab had killed Mr Rabin instead of a Jew the Israeli nation would have erupted but the very fact that the killer is one of their own has subdued their initial reaction into one of soul searching and contemplative grief rather than a resort to violence.

When dreadful deeds of cruelty occur within a family the response from those damaged is usually one of stunned silence and acceptance rather than a reaction of violent revenge. The Jewish people have a tremendous sense of family in the usual meaning of the word as well as in its wider application.

Mr Rabin according to his past history has lived by the sword and now he has died by it. The rest of the world can only watch and wait to see what happens next. But it is never for very long that Israel and her

affairs are out of the minds of those who are aware of her significance in history, nor is she off the front pages of the world's press for long because whether people recognize it or not, the Middle East is the centre of world politics as well as being the centre of the universe as far as God's plan is concerned for those who love Him and look for a continuing city and the return to earth of His Son.

I believe there is a Jewish proverb which says that the world could not continue if there were not 30 good people alive in it at any one time. When I first heard this I thought it an overstatement but on reflection I am not so sure. Good deeds have such far reaching effects, often unseen effects but effects none the less. It is doubtful if Mr Rabin was one of those good people, only God knows that. But we know that God uses all sorts of people and events to further His plan and we can only do the best we can in our small corner. To kill someone for whatever reason is not right but we are told that out of evil cometh good.

Russell has asked me to help him a little with the Circular Letter and this is my first effort to ease his load. Here I must pay tribute to Russell in appreciation for all his work on the Circular in the years since he took it on. It can often seem a thankless task. It requires steady work and attracts more brickbats than bouquets! But Russell has produced for us an excellent thought provoking letter at very regular intervals to keep us in touch with each other, and to keep before us the constant reminder of our great and high calling. Russell provides some helpful spiritual food for us all.

With the help of new technology which he has mastered marvellously the medium is really worthy of the eternal message. The C.L. is a pleasure to read and we owe Russell our grateful thanks for a job most faithfully and thoughtfully done.

I should also mention here as well the work of proof reading which Russell's sister - and ours - Eileen undertakes with every edition. I have done this a couple of times with Russell when Eileen has been away and I know the time and care it takes.

I remember as perhaps you do the first attempt at a Circular Letter that Bro. Fred Pearce produced over 50 years ago. Some of it was very hard to read but he did his very best with what was then available, stencils and carbon paper mostly, and it is because of him and those like him before him and after him that we are here today and in possession of the truth and with the hope of eternal life. We are indeed all fellow members one of another and we all have our part to play however large or small and it all adds to the sum of things.

The power of the printed word is great and the power to produce it quickly and distribute it is a true blessing. Knowledge is power and now that that most sophisticated and pleasing means of reproducing thought and ideas is available as never before there is little excuse for remaining ignorant. This is a situation that fills all governments but particularly totalitarian ones with horror. It is not for nothing that photocopiers were long banned in Russia. The ability to contact other people and to disseminate information quickly is a boon to individuals but a severe threat to the domination of the many by the few.

When the Falklands war was being fought Mrs Thatcher and her henchmen saw to it that the reports of the battle did not reach the British public as rapidly as the results of the Charge of the Light brigade trickled through a century ago.

For many reasons the world is a difficult place. We get older and our lives change and not always for the better. Those we love and depend on die and relationships we thought secure perish or those relationships we hope to see develop do not flourish and we find ourselves disappointed and probably alone. It will not always be so for it is certain that whatever our test, others who have gone before have suffered the same and wept for the same reasons. We can only endure to the end and know for sure that our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.

As we look forward to Christmas and the celebration of Jesus birth we remember everything He suffered for us and we can only marvel and be thankful for His strength and the fact that He loved us before He knew us and that He so graciously laid down His life for His friends. When we contemplate these things we can only say as the thief said to Him when they were both in agony on their crosses "Lord, remember me when you come into your Kingdom."

Love to all, Helen Brady

# Extracts From Your Letters:

## Brother Phil Parry's comments resulting from the last Circular Letter

First and foremost we are grateful to Bro. Russell Gregory for the immense labour he has put into the C/L which is produced, not for the sake of argument for its own sake but that Truth may emerge and stand the test.

The Problem with views on Ezekiel's vision of the Temple:

Bro. Leo Dreifuss and Sister Linggood appear to be in agreement that this Temple seen in vision and described in measurement to Ezekiel is a future material building for gatherings of corruptible nations during the reign of Jesus, to worship and to offer sacrifices of animals as retrospective and in acknowledgement of the one sacrifice Jesus made in shedding His life-blood on Calvary's Tree. I expressed my opinion in a previous C/L in opposition to this return to animal sacrifice under the Law of Moses, for this is how it struck me. But of course, if as Leo says, this is to be the mode of educating those who have never known anything about sacrifice and redemption and to teach them the need for reconciliation; if this is a fulfilment of Micah 4:1-2 and Revelation 14:6, then it must be a re-introduction of the Law of God to Moses and His Word.

At least there will be no arguments and disputes as to whether Jesus was a substitutionary sacrifice or not.

Having said this, the problem still remains; Sister Linggood quotes me as saying that animal sacrifices were in themselves displeasing to God. In my quoting of Hebrews 10:6 "In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure" - the writer adds the reason for this - "which are offered by the law," thus signifying the fact that "obedience is better than sacrifice." 1 Samuel 15:22. This is what I meant to convey from the words of Jesus in Hebrews 10:6

Jesus said "I come to do thy will O God," this, Adam failed to do in the garden of Eden, and by necessity to continue to live, brought in burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin which, being typical of Jesus, brought about the willing death of God's only begotten Son, a death God did not desire His Son to suffer under any compulsion, but yet pleased Him insofar that Jesus suffered it willingly in Adam's stead and thereby provided natural existence for Adam's posterity and the option of accepting Redemption themselves in the prescribed way revealed in God's word.

I have no doubt whatever that some free-will offerings were acceptable and pleasing to God through faith of the offerers, but my emphasis was on "sacrifices for sin" in which God took no pleasure, except of course, the sacrifice Jesus made for Adam and us, which was not for Himself but to pay with His own life the debt of life in the blood Adam owed to the Edenic Law. In this context only "It pleased the Lord to bruise him" - Isaiah 53.

I will return now to the question Bro. Leo asks, "Why does Ezekiel mention the sacrifices on God's inspiration if they are not to take place?"

My reply is that it is not a matter of the sacrifices not taking place but where and when? Firstly we must realize that there was no Temple in Jerusalem, it had been destroyed and many including Ezekiel, had gone into captivity in Babylon for a period which lasted for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:12, 28:10, 2 Chronicles 36:19-21, Daniel 9:2).

During the 55 years of Manasseh's reign, the book of the law was lost and it was some ten years into Josiah's reign when Hilkiah the high priest reported that he had "found the book of the law in the house of the Lord" (2 Kings 22:8). Again, when later the Jews were carried away into captivity at Babylon, their Temple was destroyed and the Ark which contained the original copy of the law disappeared.

Now I wonder would it be wrong to assume that the same thing could have happened in some way to the records (if any) of the pattern and measurements of the Temple prepared by David and built by Solomon? In any case after such a period of captivity in a foreign land it is possible God would have realised that not many

would even remember the measurements and the pattern; for this must be accurate. Hence Ezekiel 40.1-4, "Declare all thou seest to the house of Israel."

If, as some have suggested, the Temple seen in vision by Ezekiel is to be built in the future after Christ's return and is for worship and sacrifices by mortal Israel after the flesh where is the point in the man with the line of flax and measuring reed in his hand, telling Ezekiel, "Declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel"? If some of this house of Israel qualified to become the saints in Christ's Kingdom, of what significance would it have for them, especially as this Temple is associated with the priesthood of Aaron? - Ezekiel 40:45-46.

The saints are associated with the Priesthood of Jesus and as the writer to the Hebrews declared, this necessitated a change of the Law - Hebrews 7:12, "For the priest-hood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."

Therefore as I see it, if this Temple described by Ezekiel is to be built and operate during Christ's reign with priests of the sons of Zadoc who are Levites performing the same service pertaining to the Law of Moses, then of necessity there must be again a change from the law of the Spirit of life in Christ and His heavenly office, to a law which under the old covenant could never give life; for the Apostle declares, "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law, But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe" - Galatians 3:21-22.

Sister Evelyn makes a rather serious statement when she says, Page 3, C/L 156, "Zechariah prophesied for the nation of Israel, not the saints, and verse 13 (of Zechariah 6) sets the time to be when Christ sits upon his throne as King and Priest in Jerusalem." Here then we would have a situation of two distinct orders of Priesthood, one after the order of Aaron and another after the order of Melchizedec. I fail to see how a likeness of the priesthood of the old covenant can operate with the High Priest of the new covenant, and if it is contended that a future Temple is to operate as did the first, to teach in retrospect what the death of Jesus achieved, how can this be a new covenant? And why on this basis of sacrifices under the Mosaic Law could they not see prospectively concerning the sacrifice of Christ any more than in this supposed future Temple they would in the retrospective sense? To me it does not harmonise with Hebrews 8:7-13.

I was always under the impression that Zechariah and all the prophets prophesied for the good of all Israel that at least some would qualify to be termed saints, and in fact many did, so how can there be any distinction of preaching the words of God?

Sister Evelyn is dogmatic that "we learn from Ezekiel that animal sacrifices will again be offered for the mortal population in the Kingdom" she then adds "looking back presumably to the one Great Sacrifice of our Lord," and Brother Leo agrees.

Of course this has been the presumption of some people for years, but where does it say in Ezekiel that this Temple will be in operation in the Kingdom? Again, if as Sister Evelyn stated in a previous C.L. that Jesus would build this Temple, would He need the measurements for it from the book of Ezekiel written some two and a half thousand years ago? (Measurements that not even Sulley and H.C.Gates can agree about).

