

# The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No 161

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## Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends, Loving Greetings in Messiah’s dear Name

In the highly sceptical and scientific age that we now live in to have strong religious convictions of any kind is regarded as decidedly eccentric. Even the leaders of the established churches remain in their posts while unashamedly announcing their disbelief in basic tenets of the creed and Biblical truths concerning the Virgin birth and the resurrection.

The Bible is looked upon by many as an interesting mythical book that only the naïve and foolish spend their time reading. The Old Testament in particular is thought to be full of fairy stories telling the fictional events that befell various imaginary characters. Some intellectuals may gracefully grant that persons such as Moses and Abram and David were in fact real people. But few of them accept the actual existence of Adam and Eve and certainly Noah and the flood is fiction.

The fact that some of the people in the Bible are accepted as historical personages by those who have no faith is generally due to archaeologist’s discoveries and other documentary evidence which tally s with what the Bible narrates in its pages- These discoveries bring to light the truth that the Bible reveals and the accuracy of the accounts of events detailing God’s dealings with the Jewish nation before the Birth of Christ.

In 1980 a crippled Israeli war hero named Adam Zertal discovered the earliest Biblical site in what is now the occupied West Bank of Jordan, During three seasons of excavations he discovered on Mount Ebal a pile of stones that contained many pottery shards from the end of the iron age 1200 - 1100 B.C. Adam also uncovered a courtyard of about 3/4 of an acre and a mysterious beautifully preserved rectangular construction nearly 9 feet tall made of unhewn field stones. The structures strangest feature was its filling - deliberately laid field stones covered with earth, burned bones and ashes, each apparently poured in from the top. The archaeologists were mystified until they consulted the Bible, particularly the books that deal with the Exodus.

What they found was definitive proof of a site mentioned in Joshua 8:30, the one at which the twelve tribes of Israel united as one nation to make offerings to the Glory of God. It was in fact the altar Joshua built

at God's command. Adam Zertal said he dated his findings at about 12th century B.C. which would be consistent with the time of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt under Moses and their settling in the Promised Land under Joshua.

We send love and best wishes to everyone with the fervent hope that we shall be kept in the way of truth until Jesus returns.

Helen Brady.

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## **“BUT THE WISDOM WHICH IS FROM ABOVE IS FIRST PURE... without partiality and without hypocrisy.”**

**(James 3:17)**

“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth” - 2 Timothy 2:15.

Compare this advice from Paul to Timothy with the contents of the book by Mr Robert Roberts entitled “The Visible Hand of God” under the heading “The Reign of Death” on page 32 where he states:

“The Adamic race is a new start upon the planet earth from which it had emerged from its former darkness and submersion in water and at this stage our enquiry on the nature of Adam relates to it. Did it commence mortal, or was it brought down to a mortal state later on?”

For brevities sake I have not quoted his exact words but the sense of them; you may read for yourselves if you have the book. Of course the author is speaking of Adam's nature when created from the ground a living soul or body of life kept alive by food and oxygen. The author continues,

“It is impossible to get any light on this question from geology or any other natural source. Speculation on the subject on scientific premises is only pretentious maundering. There is a short and satisfactory way to the root of the matter. The resurrection of Christ is the key of the whole position. If Christ rose from the dead, Paul, his specially selected Apostle, is an inspired declarer of truth. Consequently, his dogmatic assertion that “By one man (Adam) sin entered into the (human) world, and death by sin,” is a settlement of the question.

Paul's dogmatic assertion does not stand alone. It is founded on, and endorses the Mosaic account which is itself commended to our confidence as divine on separate and independent grounds. However unfashionable it may have become therefore, and however unscientific and far behind it may seem, the man stands on logically unassailable ground who holds that death did not come into the world with Adam, but by him after he came; that at first he was free from the action of death in his organization; that though not absolutely immortal in the sense of being indestructible in nature, he was in that state with respect to the working and tendency of his organization, that death did not wait for him in the natural path, but had to be introduced as a law of his being before he could become mortal. His was an animal nature that would not die left to itself - a natural body free from death.

Page 33 continues this theme:

“Left to himself as God had made him he would not have returned to the ground. It required what men call a miracle to depress to the level of the beasts that perish, the noble creature formed in the image of Elohim... “Thou shalt die” (Genesis 2:17): this was not the prospect apart from disobedience...” End of quote.

For a man who was said to be a journalist you would expect more intelligence resulting from his own reading of the Scriptures instead of these blatant and unscriptural dogmatic assumptions he makes- But by some means he survived long enough to deceive those people who were too illiterate to reason from the Scriptures the error of his teaching, or those who had never read this book to perhaps allow it to insult their own intelligence. Either way his followers have accepted this subtle, confused, dogmatic assumption, as their basis of faith, and professing they read their Bibles and know the Truth they are without excuse.

The author is stating that Adam’s nature was “animal nature,” yet it required a miracle to change this “animal nature” to “animal nature” as a consequence of his disobedience. How could a man of such confused reasoning have been trusted by so many? He was shown to be in error in 1873 by Edward Turney; Dr. Thomas in his own written works showed him to be in error on this particular subject yet neither Thomas nor Roberts were in harmony with Scripture and their own teaching.

Robert Roberts the author of this subject “The Reign of Death,” failed to rightly divide the Word of Truth by his ignoring of the teaching of Paul whom he described as “Christ’s specially selected Apostle and declarer of truth.” He set at nought Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 15:42-53 which supports the Genesis account that all the natural animal creation was corruptible with a limited existence according to its species as ordained of God. He then has the gall and assumption to declare by quoting out of context Romans 5:12 that Paul endorses the teaching that Adam’s nature was not limited in its existence until he transgressed; he fails therefore to see that Paul was speaking of death under moral law, not death as a physical result of God’s appointment for all animal species of the dust. In his letter to the Romans Paul’s subject is not about the death which is common to all creation but the “death by sin” which Adam incurred by breach of divine law, and which as a sentence, passed upon all men before they were even born or could even sin in a personal sense. God’s love and justice in this is explained by Paul in Romans 5:18 wherein he demonstrates a reversal of the position through Jesus Christ. In the first place, by one man’s disobedience we are constituted sinners, and secondly, by one man’s righteousness we have the free gift of justification of life. We are firstly under legal sentence of death, and secondly under legal sentence of life. Paul is showing that sin could only reign until its debt was paid, that after that, grace would reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Romans 5:21

The only literal and physical death involved in this teaching of Paul is that of Christ. The death believers associate themselves with is symbolic into the death of Christ by baptism in water and faith in His shed blood, for without the shedding of blood is no remission of sin. At this stage sin ceases to reign and grace takes its place. There is no physical change in our nature by this act of belief and faith; Jesus did not sacrifice His natural life in the blood to prevent us from dying a natural death, but to free all from the dominion of sin and its wages under which Adam had sold all in his loins.

The authors reference to the resurrection of Christ as the key to the whole position, and linking Christ’s death and Paul’s “death by sin” with the common death experienced by all men, is most subtle in the extreme, and far from being a settlement, as he says, of the question, is more confusing. The death from which Christ rose was inflicted by the shedding of His blood - the very death Adam incurred by sin, that is, judicially inflicted by the shedding of His own blood. This death Jesus suffered in his stead, not death by natural decay which the author is saying, without Scripture support, was the penalty. If the penalty on Adam was “Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return,” then Jesus did not die that death, not did He return to dust.

The difference was that Jesus was not a sinner though He died the death due to the sinner (Adam), thereby saving Adam and all constituted as sinners in him, from the “death by sin” which Paul teaches in Romans 5:12. This was the “Sin of the world” of which John the Baptist stated Jesus as the Lamb of God would take away, by the deaths foreshadowing Him in Eden and under the Mosaic Law - the blood of the animals which God had given to men of faith to make atonement for their souls. The blood of bulls and of goats could not utterly of themselves take away sins - they were provisional types of the true Lamb of God whom God would supply in due time, His only begotten Son, One Lamb to cover by one offering the many

offerings for transgressions under the first covenant including also the Edenic, where sin entered the world. Hebrews 9:15-28.

The sacrificial death of Jesus was not substitutionary for natural decay and ultimate death, but for the “death by sin” which Adam did not experience (neither the Roman believers, for example) in the physical sense, or we would not be here to argue about it.

Jesus experienced the “Death by sin” with added suffering, but not the death of a sinner, the Romans experienced it only in symbol with no suffering, hence the words of the Apostle Peter, “Who his own self bear our sins in his own body to the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed” - 1 Peter 2:24; also Isaiah 53:5 in reference to Israel. (See also 1 Peter 3:17,18). Adam, the first man was involved too in his own association with the typical lamb slain in place of his own life forfeited to the law of God which set before him Life or Death which was a legal and moral position wherein he had freedom of choice. We know the result. Thus Redemption was a necessity if he were not to be put to death through the shedding of his blood - the conveyor of natural life.

It is the “natural death for sin” teaching in opposition to the Holy Scriptures which has caused the objection by so many in accepting Christ’s sacrificial death as a substitute for Adam and all men. On this false theory of death by decay being the penalty for Adam’s sin it is reasoned that if Jesus were a Substitute, we ought not to die and He ought not to have risen. The fact is, Adam did not die in the day he became a sinner but the animal which foreshadowed the death of Jesus did as a substitute; thus Adam was typically redeemed and allowed to live out his natural span of life to possibly await in the dust the time when all who have died in faith will receive its reward through the merits of Him who loved them and gave Himself for them, the Just for the unjust.

Natural death is experienced by righteous and unrighteous, interrupted by resurrection according to faith and responsibility as the case may be, but this cannot be termed the “death by sin” for the “death by sin” is judicially inflicted - in scriptural terms, the taking away of life, usually by the shedding of blood.

Thus by these false premises R.Roberts has rejected all possibility that a present believer can be said to have passed from under the ‘sentence of death’ to a ‘sentence of life’ until the physical body has been changed from corruptible nature to incorruptible. Robert Roberts’s theory is that Redemption of the believer is impossible now, but can only be said to take place after Christ’s return, with resurrection and approval after passing his Judgment Seat. Dr.Thomas taught otherwise in Eureka Volume 1,

In this same book, “The Visible Hand of God,” chapter V, Page 41, R.Roberts is faced with a dilemma in dealing with the subject of Enoch and of those believers alive and remaining unto the coming of the Lord Jesus.

In his assuming that “the taking of Enoch by God” meant that he did not die what he regards as the penalty of natural death for sin, he is faced with the facts of Scripture truth and the dilemma it has caused him. At the bottom of page 42, which I advise you to read if you have the book, and for your own good to edification, the author states:

“It naturally occurs to us (Christadelphians) to marvel how this exemption (from death) could take place in view of Enoch’s inclusion in Adam’s sentence, as yet untaken away in Christ. But our difficulty eases when we realize that Enoch’s “walk with God” included that regular offering of typical sacrifice in which Christ’s great work was foreshadowed, and by which Enoch identified himself with that work. There was no more setting aside of God’s appointed order than there will be in the case of those who “are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord” and shall not see death. In the case of these, the law of God has its fulfilment in their retrospective “crucifixion with Christ” emblemized in baptism into His death; in the case of Enoch, the same result was reached prospectively so far as the divine purpose was concerned and actually in Enoch’s offering of sacrifice.”

AMEN; AND THANK YOU MR ROBERTS!

This is the true doctrine of Redemption and the substitutionary and sacrificial death of Christ which you say was foreshadowed in Eden. But why have you left out Adam, Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and the faithful Prophets who identified themselves as Enoch did with that great work of God in Christ?

These all died in faith – not under the penalty of Adam’s sentence – but waiting to be made perfect with those faithful who remain unto the coming of the Lord, to be ever with Him in bodies like His.

Considering Robert Roberts’ statement of retrospective “crucifixion with Christ” emblemized in baptism into his death by blood shedding,” should you not ask the question, “Unto what was I baptized”?

Can I truly identify my baptism with Paul’s explanation to the Roman believers in chapter 6 verses 1 to 11? Why not rightly divide the Word of Truth rather than what R.Roberts has done in contradicting and manipulating it to suit his own incapability of doing so to avoid ridicule of his error?

Brother P.Parry.

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## CONCERNING THE SEVERAL NARRATIVES OF THE ANOINTING OF CHRIST AND THE DIFFERENT MARYS

Much of the confusion arises because there are:

- 1). Some six different Marys mentioned.
- 2). Two Simons referred to -
  - a) Simon the leper in Bethany and
  - b) the Pharisee of Luke 7:37,38 & 40.

Now in John 11:2 (the chapter dealing with the raising of Lazarus) there are cross references to Matthew 26:7, Mark 14:3, Luke 7:37 and John 12:3. But it seems to me that whoever inserted these cross references took the liberty to make a lot of unwarranted assumptions. So let us see.

**Matthew 26:6,7**, (In the house of Simon the leper). The name of the woman is not mentioned. So the cross reference should refer to the anointing only, not to the woman who performed the act.

**Mark 14:3** (also in the house of Simon the leper). Very much a repetition of Matthew 26:6,7. The name of the woman is not mentioned.

**Luke 7:36-50** This took place in the house of a Pharisee. Simon by name, a different one from Simon the leper. Simon was a very common name. Again, there is no name of the woman. All we are told of her is that she was a sinner. Also, this event took place about two years before Christ’s crucifixion, probably somewhere in or near a city called Nain. On the other hand the events described in Matthew, Mark and John occurred in Bethany, and toward the end of His ministry.

**John 11:1,2, and 12:3**. The anointing took place at the house of Martha and Mary, not in the house of Simon the leper. This is very probably that Mary whose sister Martha was too cumbered about serving (Luke 10:38-42). But the events described in Matthew 26:6,7 and Mark 14:3 took place in the house of Simon the leper.

So we have to be on our guard against jumping to wrong conclusions. The narratives lack details and I am afraid many of these will only be supplied when we meet them all in the Kingdom. Let us strive to be worthy, so that we can ask them these questions.

Now **John 11:2**, the verse is in parenthesis. It is not clearly stated as to which of the above mentioned anointing ceremonies is referred to.

One thing that does stand out clearly is that the woman described as a sinner in Luke 7:37 was not the Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha. This is confirmed in several Bible dictionaries I consulted.

Brother Leo Dreifuss.

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**Many of you will know I am a Driving Instructor by occupation and so it was very pleasing to receive the following letter from one of my ex pupils:**

Dear Russell, I'm sorry its been so long since we spoke but I thought I'd write as I don't see you very often. I did want to continue our discussion from the other week. I have put down what I feel is a logical explanation of the reason for Jesus Christ's sacrifice; Daniel 9:24-26 foretold that the Messiah would come to earth "to terminate the transgression, and to finish off sin and to make atonement for error and to bring in righteousness."

So how did sin originate? God commanded that Adam and Eve should not eat from the tree of knowledge, "for in the day that you eat from it you will positively die." This showed that God had the right to set moral standards and Adam and Eve could show their love and appreciation to God by obeying Him.

In Satan's conversation with Eve he said that God was a liar and also implied that God was holding back from Adam and Eve something good, to be like God, so they would not need him to decide what was right and wrong (Genesis 2:17 and 3:1-6). Satan brought into question the right of Jehovah as universal sovereign. By going against God they gave their support to Satan.

In Genesis 3:19 Adam was sentenced to death after his sin (see verses 17-19). Following this in verse 21, God made long garments of skin for Adam and Eve to clothe themselves. These Scriptures do not mention an animal sacrificed to compensate Adam's sin. The Bible does show that Adam's sin was wilful (see 1 Timothy 2:14). The Scriptures don't mention a repentant attitude in Adam or Eve.

Death was thus the result of his sinful act. In Genesis 3:17-19 it says "because you listened to your wife's voice and took to eating from the tree... you will eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken, for dust you are and to dust you will return" (See also Romans 5:12).

Because of Adam's sinful course, resulting in death and imperfection to all humankind, God's principles of justice required a soul for a soul. So Jesus gave His life as a "ransom in exchange for many" (Mark 10:45). His perfect life corresponded the perfect life which Adam had lost (see 1 Timothy 2:5,6 and John 3:16). After His death and resurrection Jesus presented to His Father the value of His perfect human life (Hebrews 9:23-28). This sacrifice brings forgiveness of sins, hope for the future and proof of Jehovah's love.

You also mentioned the thought that in Eden God changed His mind and did not follow through on the death sentence, comparing this to Jonah and the city of Nineveh.