Ezekiel was instructed to show the City, the pattern, and the measurements of the Temple shown to him in vision, to the house of Israel who had gone into captivity for their transgressions and thereby caused the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (Ezekiel 40:4, 43:9-11). Are we not allowed also to presume that these measurements and pattern were for those of the captivity in Babylon whom God was about to bring back to the land of Israel after 70 years and build again that which had been destroyed and to ensure that they would have the accurate measurements?

If for a material Temple far into the future, why show it to Israel of the Babylonian captivity - why not show the pattern and measurements when the time has come for it to be built? In my view this is what happened in anticipation of Cyrus king of Persia, being charged of God to order the building of the house of God in Jerusalem in fulfilment of God's word through Jeremiah - (Ezra 1:1-4).

The prophet Zechariah lived at the same period together with Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Daniel, Joshua the son of Josedech the High Priest, and Zerubbabel, governor of Judah. They were all engaged in the work of

God in re-building the Temple which had been destroyed. Zechariah by the word of the Lord declared “The hands of ZERUB-BA-BEL have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it;... and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, Grace unto it.” (Zechariah 4:6-9). Fulfilled Ezra 3:10-13.

In conclusion if we assume or presume that Zechariah 6:12-15 refers to Jesus as The Branch, we must also take into account that obeying the voice of the Lord precedes the building of the Temple and is a condition (verse 15) of whether it is built or not. This would evidently rule out the theory that sacrifices in retrospect were part of the teaching of knowing the Lord and His Son and being obedient. I am still convinced that if Zechariah 6:12-13 is a reference to Jesus it is a reference to His Temple Body as recorded in John 2:19, the material Temple also being a type or pattern of Himself. Is not 1 Corinthians 3:9-17 connected to Zechariah 6:15 if it be the Spiritual Temple?

One question - Did the Temple of Ezekiel's vision have a veil dividing the Holy Place and the Holiest of All, and if so, who will cause its rending in twain for entry into the Heavens?

Phil Parry.

**Russell writes:-**

Let me say first of all that my comments here were prepared before I read Brother Phil Parry's. They overlap in some parts; nevertheless I reproduce them as they occurred to me:

In the last C.L. Brother Leo invited comments regarding sacrifices in the coming Kingdom age and says, “I fail to see why God inspired Ezekiel to write about it if they are not to take place,” but this is the point - He didn't inspire Ezekiel for the future age, or that is how I see it. Solomon's Temple had been destroyed and the people taken captive to Babylon, Daniel (also in captivity) knew that their captivity was to last for seventy years and at the end of which it is self-evident that the Temple would need to be rebuilt. In the twenty-fifth year of their captivity Ezekiel was given instructions for the re-building of the Temple upon return to their own land, and he was also to have an active part in dividing the land by lot. Ezekiel 48:29, “This is the land which ye shall divide by lot unto the tribes of Israel for inheritance, and these are the portions, saith the Lord God.”

There was another forty-five years of captivity left. Towards the end of which the people should have been elated in anticipation of their return to their own land and the re-building of their Temple. However, when the time came there was gross lethargy amongst the Jewish population in Babylon. Many were doing very well where they were and had no inclination to uproot themselves and their families. In the event it appears to have taken some twenty years to complete Zerubbabel's Temple in comparison to about 7 years for Solomon's.

One wonders if Ezekiel ever got round to showing them the pattern of the Temple he had been given, however, the Temple they built was very like Ezekiel's pattern, being similar to Solomon's Temple. Ezekiel 43:7 to 11 doesn't read the way I would expect if this is the Temple for the Kingdom age, for example, verse 9 “Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings far from me, and I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.” God dwelling in their midst was conditional on the people putting away their whoredom and the carcasses of their kings; they are here given a choice but surely when Christ comes they will be given no such choice. Again in verse 11 the words “if they be ashamed” are very significant, (Just as it is in Zechariah 6:15 - “This shall come to pass if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God”). When Christ is here they will be ashamed, and there will be no “if” about it. But how well that verse 11 fits in with their history, their half-hearted efforts to re-establish themselves in their national home-land. When the Temple was re-built they of course did resume animal sacrifices as required by law.

Having said this I do appreciate the problem of Ezekiel 47:1 to 12 (regarding the waters issuing from under the threshold of the house), which must now surely apply to the coming Kingdom age. I feel this may not be an adequate answer, though in my own mind I wonder if these things might have been fulfilled in the past had the people shown the required dedication, enthusiasm and faithfulness. It is a fact of the history of Israel that at all times greater rewards were offered for greater zeal. Even the last page of the Old Testament holds the exhortation to the people of Israel to turn to God with greater zeal as we read in Malachi 3:10, “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouses, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now

therewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it..." But this too never came to pass. "If" being always relevant to their faith.

Russell.

**Brother Phil Parry writes concerning "immortal emergence": -**

Regarding Dennis Hayward's comments on 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4:17, I thank him for his compliments on my article in reply to Michael Ashton's "Raised to Judgment," yet I had the impression (apart from a statement by Alfred Norris in one of his booklets some years back that the change referred to those asleep and those alive), that this was not the general view of Christadelphians and neither was it the teaching Paul was expounding. Dennis has therefore surprised me in thinking that Paul is teaching that the change of nature applies both to those asleep in Christ and those in Christ who are alive when the trumpet sounds.

Paul is addressing living believers in the expectation that the resurrection would take place while he and they were still living - not fallen asleep as other believers had in faith. Hence his statement, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." Also he says that we being alive at the appointed time will not have precedence over those who are asleep in Christ in the dust of the earth, for they will be raised incorruptible and that being the case no further change is necessary for them, the change is necessary for us in the twinkling of an eye in order to be caught up together with them to meet the Lord and ever be with Him wherever the remainder of His duties takes Him.

This is how I have always looked upon it and I do not subscribe to the teaching of Dr. Thomas on the subject; his teaching being out of harmony with that of Paul and of the Scriptures in general. In fact, he teaches in Eureka that the worthy saints at their raising may not be changed to incorruptible nature until they have reigned for the period of years before being given the dominion - Daniel 7:27. (See Eureka Vol.1 pages 63-64). A lot of conjecture on account that Paul's definition of "raised incorruptible" does not fit his own view and teaching of resurrection and judgment,

The Nazarenes may not have dealt individually or collectively with this subject but it has been incorporated with the subject of Redemption in our booklet entitled "Redemption, Resurrection and Judgment," our late Bro. E. Brady dealing with the Sacrificial Principle in Redemption, the other authors being William Richmond, William Laing and H.Grattan-Guinness.\* I have only my own copy. While it may be a good idea to have other people's views on the teaching of the resurrection - Just and unjust - the most important thing connected with it is to be in a position of worthiness to obtain that world - and the resurrection related to it which is everlasting life. (Luke 20:35-36).

Phil Parry.

\*Editors note: Regarding the booklet mentioned by Phil Parry ("Redemption, Resurrection and Judgment,"), the article in it by Ernest Brady entitled, "The Sacrificial Principle in Redemption" was reproduced in C.L.118, December 1989 and photocopies are available for anyone interested. It is on my list for publishing as a pamphlet in due course. Another article in the same booklet, entitled "The Resurrection of the Saints," by William Laing, also answers the points raised by Dennis Hayward and will shortly be available as a separate pamphlet.

Russell.

**Brother Phil Parry writes in response to Brother Paul Watson's letter: -**

I do not wish to be over-critical of Paul Watson's article but I must disagree with what he said about Adam eating of the Tree of Life and while eating of it being incorruptible,

Paul Watson says that Adam at creation had no knowledge of sin. He should have said, "Adam had no knowledge of sin until Law entered, for sin is transgression of Law. I would rather he had used the words of Genesis, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" than how he phrased it, "The day you eat of that

you are doomed to die,” for this latter could give the wrong idea and mistaken view that after Adam's exit from the garden of Eden he commenced to die naturally as the penalty for his sin, which is not our view or our teaching,

Again, if Adam became incorruptible by eating of the Tree of Life are we to understand that incorruptible does not mean deathlessness as the nature of Angels? Luke 20:35-36. \*

My own view is that Adam had the right to eat of the Tree of Life as long as he did not transgress, but that while enjoying life in the garden he may not have had any inclination to partake of it and did not do so. The inclination may have come after he had acquired the knowledge of good and evil but he had lost the right to eat, therefore his being turned out was necessary.”

Phil Parry.

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\* “Incorruptible” is everlasting, else it doesn't mean what it says. It cannot be later changed to corruptible. Anything corruptible could never have been incorruptible in the first place. We may say Adam's life was “stable” while eating of the Tree of Life or that his life “could continue indefinitely” but to use the word “incorruptible” in this way is confusing and I feel sure this expression has contributed to the misunderstanding of events in Eden.

Russell.

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**Further to Geoff Hampton's comments in the last Circular Letter** regarding whether or not Matthew 28:19 is spurious, he sent me about a dozen pamphlets to convince me that it must be genuine Scripture, the general arguments in these booklets being that God would not allow spurious words to be entered into His Holy Bible upon translation as it is the Word of God and inspired for all time, typical of the arguments is, quote:- “Personally I knew that the R.S.V of 1952 was not a good translation by the men who sat on the revision board; if for no other reason! One was a socialist and voted for socialism. Another said that the Books of Genesis, Ruth, Job and Jonah and the exploits of David are simple fiction, tales and stories. Another claims that Jesus was an introvert, and never claimed to be Christ, the Messiah! What kind of book do you expect such men to produce? Certainly not God's Holy Word.” This is typical of denigrating other versions, while comments advancing the King James Version include such statements as;- “The Authorised Version came to us no doubt through the goodness of God but not only were the translators the most learned men in ancient and modern tongues in their day, and in the whole realm, but they were mostly saved men, men who had been born again and knew and loved the Son of God as their Saviour and Lord.”

So are we to accept the King James version as “inspired” just because these men say so? And what do we know of the men whom King James appointed to produce the Authorised Version? There seems no reason to suppose they were any better than those appointed to the revision board for the Revised Standard Version; indeed one thing is certain regarding those appointed by King James - they surely all believed in the God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost! We can suppose too that they all accepted the doctrine of Original Sin, which is so dishonouring to God, not to mention a personal Devil, Immaculate Conception, infant baptism, immortal soulism, heaven and hell going at death, etc., etc. None of which are taught in the Bible they were translating.

In his letter, C.L.156, page 4, Geoff wrote, “Seeing your article of research on the authenticity of Matthew 28:19 caused consternation in some, could it be reversed, I wonder, in as much to ask... can any one put forward three sound reasonings in both spiritual and scriptural terms as to why it is there.”

My comment which followed Geoff's said that it was because Matthew 28:19 didn't fit in with other Scripture that its authenticity was questioned. Further comment is needed:

There seems to be confusion all round, not only amongst ourselves but in Christadelphian writings, and that of other sects regarding the sense of these words, and by this I have observed, by way of example, that in one of our own publications a writer misquotes Matthew 28:19 by supposing we are baptised into the Name of the Son and of the Father and of the Holy Ghost. Also Robert Roberts seemed confused on this point when he

wrote in "The True Nature of Baptism," "According to trine immersion it is not sufficient to be baptised into the Son..." But the point I wish to make is this - we are not baptised into anyone's 'Name.'

Let me explain. When Jesus Christ was with His disciples He did not Himself baptise anyone (John 4:1-2), instead His disciples baptised for Him, that is, they baptised in His Name, but not into His Name. And this we find to be the case throughout the New Testament; the Apostles continued to baptise in the Name of Jesus and never into His Name. The applicant for baptism was of course, baptised into Jesus Christ by the person who baptised the candidate in Jesus Name ("for as many as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ"). We must make the distinction between the one who baptises and the one who is baptised. The one who baptises does so "in Jesus Name" and the one who is baptised is baptised "into Jesus Christ," i.e. into His death. (See Romans 6:3).

Now let us apply this distinction to Matthew 28:19. Do we ever baptise instead of the Father, or did the Father ask us to baptise in His Name? No! Do we ever baptise instead of the Holy Ghost, or did the Holy Ghost ever ask us to baptise in His Name? Again, No! Now a Trinitarian could answer, "Yes, of course, and why not? After all, they are Three in One, they are all God." But we are not Trinitarians, so what does Matthew 28:19 mean to us - "Go ye into all the world and baptise in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost"? It cannot mean the same to us as it might to a Trinitarian. It surely can now be seen why Matthew 28:19 as we have it in our Authorised Version cannot be genuine Scripture.

It would seem that when Benjamin Wilson came to translate this phrase in the Emphatic Diaglott he took the verse as it stood in the Greek and met the problem by translating the Greek "eis" with "into," which is quite in order so far as the Greek word is concerned for it is often so used, as e.g., both Philip and the eunuch went down into (eis) the water, but it still does not convey the correct meaning in the context of baptism; when we baptise anyone into Jesus Christ we baptise in His name, and not into the Name of the Father nor into the Name of The Holy Spirit.

I cannot "put forward three sound reasonings in both spiritual and scriptural terms as to why it is there," as Geoff asked, but I believe I have put forward a sound scriptural case showing why it shouldn't be there for Geoff to consider, although I thought the article, "A Collection of the Evidence For and Against the Traditional Wording of the Baptismal Phrase in Matthew 28:19," showed sufficient scriptural proof by saying that, "As for its significance, baptism is linked inseparably with the death of Christ - it is the means of the believer's identification with the Lord's death. Now the Father did not die, nor yet the Spirit. We are buried with Him ~ not with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

However, I am very grateful to Geoff for one very informative article amongst all he sent me and I reproduce it here as it sums up what I think is our own standing on the matter of Inspiration and authenticity of Scripture. It is from the Bob Jones University School of Religion, Bible Department:-

"The dominating concern for all Bible-related courses, from English Bible to Theology and Ethics...is what the Bible teaches. This is of paramount importance to us because we believe in the verbal inspiration and absolute inerrancy of the Bible. We believe, as Fundamentalists have always believed, that this inspiration refers to the original manuscripts. "The record for whose inspiration we contend is the original record - the autographs or parchments of Moses, David, Daniel, Matthew, Peter, or Paul as the case may be and not any particular translation or translations of them whatever" (The Fundamentals, "Inspiration of the Bible," page 127).

When we teach the content of the Bible, we naturally study a passage in the Greek Testament. To aid the students in understanding that passage, we will take to class many times the King James Bible, which often gives an exact rendering of the Greek. Sometimes we will take along some other conservative translation, such as the American Standard Version of 1901 or the New American Standard Bible (not the liberal R.S.V), which at times gives the most accurate rendering of the Greek. We are always trying to help the students grasp the exact meaning of the original Greek text. There are a few passages in which the delicate shades of meaning in the Greek are missed by all English translations, in which cases we must explain from the Greek text itself those fine shades of meaning. We would not use a liberal paraphrase in class except as an illustration of a mistranslation,

which we would at once correct by a true translation. We have no sympathy with any version of the Bible that is not faithful to the Greek text.

Because we believe in the inspiration of the original manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments, it is important that we have a Greek Testament that will be as close to the readings of the original as possible. Through the carelessness of scribes who copied manuscripts, many varying readings have crept into them. But God in His providence has preserved for us the original reading through the large number of manuscripts in existence that witness to the text of the New Testament. Today there are two Greek texts available. One is the Received Text, edited by a Roman Catholic scholar, Erasmus, in the sixteenth century and based on manuscripts of the Middle Ages. It is often called the "Byzantine" or the "majority text." The other is the Greek Testament, edited by Westcott and Hort in the nineteenth century and based upon manuscripts of the fourth century, usually called the "Alexandrian text." The King James Version was based upon the Received Text; the American Standard Version was based upon the text of Westcott and Hort. We do not believe that either of these texts is "liberal" or "conservative." Not only Erasmus but also Westcott and Hort were seeking to present a close copy of the original text. We are interested in which one is closer to the original text of the New Testament because:-

- (1) the Alexandrian manuscripts are much older and closer to the time the originals were written,
- (2) a careful comparison of these manuscripts with those of the Middle Ages has convinced us that a more accurate and careful job of copying was done by the Alexandrian scribes, and
- (3) Erasmus had to work in haste and with limited resources; it is our conviction that these Alexandrian manuscripts, which were not known to Erasmus, are, as a rule, the more accurate manuscripts to follow.

Therefore, along with the great majority of conservative scholars, we believe that the text of Westcott and Hort, based upon these Alexandrian manuscripts, is as a whole, superior to the text based upon manuscripts of the Middle Ages.

The portion of the New Testament that has any substantial variation between the various manuscripts is only about one word in a thousand. These variations in no way change the teaching of the New Testament on any doctrine. Therefore, we consider this not an issue of modernism versus conservatism but a matter of individual judgment on the part of Fundamental Christians. Christians should be free to choose and use either of these texts and still work together in harmony to teach and preach the word of God to those who are without it." - Bob Jones III.

The article below, "How To Study The Bible" is also relevant.

Russell.

**I would like to query a comment made by Brother Harold Dawson reported in the last C.L. on page 2, 5 lines from the bottom where he wrote - "Jesus alone would know if He had anything to wash away in baptism."**

Surely there can be no thought that Jesus Christ might have had something to wash away in baptism! He was the second "Adam" and as such He succeeded where the first Adam failed. Had Jesus fallen short of the law of God in any way before His baptism His life would have been forfeited as was Adam's life when he fell short of God's law in Eden.

There was no forgiveness available to Jesus any more than there was to Adam. Our forgiveness comes through Jesus Christ. It is through this atoning work that forgiveness is available to us. It is because of His atoning work that we are acceptable to His Father. Could Jesus have forgiven Himself by His own baptism and made Himself acceptable to His Father in that way had He sinned? And if such a way was possible to

Jesus then why was not such a way of escape available to Adam and Eve? Perhaps others would like to comment further,

Russell.

Another thought has occurred to me and it regards the prophecy of Jesus Christ that "Elias must first come and restore all things." What is encompassed by "all things"? I had at one time assumed it had to do with the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel and the re-establishment of the Law of Moses. This I believe was my father's view and is probably the view of Christadelphians generally. But why should we limit it to this. We pray "Thy Kingdom come" so that "Thy will be done on earth as it is now done in heaven." And such conditions take us back, not to the Law of Moses but to the Garden of Eden. But how can we reconcile the view of God's will being done and man having free-will?

Russell.

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## How To Study The Bible

In this day of materialism, where fame and fortune are ever the attraction, very few people are really interested in The Bible enough to want to know it better. The problems confronting them are often distracting and discouraging, thus preventing a good Bible study. Having stumbled over these obstacles myself, I feel that this brief will be of tremendous benefit and help to the reader.

Probably the most important requirement to studying the Bible is to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. To become a believer in the Lord, one must read the Gospel of John, the book that was "written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John 20:31). Being a believer automatically makes one a believer in the inspiration and authority of the entire Bible, both Old Testament and New Testament. It is much better to approach the Bible as a believer than as a non-believer. The latter is more likely to abandon his study as soon as he sees apparent contradictions, whereas the former, realizing that God cannot err, will continue his studies until apparent contradictions are resolved. Being a believer entails an act of faith upon every statement contained in the Bible, and is therefore, a daily function. God cannot be pleased without faith (Hebrews 11:6), and faith cannot be produced without the word (Romans 10:17).

Since the Bible was written in ancient Hebrew and ancient Greek, two dead languages, it must therefore be accurately translated into English, so that we might understand it. But since the completion of the Bible, no one has been inspired, and consequently, no one may be trusted to give an accurate translation. It is therefore, highly recommended that the reader obtain a King James Version of the Bible, and a good concordance such as Young's Analytical Concordance or Strong's Exhaustive Concordance. These give alphabetical listings of every word in the King James Version of the Bible, every passage the word occurs in, and the Hebrew and/or Greek word from which it is translated. The reader can now make a word study to see whether or not King James accurately translated it.