In Jonah 3:10 we see that God "felt regret" over the judgment upon Nineveh, but as it states this was only after He saw the people's works which displayed that they had "turned back from their bad ways." Surely if this had been the case in Eden God would have had both Adam's repentance and His own mercy recorded, but there is no mention of this. It is only logical to accept that as Romans 5:12 says, sin and death resulted to all because of Adam's original sin. Which is why death is spoken of as "an enemy" in 1 Corinthians 15:26.

Death is unnatural to us because we have a longing for eternal life implanted in us by God (see Ecclesiastes 3:11).

I hope I have been clear in what I've written, I would be very interested in your views. Hope I will hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely, Jennie.

**My reply:**

Dear Jennie, It was lovely to receive your letter last week and a pleasure to read it through. Your argument is well worked out and most of it I certainly agree with it as it is, of course, based on Scripture.

I hope I am being helpful in saying there is only one path, starting with events in Eden, which takes into full account all the facts we learn later in the Scriptures.

I set out my case:

I maintain that Adam and Eve were created like all other creatures - designed to live natural lives for a natural period of growth to a period of maturity and then followed by natural death, as were all animals. (See Genesis 1:27 to 30). The special thing about the human race is that God gave us a greater capability for reasoning than other animals, and with this He gave us laws to live by, which in turn gives us free will, and the exercise of free will allows the development of character. We can choose to live by the standards God sets for us or we can reject them. The choice is ours; to reject them is sin, for sin is transgression of God's law, but living according to God's commandments is righteousness and will be rewarded with eternal life through Jesus.

God's law and principle of justice required that Adam should die for his sin. In His mercy and love God provided His Son to die instead of Adam.

Therefore it would not be just of God to still require the death of Adam as punishment for his sin.

The truth is that God did not require the death of Adam as punishment; neither does He require the death of anyone who turns to Him in faith, for the punishment of death for sin has been covered by the death of Jesus.

Again you say, "This sacrifice brings forgiveness of sins, hope for the future and proof of Jehovah's love."

While this is true it needs expanding as, of itself, it is not sufficient to meet other Scripture teaching.

The sacrifice of Jesus spared Adam's life and in turn has enabled us to have life, our present natural life. However, only those who turn to God in faith can receive forgiveness of sins and hope for the future – eternal life.

Natural death is not "the enemy." Where death as the enemy is referred to in Scripture it is the perishing in death which is meant. Jesus shows this when He said, "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matthew 8:22). These people were dead "in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1) for they had no faith in Him nor His atoning work, so they perish in death. Our natural death can be seen as a rest from our labours.

Indeed "death" is used in other ways too, in Scripture, such as the symbolic death we die when baptized into Jesus Christ - we die with Him as Paul expresses it (Romans 6:4). In baptism we die in symbol in the water then rise out of the water to newness of life, which leads to eternal life if we remain faithful; through baptism we are counted as having "passed from death unto life" (John 5:24), but we may still die, so that our natural death is not the enemy as it is no bar to eternal life.

Now I want to go to Romans 5:19. Here Paul writes: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Paul is not saying that we are made literal sinners because of Adam's sin or that we shall be punished for Adam's sin, but all are included "in

Adam” - for the sake of salvation we are being counted as sinners and being dealt with as though sinners in order that we, the many, can be saved by the one act of a righteous person, Jesus (1 Peter 3:18). If this were not the case then every sinner would need an individual righteous Saviour to die in order for him or her to be saved. A life for a life (a soul for a soul). But under Jehovah’s system the many are saved by one life - the perfect life of Jesus Christ in place of the one perfect life which Adam lost by transgression of God’s law.

By being constituted sinners in Adam we can transfer to Jesus and be constituted (counted as, and dealt with as though) righteous when we are “in Him.” This is expressed again in Scripture as putting off the old man and putting on the new (Colossians 3:9,10; Ephesians 4:22; Romans 6:6). We can either be “in Adam” or “in Jesus.” It is rather like changing from one nationality to another and becoming a citizen of another country. The Christian transfers his allegiance from being in Adam to being in Jesus when he is baptized into Jesus. This is a legal transfer from one Federal Head, Adam, to another Federal Head, Jesus (the Federal system being where many are counted as one).

If Lot had remained in Sodom he would have perished with the Sodomites; if one remains in Adam he will perish with the Adamites. By being in Jesus we are not saved from dying but we are saved from perishing in death.

In dealing with God’s statement to Adam that “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” it is quite evident that this death threat was not in fact carried out as he lived beyond that day, yet the expression used in the old manuscripts was “*B’yom*” meaning “in the day.” This term is used several times, and I can give you at thirteen other instances elsewhere in the Bible, (e.g. 1 Kings 2:36 to 46, regarding the warning to Shemei - “On the day (*B’yom*) that thou goest out...thou shalt surely die...”) and in every occasion it can only mean “in that very day” and cannot mean an extended period beyond that day. The death sentence was in fact not carried out so we have to look for the reason why. It was so that the human race should continue.

That Adam and Eve were not put to death on the day they sinned shows in no small measure God’s mercy and love to them and to us, for it is obvious that had the sentence of death been carried out then, as Adam and Eve had no offspring, we would never have been born.

Therefore, as the sentence of death was not carried out as God forewarned it would be, we see that Genesis 3:17-19 is a separate issue which came about after Adam and Eve were spared the penalty of death and was not any part of the threat of Genesis 2:17, but a new set of conditions by which they could continue to live out their natural lives, not under the test of perfect obedience but under the test of faith.

Here, I wish to digress in order to clear up what may be a small misunderstanding. I have never considered that God changed His mind (although I have been falsely accused of this), for God knows the end from the beginning; He knew before He created Adam that He would need to bring His only begotten Son into the world that the world, through Him, might be saved. So it was not a case of God changing His mind for His Plan was fixed from the creation; it was a matter of not revealing to Adam His plan of salvation until it became necessary to do so through Adam’s sin, after which the test of faith replaced the test of perfect obedience.

Another Scriptural principle is “first the natural then the spiritual” (1 Corinthians 15:46), so that in our natural life we are given the opportunity, through faith, of having life “more abundantly” (John 10:10), that is, everlasting or spiritual life (Greek – *zoe* life). The fact that we have a longing for eternal life does not mean that death is unnatural; indeed to say so seems to jar the senses as the natural end to the natural body is death. Our change from a natural body to a spiritual body is unnatural, or, I would rather say, a miracle.

In conclusion I want to mention one of the types in Scripture we have set out for us in the Law of Moses dealing with slavery, comparing it with our position as being in bondage, or slavery, to sin, and this is illustrated in the law where provision was made for bondservants or slaves, for when anyone in Israel fell on hard times, the law allowed that man to sell himself to a wealthy neighbour and become his slave, his wife and children also being taken into slavery. 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 a near kinsman who was willing and able to pay the redemptive price to buy his relatives freedom. 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 as 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 freed from their bondage. In comparison with this illustration we see how Adam sold us into slavery to sin, resulting in our present sorrows, and Jesus was our near kinsman who bought us our freedom “for the joy set before Him.”

We pray that, in the fullness of time, where He is we may be also.

I do hope I haven't written too much to take in all at once but the Atonement is the subject closest to my heart.

My Love and Best Wishes to you both in Jesus, Russell.

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**In the last Circular Letter we published Brother Cyril Marsters talk given at the Christadelphian Summer School in July 1995, followed by two commentaries.**

**We received the following response from Brother John Stevenson of Australia: -**

**Re Cyril Marsters' Lecture**

**“THE CLEAN FLESH HERESY AND THE STATEMENT OF FAITH.**

**Further comments in Reply to Phil Parry and Russell Gregory.**

Although I agree with all the points you raised in your commentaries, nevertheless I feel you are misjudging Cyril Marsters. As I read through his lecture, it seemed to me that he was courageously exposing a very touchy topic in the Christadelphian camp. If you or I tried to broach the subject, they would turn us out and slam the door. However, Cyril Marsters has succeeded in discussing the subject, probably in the only way possible in the enemy citadel, by ostentatiously walking precisely along the party line and using their jargon, but by using a dry humorous sarcasm that would go completely over the heads of most of his listeners.

Read through his dissertation again, and you will observe that he never once shows a fault in Edward Turney's reasoning or methods; on the contrary he shows that Turney is consistent, sincere, and honest always, and thorough in his research and references. But on the other hand he demonstrates that Robert Roberts is insincere, deceitful, and inconsistent always. Cyril Marsters' dry sarcasm comes to a climax when he says, “Well, friend Turney, what have you to answer to that? I can't see any answer.” It should be very obvious to anyone whose eyes are open, to anyone not wearing blinkers, to anyone whose mind is not shackled by the B.A.S.F. that there is NO answer. In the preceding quotation it is manifestly patent that Robert Roberts was craftily evading “in his inimitable way” a vital issue that he could not frankly face.

Brother John Stevenson.

(The final paragraph of Brother John's letter has been withheld at the request of Brother Cyril).

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**Brother Cyril Marsters replies to the commentaries as follows:-**

Re “THE CLEAN FLESH HERESY AND THE STATEMENT OF FAITH”. Response to the Commentaries of Phil Parry and Russell Gregory published in the Circular Letter of May/June 1996.

I was intrigued to read your comments on my talk, but disappointed at the motives attributed to me.

My aim was to provide information on the controversy to those who were not informed and to draw some lessons by examining the manner in which Edward Turney and Robert Roberts disputed. Although

Robert Roberts claimed to avoid non-biblical terminology, he clearly did not succeed and his manner of insulting Edward Turney did nothing to encourage a Christ like exchange of views.

Your criticism of me unfortunately veers a little towards the same fault.

When I remarked, “Well, friend Turney, What have you to answer to that? I can’t see any answer?” I was being ironic. To respond to Edward Turney’s question by maligning the questioner was no way to proceed. I was not as you seem to think by your criticism of me, saying that Robert Roberts had produced an irrefutable answer on this point.

Cyril Marsters. 11/7/1996.

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### **Apology**

How easy it is to misunderstand others. It is quite evident I owe Brother Cyril Marsters an apology. I never intended any offence, and where I have misjudged his talk or unduly criticized him in any way I am sorry.

Russell.

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### **Brother Phil Parry writes:**

In regard to my comment on the talk by Cyril Marsters I thought it necessary to look again in C.L.160 for May/June. As a result of reading his opening remarks about an actual heresy bursting upon the Christadelphian scene and being eclipsed by a masterful exposition of received wisdom, I took it that this was how he had come to judge the results of the two Lectures, that is, that Turney’s Lecture had been eclipsed by some Divine Wisdom Roberts had received. But I can understand that this was Cyril’s feelings at the time of reading the Turney Lecture and that since reading “The Slain Lamb” Lecture by Robert Roberts as a result of receiving a review of it by F.J.Pearce he has reached a different conclusion, at least I hope so.

Cyril’s introduction in regard to Roberts’ label of Renunciationism and “Clean Flesh” upon Turney is complimentary, for indeed Cyril says that this label on Turney is completely untrue, especially after examining Turney’s actual beliefs. Cyril then proceeds to give in his own words mainly, but with some quotations, his understanding of Turney’s views from reading his Lecture “The Sacrifice of Christ.” This commences with the nature of man as described in Genesis.

Cyril goes on then to relate an accurate account of Turney’s views until we reach the point in page 20 of the Circular Letter where he says, “Turney saw all men’s personal sins as being treated by God, I think, as included in that one sin of Adam their Federal Head, which I think is the description of how his present day followers explain it.” Unfortunately we of the Nazarene Faith may be misunderstood or misinterpreted, for we do not believe or teach that men’s personal (committed) sins are included in that one sin of Adam, but that Adam’s sin alienated all from God, being in his loins or members of his body when he sinned and thus constituted sinners in a Federal sense of imputation, but not actual sinners, not being in existence at the time. I believe this is what Turney was teaching and that enlightenment made men aware of their alienated position and the way out of it through Jesus Christ, when personal sin would be accounted on an individual basis.

After reading John Stevenson’s comments I can see I may have been much too severe in my comments on Cyril’s talk in that he has presented Turney’s views as consistent and honest but shows Roberts to be insincere, deceitful, and inconsistent always.

I can quite understand why Cyril prefers John’s last paragraph to be omitted and it is right and proper that Cyril should be left to make his own decision on the future, though I am in agreement with John’s sentiments.

I can only thank Cyril Marsters' and our Brother Gregory's efforts in presenting the true facts of the position, but I do not foresee a mass turn around in our favour or to our teaching. Such an earthquake in the Christadelphian construction and foundation is to them unthinkable, but the Lord's return will cause it nevertheless.

Sincerely, Phil Parry.

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## **1) Christ's Salvation and 2) Immortal Resurrection:**

I greatly appreciate your and Helen's efforts in the circulation of the Circular Letter. Now there are so many booklets in existence concerning our controversy with the Christadelphians that it seems superfluous to add any more.

However, going through many of their writings I feel one great misunderstanding prevails among them which somehow has not been corrected by us thoroughly enough. They seem to be under the impression that Christ secured salvation by His sinless life in perfect obedience to His Father. It is quite true that had He not been obedient there could be no salvation for any of us. But this merely amounts to preaching salvation by works and entirely misses the reason for His miraculous birth. There were many whose works were perfect, though none of them without sin. But because of Adam's transgression we all fail to inherit anything better than living out our natural lives. We all live, through no fault of our own, under the handicap of being servants to sin. The expression "Servant to sin" is of course, symbolic. It means having inherited a life over which hangs the penalty of death which up to the coming of Christ had not been paid for but in type by means of the animal sacrifices. We are all born with this handicap. Just as in ancient times a slave could not redeem himself, never mind another slave, but somebody outside, such as a next of kin, could pay the redemption money, so none of us can redeem his brother but help comes again from outside in the form of One who like a next of kin was free to "buy us back," by voluntary paying the death penalty owed since Adam.

Only God, in His infinite wisdom and ingenuity was able to do this by giving His own Son. He was of the same nature as ours. To say that His bodily make up was such as to give Him special strength to overcome deprives Him of all His honour; if this were the case it could not be said He would not have been tempted in all points as we are. Where many misunderstand us is in this; What was the position of Christ that distinguished it from ours?

Not any special strength. He underwent the same everyday trials as we do, and more.

Not the fact that He did not sin, though this was important.

Not as many affirm, that He was God, or "part-God," which is the doctrine of the Trinity.

But His being born free from the death penalty incurred by Adam, because on His Father's side His life did not stem from Adam. This is what we mean in our literature when we speak of His not being born servant to sin. This is what is meant by the concept of "Free Life" which so many oppose. His was a life born free. And it was here where our salvation started. He possessed a life free from anything related to sin. What He had to do was not to fail by sinning as did His predecessor, Adam.

He only was able to pay in anti-type what was foreshadowed by the types; by giving His own life in the blood thereof as the ransom price for Adam and his offspring. So what so many overlook is that the main difference between Christ's position and ours lies on the legal, and not on the physical side. He inherited the right to eternal life from His Father. It was His from birth. He could only lose it if He had sinned as did Adam. He truly inherited human nature from His mother with all its weaknesses, or else He could not have been tempted like us. All credit to Him that He overcame. We do not sin because of our nature, but because we fail to try hard enough, whereas Jesus did.

He was strengthened by faith and prayer, not by any special physical strength. And we could do as well if we had the will to make the effort.

I hope that these remarks are helpful to clear up these matters.

Now to another topic that causes so much controversy; the immortal resurrection.

To all those who think we rise mortal I would just like to put this question:-

David - the man after God's own heart,

Daniel - The man greatly beloved,

Paul - for whom a crown of righteousness is laid up (2 Timothy 4:8), as well as to all those who love His appearing. Can you imagine what they all must feel when they wake up from the grave and find themselves at a tribunal to see if they are worthy after all?

Now we are clearly told in 1 Corinthians 15:52 "...the dead shall be raised incorruptible." This is plain English. Some affirm that the original Greek does not quite mean this, but the ordinary man in the street does not understand Greek. Now if you need to be a scholar to understand it, then God has failed in three points:

1. Salvation is impossible for the unlearned.

2. If there is such an immense difference in meaning between the original Greek and our everyday English then God has failed in preserving His word so necessary for our salvation. There may have some minor translation/editor errors crept in, but not on such fundamental matters.

3. God is not telling the truth if "incorruptible" means the very opposite, or at least does not mean what everybody understands by the word "incorruptible."