Now that one is a believer and has the tools with which to make a good Bible study, he is ready to "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). This off course necessitates being an individualist, acting independently of any creed, theology or seminary; having both honesty and courage. One must be honest enough when a conflict exists between his (or his church's) teachings and the Bible, to admit such. Moreover, one must be courageous enough to go contrary to the traditions and sentiments of the crowds. This will invariably produce much ostracism, criticism, and persecution. But the one who is primarily concerned with the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, should not mind walking an unpopular and often very lonely path. Since God has no greater joy than that His children walk in truth (3 John 4), he finds no other recourse.

Although all of the Bible is true, one must not fall into the trap of thinking that all of the Bible is true or applicable for us today. For instance, God told Noah that he could eat any living creature (Genesis 9:4); He told Abraham that every man child shall be circumcised (Genesis 17:10); He told Moses not to eat pork and other animals termed unclean (Leviticus 11:4-8); and He told the Galatians not to get circumcised (Galatians

5:2). It would appear from these statements that the Bible is full of contradictions, but when one considers the fact that each statement was directed to and therefore applies to a specific people at a specific time, and to no other, much of the difficulty is cleared away. This can only be accomplished by rightly dividing (straight-cutting) the word.

Results of such studies will show that “Easter” does not belong in the Bible, being mistranslated from the word “*pascha*,” which occurs 29 times, and is translated “passover” in every occurrence except Acts 12:4; “hell” does not belong in the Bible, being translated from three different Greek words, none of which conveys the idea of a roast and toast torture oven; the words “eternal,” “everlasting,” and “forever,” which convey to many the idea of endlessness, are mistranslations of the word “*aion*,” which cannot mean endlessness since it has an end (Matthew 24:3); and the expression “first day of 'the week,” which is used to justify the observance of Sunday, is a mistranslation of “*mian sabbaton*,” which means “one of the sabbaths.”

An “Oddment” from “The Nazarene Expositor, Date and author unknown,

### **Other Correspondence:**

The letter which follows addressed to Brother John Stevenson, was written by Peter and Meryl Morgan, who have asked for comments from the Nazarene Fellowship if any wish to respond.

John's reply follows their letter. The “Comments on the B.A.S.F.” to which Peter and Meryl refer is to be found in the last C.L. (No. 156), pages 17 - 18.

“Dear John, I am sorry it has taken so long to write this response to your comments about the B.A.S.F.

I am assuming you have a record of your letter, so that I can reply without explanation.

Clause 4. Romans 5:12-19 is quoted in support of clause 3 and I believe that those verses do state that life was contingent on obedience, - i.e. sin, then death by sin.

Scripture does not clearly state that an abrupt end would follow disobedience. The precise tense used of the verb “to die” does seem unclear - see Oxford wide margin Bible (AV) and Cambridge AV with marginal references, to name 2 authorities who put Heb. “dying, thou shalt die.” To deny this possibility is necessary for the edifice that the Nazarenes construct. I don't see how they can be so confident when experts acknowledge the meaning includes a continuing tense.

Where is the quotation about “a second probation”? I know of none. If the Nazarenes hadn't added the idea of a “second probation” then no-one would decide to divide the sentence passed on Adam as you do part way through verse 19.

When you say that “disobedience brought, about a changed physical nature” as if it was an added change to what scripture states I would disagree. The only change that came is described in Genesis 3 verses 17-19. That was Adam's punishment; all other consequences came from that sentence.

The Nazarene Fellowship finds it necessary to add an explanation. We do not.

Clause 8. Hebrews 2:14-18 seems to adequately explain what is written here. That is how I understand Clause 8. The word “earned” is advisedly not used. No-one denies the unique position of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nevertheless we know that He was less than perfect else Hebrews 5:8 & 9 would not have been written, neither Luke 13:32.

Clause 9. Again Hebrews 2:14-17 seems to explain that although He voluntarily fulfilled His mission to save sinners, it was necessary for Him to be like us. Your comment on perishing as if it were the same as dying. I don't think it is. Perishing is everlasting.

Clause 10. Romans 5:12 says that Adam's sin resulted in his death. Romans 6:9 & 10 describes Jesus position. Jesus was sinless, but sin was not impossible for him.

Clause 12. Does not say that Jesus had to die for his own salvation. It says “as a propitiation... for the remission of sins.” I would never say that Jesus had to die for his own salvation. We are simply not told.

Clause 24. “Unequivocally” - not so. John 5:25-29; Romans 2:5-11; Matthew 25:31-46. Judgment at the return of Christ makes immortal emergence a difficulty. Passages that could be read that way, e.g. 1 Corinthians 15:52, Romans 2:6 should be considered with other verses.

John 5:24 if taken literally without intervening period understood would mean death has no effect on believers. 1 John 3:14 is similar. Thus I read 1 Corinthians 15:52 to include an interim state.

I know that you are not right about expulsion and refusal to discuss. I am not denying that some have been like that, but many do not think exactly as Brother Roberts' did and yet can confidently declare that they believe the B.A.S.F.

The Nazarene Fellowship is not “purely” Bible based. They have added their own theories about man's position after Adam's sin. I have yet to read any record of “judicial” sentences being suspended, or a “second probation.”

It is a temptation to add to the Bible's record of the fall. We should all be careful not to do so.

We are at some liberty to speculate and meditate on scriptures' implications, but not on first principles. Both Bro. Roberts and the Nazarene Fellowship have speculated on first principles. That has led to our present unhappy position. We should be in unity; that is how our Lord wishes us to be. That is what he died for as he says in John 17:21 & 22.

This comes with our loving greetings. Peter and Meryl Morgan.”

#### **John replied as follows:**

“Dear Meryl and Peter, Thanks for your comments on my letter about the B.A.S.F. I will endeavour to answer them comprehensively.

When Adam and Eve were clothed in skins, it is generally assumed that the animals from which the skins were taken were ritually sacrificed in a manner foreshadowing the sacrifices later ordained under Mosaic Law. This assumption is not spelled out in scripture, yet it is accepted by the Nazarene Fellowship, Christadelphians, and many conventional Christians. Problems would be eliminated if every aspect of the Atonement were clearly spelled out in scripture, but they are not, so we have to use our God-given intelligence. Adequate information is available for clear understanding, if we seek it with sincere perception. Yet, ever since the church began, it has divided it self into hostile mutually-exclusive sects, each with its own system of dogmas by which they judge and denounce others, and excommunicate members who do not conform, and each blindly intent to rationalize and defend their own dogmas. So how does one find the truth? By seeking it with humility, prayer, and Bible reading, and by using respect and restraint in disputes and contention. We can only do our best, searching the scriptures to test each precept, and by discerning that every well established sect has its own hierarchy of blind dogmatists and efficient evangelising systems for indoctrination of their flock and proselytes in their true faith, but all notably lacking the authentic criteria stipulated by the Master (John 13:34 & 35).

Genesis 2:17, “For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” This means a summarily inflicted death, as you can ascertain by referring to every occasion that the same expression “dying thou shalt die” is used in the O.T. It does not mean a change of physical nature and the commencement of a mortal ageing process, as you and most of Christendom maintain. The fact that when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they were not caused to die that day, does not indicate that God was arbitrary or deceitful, but being a God of love and mercy. He contrived a plan of redemption, not only for them but also for their descendants (Genesis 3:15). Your authorities asserting that the tense is in some doubt, would have to account for all other usages of the same expression, before they could be cleared of bias towards the conventional theory of changed nature. It is not the Nazarene Fellowship who have constructed a false edifice but rather they have seen through the false edifice of mainstream Christianity and Robert Roberts and the B.A.S.F.

The scriptural basis for the concept of a second probation derives from the fact that Adam lived for over 900 years after his execution sentence was suspended. By insisting that we are “dividing the sentence” (verse 19) you are ignoring the real sentence (cursed ground, thorns and thistles, and sweat) and concentrating on the footnote about the duration as though that were the real sentence. Ask any Christadelphian or mainstream Christian what was the consequence of Adam's sin and the erroneous answer is returned: “Mortality,” simply because the sentence is not studied carefully, and the footnote about duration is confused with the execution sentence “dying thou shalt die.”

You say that I state “Disobedience brought about a changed physical nature, as if it was an added change to what scripture states.” Wherever did you get that from? I do not state that, neither does scripture; it is Robert Roberts and the B.A.S.F. that make that unfounded statement; not only them but the whole of Christadelphia and mainstream Christendom. If you deny that concept, you are disloyal to Clause five. How can you say that the Nazarene Fellowship finds it necessary to add an explanation whereas you do not? On the contrary we simply refute your unscriptural added explanation about inherited defiled nature. You argue that it is consequent on the sentence; we insist that manifestly it is not.

The same applies to clause eight. We say Jesus was the spotless, sinless, undefiled substitutionary sacrifice. Where does the Bible say that Jesus wore condemned nature and died to abrogate the law of condemnation for Himself? Not only would that have disqualified Him from being our sacrifice and sin-offering, but it is contrary to every biblical reference to His sinless nature. Your reading of Hebrews 2 must not be stretched to defile the Holy Son of God. I also query the interpretation of the verses you cite to imply that Jesus was “less than perfect,” but nevertheless those verses could never be wrenched to signify that He has a “defiled physical nature,” which we find utterly abhorrent. Jesus refused to commit sin; to say that “sin was not impossible for Him” is irrelevant and pernicious. Maybe you would never say that Jesus had to die for His own salvation, but many Christadelphian leaders have said so, and insisted.

We say you are wrong to accuse us of adding our own theories to the Bible story. The boot is on the other foot entirely; we adamantly oppose Robert Roberts' added theories, especially those in clauses five, eight, ten and twelve. It seems that your loyalty to the B.A.S.F. prevents you from trying to understand the plain statements of the Bible, untrammelled by preconceptions. The added theories of Robert Roberts cause difficulties with other parts of scripture, and endless strife throughout Christadelphia. Your accusation of our “speculation” being like Robert Roberts' is unfair and offensive; I am certain that Nazarene Fellowship people have never carried on like Robert Roberts did when his authority was questioned. We do not excommunicate, we do not shout abuse, we do not sulk, we do not prevent others from speaking. You imply that some Christadelphians are tolerant; but we say not the leaders, not the editors, not the arranging brethren.

You say that many Christadelphians disagree with Robert Roberts but accept the B.A.S.F. We insist that you cannot do that. The heresies and errors and prejudices of Robert Roberts have been set in concrete in the words of the B.A.S.F. and anyone who accepts the latter is stuck with Robert Roberts with his divisions and strife and false teachings. You would have to deceive yourself to imagine you could have a B.A.S.F. constitution but reject its author. It is an immense tragedy that the valuable foundation work of Dr. Thomas was later largely wrecked by Robert Roberts, but perhaps that is how the Lord separates the wheat from the tares. I enclose a copy of a booklet “Christadelphians - Their Dilemma Exposed” with an earnest request that you study it soberly, because of its relevance to fundamental principles.

I send you loving greetings in the Hope of Israel.

John Stevenson,

#### **Reply from Russell:**

Dear Peter and Meryl, Greetings in Jesus Name.

I feel John has answered your letter very well and with much patience and there seems little else for me to say, however, as you have invited comments from others of the Nazarene Fellowship I thank you for this opportunity of expressing a few observations of my own.

In several places you misunderstand and misuse Scripture. In the first instance you say Scripture does not clearly state that an abrupt end would follow disobedience and you quote your authorities. Nevertheless, there are about ten or twelve parallel cases in the Bible where the expression “dying thou shall die” is used and in every case it can be nothing less than a judicial putting to death. It is not something the Nazarene Fellowship has needed to invent, but by comparing Scripture with Scripture one is left with no alternative.

Clause 5; John said that the notion that disobedience brought about changed physical nature is the fundamental fallacy of Christadelphian belief and I note you do not accept that physical flesh was changed, for you quote Genesis 3:17-19 where no physical change is mentioned. How then can you accept the B.A.S.F.? It is the very concept of changed flesh which prompted Robert Roberts to draw up the Statement of Faith in the first place in order to oppose Edward Turney, who believed the change was in our relationship to God - a legal change - and not a physical one. To say that man's nature was changed to defiled nature has never been proved, and that statement cannot, therefore be used to prove anything else.

Romans 5:12-19 does not refer to natural death but judicial and when and where applied to the sinner it is everlasting. Verse 10 tells us that Paul is talking about being saved. Saved from what? Not natural death, for many die natural death who will be raised to life everlasting, but saved from perishing.

The fact that Adam was not put to death in the day he sinned indicated a change of direction in the plan of salvation by a loving, compassionate, merciful and all-providing God who was not willing that any should perish. Adam had been put on probation and failed. The sentence of death due to him was not carried out though the condemnation remained, and we, his descendants, having received our lives through him are born into that same condemned state. Jesus Christ did not receive His life by descent through Adam but received uncondemned life direct from His Father through the virgin birth. Jesus was the “second Adam,” and whereas the first Adam failed, the second Adam did not. We are offered life through Jesus Christ and to obtain this life we need to leave the first Adam from whom we received our condemned life and join the second Adam through baptism, by which we die to sin and rise to newness of uncondemned life in Jesus Christ. Had Jesus life come through the line of Adam, Abraham and David, there would be no point in our baptism into Him as we would then still be in Adam - and in Adam all die. But now, all in Christ do not come into condemnation.

Jesus Christ, as Son of God had an inheritance of life from His Father and this had nothing to do with His death. His life was His own and to say “He was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience” is misleading assumption, and your observation that “earned” is advisedly not used in place of “obtain” is surely a quibble.

Jesus Christ, as the second Adam was placed on probation and could have lost His inheritance through sin, but He did not. No law demanded He lay down His life, but after remaining righteous and well pleasing to His heavenly Father He then offered his mortal life in the place of Adam's which had been surrendered in Eden but never taken from him. That is to say Jesus Christ took Adam's place and died in stead of him.

Jesus Christ said He gave His life as a ransom for many and it is reluctantly acknowledged by some Christadelphians that this for means instead of as is used in “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” that is, one in the place of another, though they prefer to ignore the obvious, that Jesus gave His life as a ransom instead of many lives - His life in the place of the many lives of the faithful who have come out of Adam and into Him through baptism.

Jesus says “ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you,” and this is our present position in Him. To jeopardize this position in any way would indeed be foolish. Whether or not we call it a second probation, it is a gift of opportunity to show our grateful appreciation to Him and do whatever He commands. This is scriptural and the Nazarene Fellowship has added nothing to it.

It is said that Christ dying instead of us would be unjust for why should the innocent be punished and the guilty allowed to go free? We wholeheartedly agree that this concept of substitution would be a cruel and gross injustice, but what do the Christadelphians put in its place? Is Clause 12 better? “...He was put to death by... instruments in the hands of God...”! In whatever way these words are couched they are a gross perversion of the truth and it beggars belief that a man purporting to be a follower of Jesus Christ could malign God in this way. The words of Jesus Christ on the Cross, “Father, forgive them...” gives the lie to Clause 12. Imagine someone saying to Jesus Christ while He was dying in agony, “Sorry, Lord, but you've

got it wrong; these men are but instruments in the hands of your Father. It is your Father you should be forgiving? Perhaps, Peter and Meryl, you have never seen Clause 12 in this light before, but it is there and it amazes me that it has been allowed to stand for all these years. Whenever will someone have the courage to vote for change? It is little wonder that John cries "Shame!" in his comments on the B.A.S.F.

The "devil" is the personification of man's will when opposed to God's will and Jesus Christ was put to death by the devil, not by God. Even Pilate said "I find in him no fault at all," and knew He ought not to be crucified, but no, the B.A.S.F. states that God put His Son to death because He was sinless, which makes Pilate more righteous than God!

For God to make His Son of sinful flesh and then have Him crucified for it does not show God's righteousness and neither is this the way Jesus Christ fulfilled His mission to save sinners.

Here I would like to quote from an article I wrote in consequence of being turned out of Erdington Christadelphian Ecclesia:-

"In his letter to the Romans, Paul uses the illustration of sin being a slave owner to whom the human race has been sold." "Sold under sin," we read in Romans 7:14, while in chapter 6, verse 16, he writes, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness;" so when Adam sinned in Eden he sold himself to sin and became the bondservant of sin; and we, his offspring, are born into that same bondage.

Our position is also vividly illustrated in the Law of Moses where provision is made for bondservants, for if anyone in Israel fell on hard limes, the law allowed that man to sell himself to a wealthy neighbour and become his bondservant, or slave; his wife and children also being taken into bondage. This was done in order that the poor man and his family might have some means of livelihood though lacking the freedom previously enjoyed. The Law also made provision for the bondservant to redeem himself if his circumstances should by some means improve sufficiently for him to buy his freedom. If this should prove impossible then all was not lost if a near kinsman should come forward who was both willing and able to pay the redemptive price. Such a relative was not bound by the law to pay the price of redemption, but he had the legal right to redeem, and it was up to him to exercise that right if he so wished. Most certainly, if the near kinsman had love and compassion for his less fortunate relatives it would give him great joy to see that family free from their bondage.

Jesus Christ was the only one both willing and able to redeem Adam and his family (the human race) from their bondage to sin; for being born of a woman He was the near kinsman required by the law, and as Son of God He was born free of the imputed sin of Adam. It was for this very reason that Jesus Christ was the Son of God by begetting; He had a life direct from His Father and was in a similar position to Adam in the Garden of Eden, but with a right to eternal life provided He remained sinless. He did not forfeit His right by transgression at any time and never came into the bondage of sin. Jesus Christ was made under the law (Galatians 4:4) and never broke that law, for we read in Galatians 3:10 "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them," and as Jesus Christ did continue in all things that are written in the book of the law, then the curse was not on Him. He was the only man who had the power to retain His life or give it as the ransom price for the sin of the world, as He said, "I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:18)."

I will not deal with any more points in your letter as John has already shown plenty of grounds for rejecting the B.A.S.F., except to mention the subject of resurrection - this has been well covered in our literature and rather than repeat those arguments here I will send you a copy of "Progressive Revelations as to The Millennium, The Resurrection, and The Judgment" by H.Grattan-Guinness,

With Love in the Lord,

Russell Gregory.

## The Forgiveness of Injuries

The duty of the forgiveness of injuries is a prominent feature in the teaching of Christ. From Matthew 6:15 we learn that it is essential to our own forgiveness. The words of the Lord are, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

In the parable recorded, Matthew 18:23-35, Jesus instructs us that this duty should be exercised from a remembrance of the forgiveness which we ourselves have received. His answer to Peter's enquiry, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" shows that pardon should be unlimited as far as the number of offences is concerned. "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

But Christ not only taught this duty by precept, but also by example, unmoved by ingratitude, contumely and the approach of a cruel ignominious death. Though His life had been crowded with acts of kindness, though He had found His highest joy and constant service in mitigating human woe, and thousands could have borne testimony to His tender compassion and healing power, He fell a victim to the malice of His enemies. Human dogs compassed Him about, they clamoured for His blood, "pierced His hands and feet" – those hands which had so often ministered to the wants of others, those feet that had walked so many weary miles to preach the gladdest of all tidings, the Gospel of the kingdom of God; yet even in His dying moments He cried, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Again, what a wondrous manifestation of this spirit do we see in the commission He gave to His apostles. Having told them to go into all the world to preach the Gospel, He added, "beginning at Jerusalem," which was equivalent to saying, let my murderers have the first offer of mercy. Peter, in addressing the, "men of Israel" on the day of Pentecost, charged their guilt upon them, for he said, "Him (referring to Jesus Christ) ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). Yet, for this most heinous crime, the same Apostle had been commissioned by his Master to offer them a free and full pardon, in the name of Him whom they had so cruelly treated.