Now we, like Paul, can rest assured that if we live worthy of our high calling to the end, we shall have been judged worthy already. Like Paul we are being judged all the time, continually, by our conduct now - 1 Corinthians 11:32, "But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

It is our very own responsibility of how we react to our great high calling, how we appreciate God's gift of His only begotten Son who suffered so much out of sheer unselfish love for us. Let us endeavour to live after the manner of the many worthies of old and not lose our salvation gained at such a high cost by our Lord and Master. Let us hold fast to the end of our probation so that we can be as sure as David, Daniel, Paul and many others when we die (unless the Lord returns before) that the crown is ours.

'Even so, come, Lord Jesus' - Revelation 22:20.

Brother Leo Dreifuss.

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## **The following correspondence with David Nodding is continued from page 14 of the last Circular Letter:**

(The paragraphs have again been numbered for ease of reference).

David writes:-

1. Because Russell believes that Adam and Eve were created as mortal beings, then the human race are not subject to death because their first parents broke a commandment, but because they were created mortal, and the statement made by Paul that "As in Adam all die" then, does not mean anything.

2. Because Russell believes that God should have carried out His death threat upon Adam and Eve, on the day they broke His commandment and this he concludes, because the two Hebrew words appear in other places in Scripture. (Yet it has been shown, that the people to whom these words were spoken, also were not always executed on the same day). His answer to this is that they escaped it because of their faith, or God overruled the situation.

3. Why should God create dying creatures we ask ourselves, when he so required His creation to be His children (Luke 3:38, which was the son of God).

4. We are told that Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, which you say, refers to his intelligence with the ability to reason, he was given choice, and had free will to respond to God's love and the only thing you have missed out, is that he exhibited a being that was living and not dying.

5. As I can't accept your statement in paragraph 4, because I teach that Adam was not created as a dying creature, but became one by breaking God's commandment, and so to me Genesis 2:17 is an exception.

6. In paragraph 9 you think I am not being logical because I pointed out that where we find these two words employed, that sometimes the death sentence is carried out, and sometimes it is not. The reason I wrote this was because the booklet that has been written to explain these two words says:-

"If it is true that the penalty threatened by God, to be inflicted on Adam should he sin, was that he should become a dying man, it follows of necessity, that such a threat cannot again be used, by God (or man) against either Adam or any of his descendants. The same threat, however, is repeated in several cases recorded in the Old Testament, of which the following are examples. In every passage cited the same word appears in the Hebrew Scriptures the only variations being grammatical as the verb is used in the 2nd or 3rd person."

This statement implies that because we interpret the words *Muth Temuth* in relation to Adam with him becoming a dying person, then the same interpretation must apply in all other cases. And if we apply this threat of becoming mortal to all the other cases, then logic does not make sense, and this is true, but I did not say this in my paper. What I said was that whoever speaks the words to whomsoever, so made the decision when the sentence of death was to be carried out, whether by a violent death, there and then, like in the case of Ahimelech, when Doeg the Edomite murdered him with another 85 priests, or like Jeremiah who we believe died a natural death.

7. It is because you believe that Adam was created a mortal creature that you have difficulty in accepting this interpretation. After Adam had sinned it is recorded that his span of life was 930 years.

8. As for Enoch and Elijah not dying, something would have certainly have been spoken of in the New Testament, yet in Hebrews 11, after speaking of Enoch's translation, can still say "ALL THESE DIED IN FAITH."

9. Just accept it Russell, the death sentence on the Adamic race came about because Adam and Eve broke God's law.

10. As Paul wrote: "as by one man sin entered into the world, AND DEATH BY SIN; AND SO DEATH PASSED UPON ALL MEN. (Romans 5:12).

David Nodding.

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### **My reply to David's letter:-**

Dear David, Thank you for your letter which I received on the 21st April.

1. You misunderstand "as in Adam all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22). The verse reads: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive", Paul is explaining that we can either be "in Adam" or we can be "in Christ." However, whether we are "in Adam" or "in Christ" makes no difference to dying a natural death.

Therefore it is evident the Apostle is not here considering natural death. What he is considering is a legal position. That is to say, we are either legally “in Adam” or we are legally “in Christ.” It will be seen that natural death applies to both groups. It is vitally important we make this distinction between natural death and this legal position of which Paul speaks. Jesus Christ made the same distinction when He said, “Let the dead bury their dead;” He was saying in effect, ‘Let the legally dead (though living) bury their dead (those legally, and literally dead).’ The legally dead being those “in Adam.”

2. I do not believe in any such things as you say. You make two false assumptions here: (a) I did not say God should have carried out His death threat on Adam and Eve on the day they broke His commandment and (b) I did not say they escaped the death threat because of their faith, or because God overruled the situation.

With regard to (a) - God showed mercy on Adam and Eve and thereby on all who have been born of them ever since, in giving them natural life. Our present natural life is our redeemed life.

With regard to (b) - one cannot say that Ahimelech and the 85 priests lacked faith and were therefore murdered. (To say “God overruled the situation” can be said of almost anything).

3. Turn the question round and ask, why should not God create man corruptible? Either man was created corruptible or he was created incorruptible. If he was created incorruptible then he could never die, i.e. he could not later be changed to corruptible because that would mean he was never incorruptible in the first place. However, if he was created corruptible, he can be changed to incorruptible whenever God, in His mercy, love and grace decrees. Obviously Adam died, therefore he was created corruptible. It is unnecessary to pretend, suppose or invent any other condition once a right understanding of events in Eden are appreciated.

4. Your use of the word “dying” is very questionable. Adam was created a being that was living - and ageing for 930 years. You misuse the word by saying or implying that he was dying for 930 years when in fact he was living all those years. Why use jargon?

5. There is no need to make *Muth Temuth* mean something different in Genesis 2:17 from the other 14 instances cited. A right understanding of these events in Eden enhances an appreciation of the Atonement - without straining interpretations.

6. We say *Muth Temuth* is the threat of execution in every instance – without exception.

You repeat the point you made in your earlier letter that - “Whoever speaks the words to whomsoever, so made the decision when the sentence of death was to be carried out, whether by a violent death, there and then, like in the case of Ahimelech, when Doeg the Edomite murdered him with another 85 priests, or like Jeremiah who we believe died a natural death.”

But this isn’t true. For example, in the case of Jeremiah it was the priests and the prophets who threatened him with execution (Jeremiah 26:8 - “Thou shalt surely die”) but they did not get their way, because the princes prevented his execution. (Jeremiah 26:16 - “This man is not worthy to die”). We must ever be consistent in our handling of the word of God.

7. It is not a case of having difficulty accepting your interpretation (I think you mean explanation), but a matter of utterly rejecting it as being unscriptural.

8. The New Testament reaffirms that Enoch was translated that he should not see death (Hebrews 11:5); and regarding Elijah, I see three references in the New Testament implying he was alive at that time, and they are:- Revelation 1:1, the angel who was given the Revelation by Jesus Christ was, I believe, Elijah, and Revelation 19:10, “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God:” and Revelation 22:8 & 9, “I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then said he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God”

9. You say “Just accept it, Russell.” Well, well! Whatever happened to “Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good”? Our Creator exhorts us to reason with Him, but you say, “Just accept it”!! No, David! I say that to accept the word of my fellow-beings on their say-so is to fall into the trap set by Apostate Churches who say to their congregations, “We have worked it out for you. Just accept what we say.” It is the language of foolish popery. If I cannot find reason and proof from the Scriptures for my beliefs, and through the exercise of prayer, then I will wait till kingdom come, if necessary, but I will not accept man’s teaching where I see it to be unscriptural.

But then you go on to say “The death sentence on the Adamic race came about because Adam and Eve broke God’s Law.” Yes, I agree. **Later in the scriptures we find this refers to the second death.**

10. Romans 5:12, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that (or, in whom) all have sinned.” So now let us reason from Scripture.

In 1 above I pointed out how Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul used the term “death” in the sense of a legal position.

Now let us ask what was the death sentence which came upon the Adamic race as a result of Adam and Eve breaking God’s Law. We find the answer to this in the epistle to the Romans and I would here like to quote at length from a booklet by Brother Phil Parry, entitled “By Man Came Death - What Death?” where on page 5 he writes;

“Paul has been used to reveal the Federal position concerning “In Adam” and “In Christ” through the epistle to the Romans; it remains for us to understand it first and then accept it as a revelation.