Although Judgment ultimately overtook them as a nation, it was not because they had killed "the Holy One and the Just," but because they refused to have life through His Name; not because their sins were great and numberless, but because they were relentless and persistent in their iniquities.

The injunction to forgive presupposes the possibility of one brother trespassing against another. There always have been such cases, "For it must needs be that offences come." It will be readily admitted that injuries are more keenly felt and more difficult to bear, if inflicted by a brother, than if they proceeded from an alien. This is touchingly illustrated by those significant words in the 55th Psalm, which had their striking fulfilment in the experience of Christ, when sold by Judas for thirty pieces of silver, "For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it... but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company" (Verses 12-14). But however hard it may be to endure; the duty remains the same, namely, to forgive.

When the act which has caused the wound is in itself morally wrong (which it generally is, though not always), then forgiveness of the injury is perfectly compatible with indignation against the act itself, on account of its moral turpitude. Thus it is requisite to make a distinction between the act itself and the perpetrator of it; for the former may be justly the object of indignation, while the latter is the object of forgiveness. This is clear from the fact that after we have forgiven the offender our opinion of the offence remains the same.

Bishop Butler, in writing on this point, says, "Forgiveness of injuries does not preclude resentment but only the excess of it." This statement probably appears very objectionable to you, and were I to submit it as the expression of my opinion I presume it would not fail to be the theme of criticism. I should judge that resentment and forgiveness of injuries are about as opposite to each other as heat and cold, and that it is not possible for both to be consistent in the same person.

Dr Angus, who reproduced Butler's works, put a footnote to this effect, "resentment in man answers to wrath in God, and means that moral sentiment with which a holy being cannot help but regard iniquity. If this is all that the Bishop intended by the word "resentment" it is quite true that forgiveness of injuries does

not preclude it, though it is not true that it precludes the excess of it since there is no danger of excess in the case.

We cannot be too indignant against an action on account of its moral baseness; the only danger in the case is permitting our indignation to lead us to a reprehensible course of conduct. Instead of this passion (if passion it may be called) being wrong, it is stronger in the Deity than in any of His creatures, because His apprehension of the enormity of sin is perfect. But while forgiveness of injuries is compatible with indignation against the act, it is opposed to cherishing ill feeling towards an individual on account of what he has done, and allowing that ill feeling to be manifested in retaliation should opportunity occur.

By recognising the distinction between the act and the perpetrator it becomes evident how the precept, "be ye angry and sin not" may be obeyed, because the object of anger is the sinfulness of the act. However angry we may be on that account it does not at all necessitate our fostering malevolence towards the transgressor. That the two are reconcilable is clear from what is affirmed of the Deity, "that He is angry with the wicked every day," yet He is a God of truth and without iniquity. Just and right is He.

It must not be inferred from what has been advanced that there is no medium between refusing to forgive and cherishing ill feeling. Refusal to forgive may be a proof of ill feeling, but not necessarily so. This leads me to correct a misconception which seems to prevail on this subject, namely, that it is our duty to forgive unconditionally. This is an error, as may be seen by reference to Luke 17:4, "If thy brother trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him." The word "if" shows that conditions are imposed as a prerequisite to the obtaining of forgiveness. Moreover, we are told to forgive even as our Father in heaven hath forgiven us.

Does God forgive unconditionally? If He does, then it might be argued that we ought to do likewise. Imagine a case where forgiveness is withheld because there has been no acknowledgement of guilt, no expression of penitence; this would by no means be a proof that resentment was entertained against the perpetrator of the injury. At the same time it would not imply that there was a disinclination to forgive, but simply that pardon was not granted for the reason specified, a reason held (and rightly too) to be justifiable,

When the act which caused the wound is in itself morally wrong, so far from there being no medium between refusing to forgive and cherishing ill feeling toward the individual, there is a possibility of being very anxious to forgive, and yet not being able to carry out the benevolent desire. Take, for instance, a father and son. The son has been guilty of some gross misdemeanour against his father. The parent might truly say, were I to forgive my son apart from any recognition on wrong doing on his part, I should only be encouraging him in his evil way; neither should I have any security that he would not repeat the same offence at some future time. This is what I cannot do.

We can all understand, nevertheless, that he would be only too willing to forgive. This explains how easy a matter it is to forgive if our disposition towards the delinquent is what it ought to be- We should require no external pressure to be brought to bear upon us; we should have sufficient pressure in our own breast to lead us aright.

Although we are not expected to forgive unconditionally, the teaching of Christ on this subject does not end here. There are two courses of conduct forbidden; one is, proclaiming the matter abroad; the other, letting it rest in abeyance until the party comes to us and acknowledges the wrong. It may be his duty to come, or it may not, for possibly he might be unconscious of having given offence.

That both these modes of procedure are prohibited is clear from the following precept, "If thy brother trespass against thee, Go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone" (Matthew 18:15), It may have been only a misunderstanding, or it may have been thoughtlessness (not that thoughtlessness is altogether excusable); it might turn out after ail to be only imaginary; or, if real, perhaps not intentional.

How wise the counsel to go and ascertain. What a vast amount of mischief might often be spared by attention to this precept.

Christ, in giving this injunction does not profess to legislate for the world at large, but only for the members of His own household. The uniform observance of it by them is intended to draw a line of

demarcation between His disciples, and the votaries of the world, who are too selfish to act in accordance with the Saviour's command, perceiving not that obedience would promote their own happiness.

The precept is as merciful as it is wise, it is based not only on God's sovereignty, but also on His love; enjoined not only out of "jealousy" for Jehovah's honour, but from solicitude for our welfare. The gracious character of the admonition may be best apprehended by considering what would be the consequence of acting in a contrary direction. Suppose then, a community to establish the law of retaliation as just and salutary. Those constituting this community would unavoidably be dependent one upon another; in the nature of things it could not be otherwise. They agree to regulate their conduct according to this law. What would be the effect? Just this; malice would beget malice, resentment engender resentment, revenge incite revenge; this vice would propagate itself, not only in a general way by example, but by a peculiar inducement and method of its own; reason would be blinded by passion.

How painful and disastrous the result of indulging a thirst for vengeance; it would be like adding fuel to the fire, causing still greater conflagration; as the wise man says, "the beginning of strife is as the letting out of water" but who could tell what the end would be?

The duty of forgiveness has its foundation in Justice, and therefore, though only saints are under its binding power, owing to their allegiance to the Lord, yet none are altogether free from moral obligation in the matter. The law is not only written in the sacred oracles, but God has, to a great extent, inscribed it on the hearts of His creatures, for, apart from the Scriptures, men have an intuitive conviction of the rectitude of the thing itself. They cannot help but know and feel that it is wrong to withhold from another that to which they would consider themselves entitled under similar circumstances. It is true that evil surroundings and vicious training can all but obliterate this inward consciousness, but this is no proof that it was not originally planted.

With respect to punishment for disregarding the Divine Word, we find that God for the most part chastises by leaving men's evil doings to bring about their own recompense, and thus it has ever been that the history of nations is a history of blood. But while we may rejoice that submission to Christ's commands is so conducive to our happiness, still we must be prompted to obedience by higher considerations than those of self-interest, namely by recognizing that obligation which arises out of our allegiance to Christ. This leads me to notice, in conclusion, that the exercise of a forgiving spirit is essential to the very existence of the Christian character.

The Chinese are remarkable for their skill in all that concerns the art of design:

"In China, when a man has found out any improvement in his art, he makes it known to the Governor of the Province and claims a reward for his skill. The Governor immediately orders the article to be placed at the door of his palace and exhibited there for a year. If in that time no one points out any imperfection in it the artist is rewarded and taken into the Governor's service. But if any real defect can be pointed out in the work it is returned without any reward.

One day a young man brought to the palace a piece of silk-cloth on which was represented an ear of corn, with a sparrow perched upon it; No-one on seeing it could deny that the representation was very life-like. At last a man came by and began to criticize the performance, declaring that it was by no mean flawless.

He was immediately admitted into the Governor's presence and at the same time the artist was sent for. The fault-finder was then asked what his objections were. He said, "everybody knows very well that a sparrow cannot alight upon an ear of corn without making it bend. Now, the artist has represented it as quite straight, and yet he has shown a sparrow perched upon it." The remark was just and the artist received no reward."

You see, the want of the bending of the stalk completely spoiled the naturalness of the picture and, it may be said, that the absence of a forgiving spirit not only mars the beauty and harmony of the Christian character, but destroys its very existence. Though an unregenerate person lacking this spirit might have many good qualities, yet it is utterly inconceivable that there could be a Christian character in its absence. Christian means Christ-like and an unforgiving spirit is infinitely removed from likeness to Christ.

The gentle forbearing spirit, which is ever ready to forgive, may not inaptly be styled the bending element in character, and how often does it happen in the case of offences, that if there were but a little yielding on both sides a reconciliation might speedily be effected.

The artist lost his anticipated reward, and assuredly we shall lose ours too, if the important element in question be wanting in our character. The Governor did not take the young man into his service, and neither will Christ accept our services in ruling the mortal nations of the earth if we have failed to manifest the Christ-like spirit of forgiveness.

Lastly, let me refer you to the inimitable parable of the Prodigal son, as beautifully and forcibly-illustrative of the forgiveness we have received from our heavenly Father

John Glover (1957)

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## **The Raising Up Of Pharaoh and The Hardening Of His Heart**

“For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.” - Romans 9:17.

It will be allowed that this passage is one of those in Paul's writings “hard to be understood.” That mode of interpretation which borders on fatalism is thought to have a strong support in the above words, and to a superficial reader the arbitrary action of the Almighty, regardless of the will of man, does appear to be inculcated. If an objection be made, we are reminded of the Apostle's other language, in which he teaches that we are the clay and God is the potter; that for us to find fault is as unreasonable as for the vessel to say to him that made it, why hast thou made me thus? But while reverently acknowledging the creative power of God, and His perfect right to make such use as seems good to Him of the works of His hands, we feel bound to demur to the doctrine that man is absolutely of no more account than literal clay in the hand of the potter, which may be fashioned and marred to suit God's taste. We are sure that whatever God does is done in accordance with wisdom and kindness. To act despotically, without any consideration for the senses of man, is undoubtedly to abolish His responsibility. This is utterly incompatible with God's invitation to man: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.”

We have never been able to satisfy our judgment that the raising up of Pharaoh signifies that God brought him into the world for the express purpose of making him an execrable monster and that for the sole object of displaying His mighty power. However, there is nothing incorrect or uncharitable in saying that such a sense has often been put upon the text. If the case really stood thus, would not all that solemn entreaty, all those dreadful threatenings by Moses, be made a mockery? Would not the Creator be presented to us in the aspect of infinite cruelty? An affirmative answer is the only answer we can rationally and conscientiously make.

The sense of the passage seems to turn upon the words “raised thee up.” The Greek word used by Paul does not require us to believe that Pharaoh was raised up from birth to be a cruel tyrant. It may be taken in a very different sense. We believe that the Almighty raised up Alexander, Nebuchadnezzar, Attila, Napoleon, and such-like characters; that is, that He raised them up to power. He does not create wicked men, but finding such always at hand He exalts them to the positions necessary for the accomplishment of His purposes, and protects them till their work is done. The words used in the Septuagint signifies thou hast been preserved. In some instances this seems strikingly manifest. Napoleon for example, took poison at the time of the Russian campaign, but it was found to have lost its strength; and again, on the plains of Waterloo he purposely exposed himself to the hottest fire, but no shot touched him. For this same purpose have “I raised thee up,” is also suggestive of the idea that this particular Pharaoh might not be of the regular royal line, or the blood royal, but like Napoleon, God raised him to the throne of Egypt, seeing he was the right sort of instrument to bring about the necessary state of mind, on the part of the Hebrews, to cast off the yoke of bondage.

We are not able to give positive proof of this but there are some facts which seem to admit of the inference. The word "Pharaoh" is said to be the title of office common to the Kings of Egypt, and that the Scriptures speak of several Pharaohs, cannot be doubted. We may distinguish four; the first of whom flourished in the days of Abraham, the second, he whose dreams were interpreted by Joseph; the third "he who knew not Joseph," and gave command for the destruction of the Hebrew male children; the fourth, that Pharaoh before whom Moses stood, when 80 years old, to demand the release of Israel. It appears to be the daughter of the third, of whom Josephus speaks, informing us that her name was Thermutis. Possibly her father had no male issue, as she adopted Moses to be her son. Josephus indeed states that she presented Moses to her father, as one that should succeed him in his kingdom. The same historian also says, that, previous to the birth of Moses, the royalty had been transferred to another family. (Antiq. c-v.)

Concerning the hardening of Pharaoh's heart, we find it impossible to concur in the arbitrary view previously referred to. In several verses it is said "Pharaoh hardened his heart;" and this must be reconciled with those other verses which say "God hardened the heart of Pharaoh." Having regard to the interviews of Pharaoh and Moses, we should not hesitate to cast all the blame on Pharaoh. The mind shrinks from the slightest admission that God was the author of such obstinacy and rebelliousness, which He afterwards punished. Boothroyd translates the text, "God suffered Pharaoh's heart to be hardened." It would seem that this is the sense intended; "But when Pharaoh saw there was respite, he hardened his heart, and hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said. This hardening therefore, appears to be not direct and arbitrary, but consequential and conditional. In this case, cause and effect look almost like one and the same operation; but there are other cases analogous wherein we readily perceive the difference and recognize the justice as well as the power of God. In Thessalonians Paul declares the fate of those who "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they might all be damned that believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Pharaoh had enquired who the God of Israel was; and by Moses and Aaron God had made His power known unto Pharaoh. Pharaoh therefore, occupied the position of those mentioned by Paul, in these words; "When they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness." As Paul further says, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." Romans 1:21-24,28. What the wicked choose to do after ample warning and remonstrance, God will not hinder; He suffers them to walk in their own ways, and in this sense He may be said to have hardened Pharaoh's heart. He could have destroyed him in a moment but His purpose required such a wicked agent to oppress Israel and turn their attention to the offered deliverance. This purpose was fulfilled by preserving Pharaoh's life and giving him over to that "reprobate mind" which he preferred to the mind of God.

If these observations succeed in throwing any light on this difficult text, we shall feel glad. Any view of God's character which seems contrary to reason is very painful, and whatever goes to change such view for another in harmony with justice, brings relief to the mind.

Editor - "The Christadelphian Lamp" 1874.

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## **EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE - A Note of Explanation:**

So far we have published four articles in this series,

1. The Ezekiel Temple services and Priesthood, essentially Levitical and Aaronic.
2. The Restitution of all things. This dealt with the boundaries of the land in the future in contrast with H. Sulley's enlarged land
3. The actual Temple measurements - mainly Ezekiel chapters 40 to 42 which illustrates a building similar to that described in 1 Kings 6 and built by Solomon.
4. This showed that the temple described by Bro. Sulley is highly imaginative and not like that described by Ezekiel.

I have been in touch with Edgar Wille, who was co-author with H.C.Gates of this series in 1964. Apparently due to a missing page. No. 5 of the original series was published as our No. 1. Edgar says this does not matter too much, though it affects the reference in part three to the first two numbers.

We now proceed with the original No. 1 as our No. 5 which deals with the boundaries of Jerusalem. Nos. 6 and 7 will be the same as in the original order. No. 6 will pick up the theme of our No.1 and No. 7 links the temple and its worship with the concept of the Kingdom the authors then held.

Edgar Wille asks me to say that ultimately the study, linked with the Epistle to the Hebrews, led him to the conclusion that there will be no temple, no animal sacrifices, nor mortal priestly castes in the age to come. H.C.Gates unfortunately died a few years ago.

Russell.

## **EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE**

### **Jerusalem, the City of the Great King**

We begin with a short study of Jerusalem which is so dear to all who love the promises of God. This article aims to show the boundaries of the Jerusalem of the future with a view to establishing the outer limits of a city which must have room for children to play, old men to lean on their staffs, and palaces to be built, as well as for the Temple. Thus we shall get some preliminary broad ideas about the size of the Temple, at the same time enlarging our understanding of our city for whose peace we are invited to pray.

There are many passages of scripture which speak of the coming glory of the city of Jerusalem. It is to be the city of the great king, as Psalm 48 declares: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king." Other scriptures speak of God returning to Jerusalem - to the place where He was before, as for example the following:

"Therefore thus saith the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem... The Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem." (Zechariah 1:16-17).

It is evident that this future city of Jerusalem is to be a real city with inhabitants, as the following scriptures show:

"Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein." (Zechariah 2:4).

"Thus saith the Lord: I am returning unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; there shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." (Zechariah 8:3-5).

These scriptures raise a problem, for if the Jerusalem of the future is to consist only of the Temple - if the Temple is so large that it covers the whole of what is known as Jerusalem, as Bro. Sulley suggests, how do boys and girls play in the streets of it, and how do old men and old women dwell there? If it is a Temple only, how is it a city? If it is thought that the new city lying to the south of the present Jerusalem is the city which is meant we would point out that it is called by another name - *Yahweh Shammah* - and by no stretch of the imagination can it be called "Jerusalem" and "Zion" when it is miles away from the ancient site. (Ezekiel 48).

## **The Boundaries of Zion**

Now God in His wisdom has not left us to speculate, on this problem but has provided the answer. For in two passages of scripture the boundaries of the future Jerusalem have been defined. Our first reference is to Jeremiah 31:38-40,

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the city shall be built to the Lord from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner, and the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever.”

Here we have a list of landmarks giving us the boundaries of the future Jerusalem, and it appears that we are taken round the city in an anti-clockwise direction. Starting with the tower of Hananeel, which was the extreme northerly point of the ancient city, we proceed west to the corner (or valley) gate, then south, (the hill Gareb is doubtful but Young's Concordance locates it at the South-west). Goath too is very doubtful, but the valley of the dead bodies would be the valley of Hinnon - which would mark the southern boundary. Then east to the valley of the Kidron and to the Horse gate which also was on the east.

The other scripture is Zechariah 14:10,

“All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the King's winepresses.”

The boundary points here given are located as follows:- Benjamin's gate was the gate of Ephraim and was situated on the north west; the first gate is doubtful but the Speaker's Commentary says it was also known as the “old gate” and was situated on the north-east; the corner gate, as we have seen, was on the west, the tower of Hananeel was the most northerly point whilst the King's wine-presses were probably situated in or near the King's garden which was just outside the wall on the south eastern corner.

Here, then, we have confirmatory evidence that the city is to be built within these ancient landmarks. The boundaries are clearly given, roughly north to south and east to west.

Other helpful references are 2 Kings 14:13 where we have an account of Jehoash, King of Israel, breaking down the wall of Jerusalem “from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.” This distance of four hundred cubits shows that the location of these two points - as given on the accompanying sketch plan - is correct.

The other helpful reference is Nehemiah 3 where we have the account of the rebuilding of the wall under the leadership of Nehemiah. The account takes us round the city in an anti-clockwise direction and helps us to locate the various gateways. There is one verse in this chapter which gives a measurement of a thousand cubits from the “valley gate,” (otherwise known as the corner gate) unto the dung gate - which again confirms the position of these places on the sketch plan.