If it were not for Paul’s epistle to the Romans, the Gentiles would have had little idea of God’s dealings with all men in general on the Federal Principle, for we see from Genesis to Malachi that His main dealings were with the direct descendants of Adam, Noah, Abraham and the twelve Patriarchs with their tribes... but a reading of Genesis alone, without the revealed mystery (secret) through Jesus and the Apostles, especially Paul, would leave us in ignorance of the Federal Principle in God’s Plan of Redemption and Salvation through His only begotten Son Jesus laying down His life; which was shown first in type in Eden and finally in substance on the tree at Calvary...

Then on page 6 he goes on to say;

The doctrine of predestination in the New Testament epistles and the fact we are alive, indicates to us in retrospect that God intended to spare Adam’s life but He did not indicate this fact to Adam before he sinned, nor did it make part of the serpent’s statement true - “Ye shall not surely die,” for if we understand Romans 5 we shall detect by logical reasoning that Adam ‘died’ when he broke the Law.

You may ask, in what way and by what reasoning can you say this? Fair enough. Turn to Romans 5:15 and you will read, “For if through the offence of one many be dead...”

I ask, How were the many dead, and when? The answer is obvious. They were dead when the offence was committed.

And how were they dead? They were in the loins of Adam when he sinned.

How then did Adam die? He died by Law, his life was in forfeit to the Law and its claim was hanging over him, therefore if Adam met that claim physically, he and all in his loins would have perished.

1 John 3:14 - What death can he abide in if still physically alive? It is the moral and legal - not the physical, which governs the position.

If therefore in this legal position the many unborn were dead, then we must conclude legally that Adam was dead, but how (we might ask), could predestination work if Adam were to be put to death, and consequently all who were predestinated? The Apostle said, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (see Acts 15:18). How was God to replenish the earth with a people who would reciprocate His attributes, to become a success? The answer was already in the foreknowledge and plan - a new man who would justify His condemnation of Adam's sin, in a likeness of the same Adamic nature in which sin was committed and would lay down His own natural life instead of the life which Adam had forfeited by disobedience. This was demonstrated and typified in the lamb slain from the foundation of the world and referred to in Revelation 13:8, and by which Adam's sin, classified and referred to by John Baptist as "the sin of the world," was remitted and taken away."

Rather a long quote but I felt it necessary to cover the outline points of the subject and I am sending you the booklet as well which I hope you will kindly find time to read, and study the importance of its message.

Sincerely your brother in the quest for the truth in Jesus Christ,                      Russell.

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**From a Circular Letter dated June 1966 -**

## **A Letter sent to our Brother Ernest Brady.**

Dear Brother Brady, Loving Greetings in the Master's Name.

My sincere thanks for C.L. and the revelation it brings. First I would say how sorry we are to hear that you have been so unwell that your labours have been restricted, and we trust that by now you may be more fully restored to a state of health that enables you to use the sword of the spirit in all its magnitude and fullness. How necessary this need appears to be as I peruse the letter from Australia initialled C.S.R.

If I remember rightly, I have made some adverse comments on this gentleman's doctrines in a previous letter; and the one before me now seems to emphasize the very romantic and superficial grounding on which his doctrinal status is founded, and what sort of treatment such an extreme case as this demands, I seem lost to assess. It may be that your reply dated 23.4.66 will show to him how palpable his lack of understanding of the word which he claims to be his guide and philosopher. I should be very sad if in any way I added to his confusion, yet I have to say, yea am even compelled to say that I have yet to read a more complete contradiction of the word which the Lord declared to be spirit and life.

What seems to me to be an early question is: How truthful is your correspondent? He says he doesn't favour statements of faith, amended or otherwise, and his following observations would indicate that neither does anyone else in Australia. He should then be able to answer the question, Why does the word disfellowship operate in the Ecclesias who claim to be at one with the B.A.S.F. Quote, "For approximately 30 years I was associated with the now Petrie Terrace Ecclesia, and took an active part therein, and know that during that time they never used the B.S.F. or the .B.A.S.F. statements." That may account for his ignorance concerning its contents; does he know that it tells all Christadelphians just what they must believe, and exactly what they are not allowed to believe? It is also very forthright in declaring just how the many rebels must be dealt with.

'Disfellowship,' a word invented by Mr Roberts, a word I have yet to find in any English dictionary; it may have sounded a bit more cultured than cast out or cut off, or perhaps a bit more awe-inspiring. Nevertheless, it was very much in evidence in the life of all Australian Ecclesias long before the visit of John Carter; it might be well if C.S.R. would count up the number of people who were cast out because of the beliefs he professes to hold, or any others contrary to the B.A.S.F.



Then we come to the amazing statement that all the Australian Ecclesias surrendered their position to pacify John Carter or in this own words: “for the sake of unity.” Quote,

“It is only since the late John Carter’s visit that they accepted in principle the B.A.S.F. with Addendum to effect the desired unity amongst the Ecclesias. The Addendum more or less covering their views as outlined by John Carter in the “Atonement.” Unfortunately you are judging conditions here without knowledge of the true position.”

Strange indeed that C.S.R. should give such a detailed account of prevailing conditions in Australia and then blame others for assessing the situation on the basis of his own confession. Just let him try to enter the doors of an Ecclesia in this country and tell them he didn’t believe in the flesh full of sin and defiled nature principle; he wouldn’t have time to fall out of his chair, he would be pushed out, and very unceremoniously too. Yet on the basis of what C.S.R. declares to have been a compromise agreement with John Carter, they are making a profession of being a unity with the Ecclesias who withdraw fellowship from any with such anti-Christadelphian views and beliefs as those held by C.S.R.

May I here suggest that all who are of the same persuasion as C.S.R. should take up their Bibles and learn the true meaning of fellowship and begin with the concise declaration by the Apostle John, 1st Epistle, chapter 1 verses 3 to 7: “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy might be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin.”

No one disputes that fellowship is a sharing, the perfection of oneness; and so the Lord Jesus put the fullest emphasis on oneness in His memorable prayer to the Father. John 17:21, “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me; and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me; verse 23, “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” Those last two sentences have also a deep significance for all those who claim that Jesus had so much that is denied to us; perfect equality is stressed, the love of the Father is bestowed on all His children in like abundant measure.

However, let us continue with the Father’s teaching on fellowship through our own Apostle; 1 Corinthians 10:15-17. “I speak unto wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion (coming together) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break is it not the communion (coming together) of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread.” What communion means to Paul, must mean the same to all who claim to be of the body. I have heard Christadelphians say that it is a matter of indifference to them what others believe, and yet, like our friend they will partake of the same bread and the same cup, which are the true symbols of oneness. Christ is one and all those in Christ are one with Him. The memorial service is the meeting together of the saints in light, and anyone who believes that he or she can be something apart because of different beliefs or doctrinal disagreements is surely in ignorance and darkness. There are no half-way houses, we are in fellowship or we are not; and only in Christ and of the body can our fellowship be with the Father and with the Son. Paul leaves us in no doubt regarding the true position; 1 Corinthians 12:12, “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one spirit. For the body is not one member, but many, so if we shall say because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?” We all know the answer to that one. Of course it is, how can it be otherwise? How can one assemble with a number of people, all professing to be of the same mind, all believing the same things, and yet be separate? It is just impossible if there is any honesty in our hearts. Therefore how is it possible for one to meet at a table which is supposed to typify oneness, all the members being of one heart and one mind, and still contend that it is a matter of indifference as to what the others believe, and that our offering and worship is something apart from theirs?

God doesn't accept offerings of such unholy and doubtful character, in fact character is completely discounted by any pretence of unity that is absent in spirit and truth, and sincerity is a dead letter. Whether we like it or not, it is still true that by our presence in an assembly where fellowship is the key note (whether in reality or otherwise) we declare ourselves to be at one with them, and with all that is done and all that is believed. Anything short of this, where people profess to be meeting in the name of the Father and the Son, is just an unholy pretence. The body is of Christ and there must be no schism in the body; a unity in the spirit, and how the dear old Apostle stresses this truth; Ephesians 4:4-6, "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." What oneness is thereby created? The Christadelphian Statement of Faith is a clear statement of what all Christadelphians believe. To meet with them is to declare that you are at one with them, and the bread you break together is a symbol of perfect unity. How definite is the Apostle in his teaching of the Corinthians, chapter 1 verses 9,10, "God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Chapter 12, verse 12, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ..For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one spirit." Then he goes on with the analogy of the members of our natural bodies, the hand, the foot, the eye, the ear, and then condenses the whole exegesis into two simple sentences, "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." This very simple teaching is further stressed in his other Epistles, Romans 12:4,5, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" doesn't leave much room for C.S.R. in a Christadelphian assembly with his denunciation of their basic beliefs. If we just add Philippians 1:27, "Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel." The accumulative results of this lack of perfect oneness is markedly stated by Paul when he declared the state of the Ecclesia at Corinth, 1st Corinthians 11:17 to 19, "Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Surely C.S.R. is a witness to the existing heresies in Christadelphianism; put the true light on them; at least twelve divisions, resulting in complete separation. Who then is walking in the light? Didn't the Lord Jesus counsel "Take heed how ye hear; if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness."