## **As of old**

Now what do we gain from these references to the past and future limits of Jerusalem? One thing, and one thing only - that Jerusalem, the city, is to be rebuilt as it was before. Its walls and gates are to be in the same places. There is but one item uncertain; and that is the reference from Jeremiah 31 which speaks of the “whole valley of the dead bodies” being incorporated. But does this mean that this valley, otherwise known as the “valley of Hinnon,” is to be within the city walls, or that the walls are built up to the valley? The latter is probably true because of the reference in Isaiah 66:24 which reads,

“And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched: and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.”

This place of the “carcasses” surely can be no other than the valley of the dead bodies and is the Gehenna of which Christ spoke. This, of course, was outside the city walls and access to it was by the dung gate. It would appear that this valley is to be used in future for the same purpose as in the past, namely to burn all refuse and to provide a lesson for the people that they may not err from God's ways,

It is clear, then, that Jerusalem is to be rebuilt as it was before, and what does this mean in regard to the Temple? It means that very definitely there is not room for the mile square conception of Bro. Sulley. There is room only for a 500 cubit Temple. This will be still more evident when we examine Bro. Sulley's handling of the passages from Jeremiah and Zechariah, and reference to the sketch plans provided surely must dispel all doubts.

It is fitting that Jerusalem should be built as it was before. It will lose nothing of its former character when God chose it, when He “loved the gates of Zion” and made it His dwelling place. The scriptures reveal that God will “return” unto Zion, He will choose it yet again; He hath “desired it for His habitation.” How fitting, too, for the resurrected “ancients” of Israel to see Jerusalem as they knew it.

Consider the references to the rebuilt city of Jerusalem in the prophets - here are just one or two:-

“Thus saith the Lord: Again there shall be heard in this place...the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say. Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the Lord... In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, the Lord our righteousness.” (Jeremiah 33:10-16).

“Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up... For there are set thrones of Judgment, the thrones of the house of David. Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.” (Psalm 122).

But the most striking passage of all is Jeremiah 30:18 -

“Thus saith the Lord; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places; and the city shall be builded on her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof.”

This verse becomes even more striking as it is rendered in the R.S.V:-

“Behold, I will restore the fortunes of Jacob and have compassion on his dwellings. The city shall be rebuilt upon its mound, and the palace shall stand where it used to be.”

“Rebuilt upon its mound.” “Stand where it used to be.” Could phrases be any more definite to express the fact that Jerusalem will be a city, and its location be as it was before?

There can be no other conclusion than that Jerusalem will be rebuilt according to its ancient landmarks, walls, and gates; and that the temple is a structure inside this city. No other interpretation can find a place for all the scriptures concerned. And so we emphasise again that this limits the size of the Temple; it can only be 500 cubits (not reeds) square.

## **Greater Jerusalem**

There remains a further passage in Zechariah which calls for some explanation: - “Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein.” (Zechariah 2:4).

What is here meant by “Jerusalem”? It would appear that this name includes in this place an area greater than the city itself. It is a tract of country including towns, men and cattle. It thus could mean the Holy Oblation in its entirety, which will have in it the rebuilt city of Jerusalem, the city to the south described by Ezekiel in his last chapter and called *Yahweh Shammah*, and also other towns and villages, as well as fields for cattle. There would thus be a city of Jerusalem and a greater Jerusalem - the same as we speak of the city of London and greater London

## **Bro. Sulley's view of Jerusalem**

Bro. Sulley gives a map of the present Jerusalem with his mile-square Temple superimposed upon it - as shown on the accompanying sketch plan (figure 2). In the light of what we have seen this is open to the following objections:-

1) It makes no allowance for the fact that Jerusalem is to be rebuilt as a city with boys and girls playing in the streets thereof Jerusalem is not only a Temple; it is a city with a Temple therein.

2) We have seen that Jerusalem has well-defined limits; Bro. Sulley goes right outside these limits.

3) He has the boundary points in the wrong places!

We will examine the second and third points a little more closely.

From Jeremiah and Zechariah we have seen that the boundaries of the rebuilt Jerusalem are;- North - the tower of Hananeel; South - the king's winepresses; East - the horse gate; West - the corner gate. Bro. Sulley ignores these limits and goes right outside them for his temple walls,

The scripture says "from the tower of Hananeel unto the King's winepresses." We should surely stay with the limits given by scripture.

Thirdly, Bro. Sulley has two points marked "A" and "B". "A", he says is the tower of Hananeel and "B" the corner gate. But these do not correspond with the facts. The tower of Hananeel was situated at the point we have marked "Y" and the corner gate was never at the eastern side but at the west, at the point we have marked "Z." Further, as with rather loose application of scripture in regard to the hill Gareb (which Young says was at the south-west, but he places at the south-east), he says, "Whether the Mount of Offence" is the same as the hill Gareb, I know not, but it is not a little remarkable that one of the existing walls of Jerusalem, if extended, would intersect this hill." (Temple book. New Edition, page 137). In other words, he does not know whether the hill Gareb should be there or not but he places it there!

To be continued.

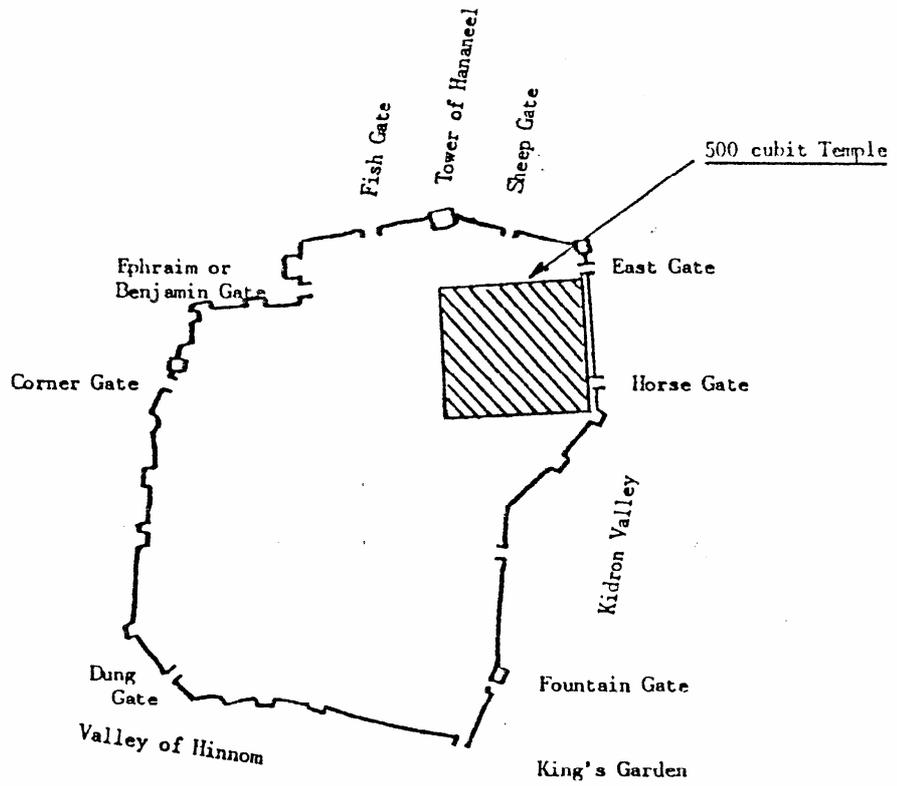


FIG. 1. PLAN OF JERUSALEM WITH 500 CUBIT TEMPLE

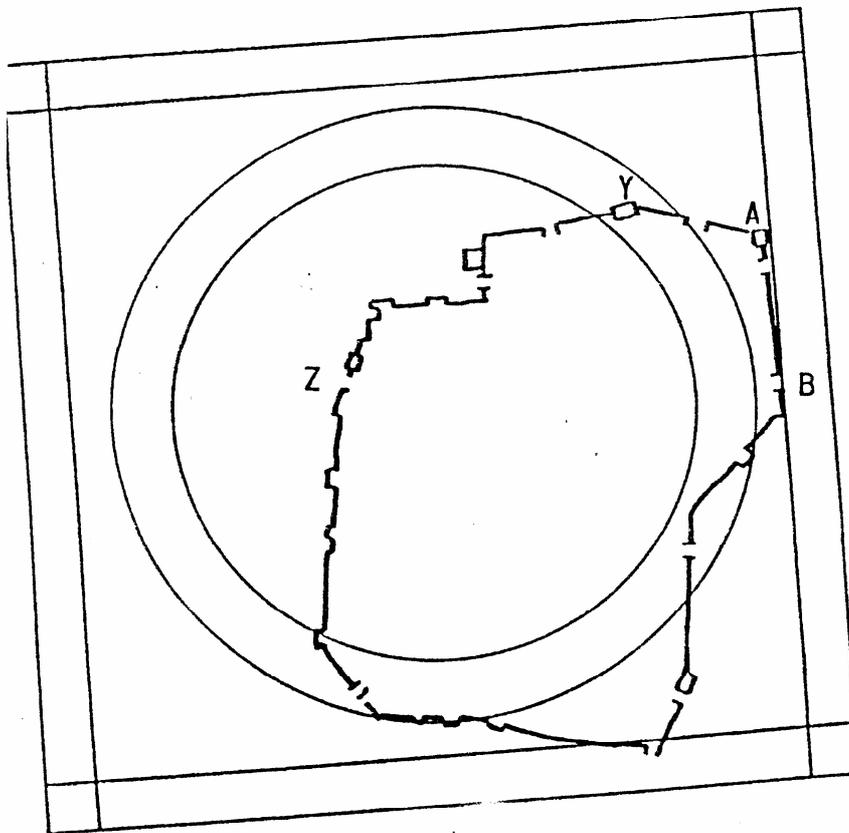


FIG. 2. ANCIENT JERUSALEM WITH H. SULLEY'S TEMPLE SUPERIMPOSED