How strange all this controversy is, and it's always the other people who are wrong; why? Just because the word of men is allowed a place in the considerations of the things of God, thus creating an impossible situation; so heed the warning of Jesus, "Take heed how ye hear" and add the words of Paul - Ephesians 4:14, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive."

The word of the living God contains so many warnings against the word of any man, but it hasn't had much effect on C.S.R. Why does he assume that it was for our sins that Christ died, and not for us? The word of God doesn't discriminate between us and our sins or our state. I will just quote from the word a passage or two that C.S.R. ought to be mindful of Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners. Christ died for us." 1 Corinthians 5:7, "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again." Galatians 1:4, "Who gave himself for our sins." Ephesians 5:2, "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." 1 Thessalonians 5:10, "Who died for us that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him."

C.S.R. talks of destroying fundamental truth; his chief concern seems to be a getting away from the truth; says there is no need for him to explain the simple meaning of 1 Corinthians 13:3; there isn't, but he fails to appreciate that he is isolating the important factor, and that is us; we are responsible for our sins, but not for the great sin for which Christ died - the sin of the world - "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away

the sin of the world.” Your detractor invokes the law in an attempt to get his way, but how deep he digs the pit and falls into it neck and crop. Then foolishly quotes the conclusions of a man on the subject of the atonement; shows that some men just refused the very definite declaration of God; “And it shall be forgiven him.” That was the divine edict concerning the man under the law. The sinner brought his offering for the special purpose of having his sin remitted. He was responsible for his sin and in keeping with the decree of God in Eden, he merited the penalty, which was death, and just as God provided a substitute for Adam in the day that he sinned, when an animal’s blood was shed and the right covering provided, so with the Israelite, if his offering merited divine recognition, then the animal suffered the penalty due to its offerer, it died for his sin. How it is possible for a man to read through the Book of Leviticus and still ignore the principle of substitution is only made clear when we realize that God provides strong delusion for those who refuse the divine way to love and forgiveness.

I feel I must quote the words of Almighty God to confirm the true principle of divine forgiveness. Leviticus 4:29,30; “And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar.” And the result is simply stated in the final sentences of verse 31, “And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. Our friend says, No, his sins were put in storage with the high priest until the great Day of Atonement, and turns to the letter to the Hebrews for confirmation, and quotes Hebrews 10:4, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.” Why didn’t he take a look at the 9th chapter in which the comparison between the sacrifices under the law are compared with the sacrifice of Christ? Verse 9 would have indicated how great the efficacy of those animal sacrifices were: “The blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctified to the purifying of the flesh.” He preferred the word of a mere man, whom God had warned him against so strongly; and I have found no record of a divinely appointed Mr Harvey as a teacher. Our friend and his Mr Harvey have herein taken up the role he earlier accuses you of taking, i.e. of adding to and taking away from the holy word. The Hebrews brought their offerings for one specific purpose, the remission of their sins, which was accomplished by the shedding of the blood, the offering being for personal sins. The great Day of Atonement was for national sins, and required a sacrificially cleansed high priest to enter the holy of holies, but not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. Moreover (says the Apostle) he sprinkled with the blood both the Tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. For what purpose? For their purification says Hebrews 9:23, “I will be sanctified in them that approach unto me, and before all the people I will be glorified.” Therefore Paul writes, Hebrews 9:19-22, “For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood both the Tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood there is no remission.”

We have only to go through the tenets of the law to learn that this process of purification and sanctification was for sins of ignorance and defilement that was in no way deliberate. Therefore the purpose of the great Day of Atonement was set apart for the complete and comprehensive cleansing, of purifying and sanctification of everything associated with the church and the people. When all the words of the law had been accomplished, the scapegoat was provided and sent away into the wilderness to signify that every sin and every defilement had been erased once and for all, to be remembered again no more forever; and sanctification was complete, the goat carrying away the memory of every transgression.

The idea of loading sin on anything is just an impossibility, it is abstract and without substance; and even in the holy word has to be personified to make it a figure. This simple truth personifies the foolish reasoning of Mr Harvey; quote - “His sin confessed to the priest who takes the responsibility as a mediator, to intercede with God on his behalf, to carry into effect the full atonement which culminates once every year. Having confessed his sins he places his hand upon the head of his offering. Does he ceremonially put his sin on the animal? Certainly not. The sin has been confessed to the priest, Leviticus 5:5. The sin remains with the priest who takes responsibility of all sins of the nation, and eventually places them upon the head of the scapegoat. Leviticus 16:21,22.” Question, Who is stretching the word of God here? Harvey goes on to say, “The sinner had no right, office or privilege to put his sin on any offering.” The question then is, What is meant by laying his hand upon its head? He answers the question by saying, “The answer is he thus identifies himself with his offering, which represents righteousness, holiness and truth.” If he can’t find a better answer than that he

should never put his thoughts on paper and thereby expose his own ignorance, and cause his fellow man to do the same, misleading such impressionable people as C.S.R. The truth is that once conscious of his sin, he must comply with the demands of the law.

And here I feel I ought to justify what I said concerning these sins of ignorance. A wilful, deliberate or presumptuous sinner received an immediate recompense for his transgression. Hebrews 10:28 reads, "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy under two or three witnesses." Just to quote one or two of these instances, we might cite the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day: the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, or of Nadab and Abihu. To confirm all this, I quote from Numbers 15:27-30, "And if any soul sin through ignorance, then he shall bring a she goat of the first year for a sin offering. And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the Lord, to make an atonement for him; and it shall be forgiven him. Ye shall have one law for him that sinneth through ignorance, both for him that is born among the children, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them. But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born among the children or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people." There was no offering for presumptuous sin. If we would like the details of what happened when the ignorant sinner brought his offering according to the law, they are simply stated in the 4th chapter of Leviticus, verses 27 to 31. Then this laying on of the sinner's hand upon the head of his offering; did it transfer his sin to the animal? Harvey says No; and quite rightly. Sin, as previously stated, is abstract; it can't be handled and disposed of like an old coat, but the fact remains that its wages are death; the word spoken in Eden must ever prevail - death for disobedience. How then could the sinner escape? God has enjoined His way on us and instructed us as to the ways and means He has provided for repentant sinners to escape the dire consequences of sin. He demonstrated that way in Eden, and more fully in the law given through Moses, yet death was still the inescapable penalty. However, if the sinner had died for his sin, he would have remained dead, for it is written, "God hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner." Therefore the wisdom of God comes to the sinners aid, and the principle established in Eden, which provides the one means of escape, has ruled in every age since, and the substitution provision has been the rule ever since, a rule which operated so mercifully for the chosen people of God.

We have already cited the Scripture which showed how the sinner escaped the penalty for his transgression, recorded in Leviticus 4. We look at the pen-picture presented by this Scripture and see the offender in company with the very best of his flock or herd, and therein was sacrifice typified, the giving of the best and doubtless the most precious of all his possessions; we see him with his hand upon the head of his offering, thus associating himself with the penalty he was imposing on the head of a perfectly innocent creature, then shedding its blood in which was its life; the animal thus receiving the wages for its owner's sin, it died in the stead of its owner; sin demanded the death of the sinner, God's mercy and love provided a way of escape, nevertheless there could be no escaping the penalty which God Himself had imposed, and the only way to avoid paying it oneself was to bring a substitute, innocent and perfect and make it to suffer the death which was legally imposed or according to law. Harvey says, "Legal death carries penalty," at the same time claiming that a sacrificial death is not a legal death; just another witness to his muddled thinking. The law it was that demanded a sacrificial death, and legality has no place without law.

I feel there is so much more I could say in contradiction to the unscriptural conclusions of the man whom C.S.R. has named, and who he expected might be able to get him out of the hole in which he found himself. The real conclusion is that his helper has cemented him in the hole he dug for himself. Let us then see how it works out. The divine record says that the offences under the law were truly atoned for and forgiven. Harvey says they were put into storage until a given time, then loaded on to a scapegoat and sent away; an admission that they were disposed of and done with. Then C.S.R. comes with the scriptural statement that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins, without a mention of the sins that they couldn't take away. The sins of God's people, both individually and nationally, had been atoned for and forgiven, so what was it that remained? The sin of the world is the answer. The 9th chapter sets the situation in detail, the functions of the high priest and what he accomplished, but alas his grave limitations are included in the details; the holy spirit this signifying that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, and while those gifts and sacrifices which he offered played their divinely appointed part, the sin of the world remained. The laws being merely a foreshadowing of those good things to come, they were imposed on them until the time of reformation. "But Christ being come an High priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves

but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” That, C.S.R., is why Christ died, and stands out as the prime cause for His coming. His own words, “The son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many,” and had nothing to do with God’s righteousness. Christ Himself was God’s righteousness. There was no need for Him to die to manifest it.

If our friend had taken a complete survey of the letter to the Romans from which he quotes, instead of skimming off those fragments which he felt needful to justify himself, he would have learned that it is God that justifies, and that it is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus that we can be justified, and that by God’s grace; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood. Faith and righteousness have no place in God’s plan until we have been redeemed, bought with a price, no longer our own; then faith in His blood to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past. Faith in His blood is the dominant factor and without it there is no righteousness. How then does Adam come into the reckoning? What had the Lord Jesus to do with his sin? Nothing whatever. He had to suffer the consequences just as the animal paid the penalty for the Hebrews sin, so Christ paid the penalty for Adam’s sin. C.S.R. quotes “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.” Why then didn’t C.S.R. analyse the next verse? Hebrews 10:29, “Wherefore when he cometh into the world he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.” That was the body which was offered to God without spot or blemish, for the sin of the world.

No matter how many animals were slain or how much blood was shed, the consequences of Adam’s sin remained; the way into the holiest was not yet made manifest. Why? Because the Cherubim and the flaming sword still turned every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life. That is the connection of Christ to the sin of Adam, to remove the consequences and open the way to the Tree of Life.

Therefore it is written “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God: Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified: and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.” Howbeit, the first consideration for us is redemption, being freed from the bondage which Adam’s sin imposed upon us and that is what connects us to the sacrifice.

The purchase price of our redemption was the life of our Lord Jesus, which was poured out in His shed blood. “Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood” says the song of the redeemed. And it’s just as simple as that. He died unto sin once; we must do the same but only in a figure. It is through the operation of God that we die to sin, or become dead to sin, and then like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we also should walk in newness of life. Christ died for us. If we believe that, then we are reconciled to God by His death. And just as the animal died for the sin of its Hebrew owner, so Christ died for us. The penalty for sin is death, and nothing ever changes it. Yet we read that, “Christ hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” Obviously the reference isn’t to the common death of all men; for all continue to die, so it can only mean the death for which He died; the penalty for sin. Therefore if we are associated with the redemption that is in Him, we shall live. At the end of our natural life we shall fall asleep, asleep in Jesus until the Lord Himself “shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

I can’t feel that there will be much comfort for those who despise the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus, declare that His sacrifice was to manifest the righteousness of God. That is Christadelphianism at its crudest; and they do have another objective to couple with it. Perhaps reason would have been a better word, but it still adds up to the declared purpose in the Statement of Faith, viz. “For his own condemned nature.” Strange indeed that the declared doctrines of a professing Christian community should omit any reference to, or mention of the word sacrifice. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” And what a futile thing to do if it doesn’t save the life of his friends and they die for the same cause.

There ray dear brother, I must end, and I am not going to apologize for anything I have said. My one hope, however, is that i haven't wearied you. We do hope sincerely that your health is much improved, and that nothing will happen to delay or hinder your next C.L. Meanwhile, please accept our warmest good wishes, together with our united love in the truth, both to you, Sister Brady and Sister Helen.

Sincerely your brother in Christ, T.E.Allen. 26.5.1966.

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## **THE THREE-FOLD CORRUPTION OF GOD'S WORD**

### **1) By taking from; 2) by adding to; and 3) by altering.**

This led up to the first sin:

1. God had said, "Of every tree in the garden thou mayest freely eat" (Genesis 2:16). In repeating this, Eve omitted the word "freely" - making God less bountiful than He was.

2. God had said, "But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it" (Genesis 2:17). In repeating this Eve added the words "Neither shall ye touch it" - making God more severe than He was.

3. God had said, "Thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 3:17). In repeating this, Eve altered it to "Lest ye die" - thus weakening the certainty of the Divine threat into a contingency.

No wonder that dealing thus with the Word of God she listened to the words of the Serpent, and became an easy prey to his guile with which he deceived her.

No wonder, also, that the "second man," the last Adam, when He was tempted, three times repeated the words "It is written," as though to call attention to the occasion of the "Fall" in the three-fold perversion of God's words. "It is written," and I will not omit anything from it; "It is written" and I will not add anything to it; "It is written" and I will not alter it."

It is worthy of note that both the temptations began in precisely the same way: by the tempter questioning the truth of Yahweh's word. In the former by saying, "Hath God said;" In the latter saying, "If thou be the Son of God." (Matthew 4:3), when the voice from heaven had not long before declared "This is My Beloved Son." (Matthew 3:17).

D.T.P.

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## **ON SINFUL NATURE AS A JUSTIFICATION**

The following extract is selected from the works of Professor Finney, an American Presbyterian Minister; but I suppose that if it should fall across the path of any of R.Roberts' followers, they will say that the doctrine is false because it emanated from one of the Apostasy and therefore those who believe it cannot be wide awake.

I wonder if they are aware that the opinion they hold of Romans 7, that no writer is known to have held that view for centuries after it was written, and on good authority it has been supposed that St. Augustine was the first writer that exhibited this interpretation, and that he resorted to it in a controversy with Pelagius; therefore they (the Robertsites) according to their reasoning, cannot be wide awake.

Brother F.J.Pearce (1950's ?)

“Sinners often plead their sinful nature as a justification. This excuse is a good one if it is true. If it is true, as they pretend, that God has given them a nature which is itself sinful, and the necessary actings of their nature are sin, it is a good excuse for sin, and in the face of heaven and earth, and at the day of Judgment, will be a good plea in justification.

God must annihilate the reason of all the rational universe before they will ever blame you for sin if God made you sin, or if He gave you a nature that is itself sinful. How can your nature be sinful? What is sin? Sin is a transgression of the Law. There is no other sin but this.

Now, does the law say you must not have such a nature as you have? Nothing like it. The fact is, the doctrine overlooks the distinction between sin and the occasion of sin. The bodily appetites and constitutional susceptibilities of the body and mind, when strongly excited, become the occasion of sin. So it was with Adam. No one will say that Adam had a sinful nature. But he had, by his constitution, an appetite for food, and a desire for knowledge. These were not sinful, but were as God made them, and were necessary to fit him to live in this world as a subject of God’s moral government; but being strongly excited, as you know, led to prohibited indulgence, and this became the occasion of sinning against God. They were innocent in themselves, but he yielded to them in a sinful manner, and that was his sin.

When the sinner talks about his sinful nature, as a justification, he confounds these innocent appetites and susceptibilities, with sin itself. By so doing, he in fact, charges God foolishly, and accuses Him of giving him a sinful nature, when in fact his nature, in all its elements, is essential to moral agency, and God has made it as well as it could be made, and perfectly adapted to the circumstances in which he lives in this world.

The truth is, man’s nature is all right, and is well fitted to love and obey God, as to hate and disobey Him.

Sinner! The day is not far distant, when it will be known whether this is a good excuse or not. Then you will see whether you can face your Maker down in this way; and when He charges you with sin turn round and throw the blame upon Him. Do you inquire what influence Adam’s sin has then had in producing the sin of his posterity? I answer that it has subjected them to aggravated temptation, but has by no means rendered their nature in itself sinful.”

Professor Finney.