

Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No 167

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A Prophecy Concerning Jesus Christ

"The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: Who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me.

Behold the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me: Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up.

Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

Isaiah 50:4-10.

Editorial

Recently I heard a further episode of the Radio series called "Apocalypse Now and Then," five programmes examining the theology behind the belief that we are living at the end of time.

The penultimate episode proved to be the most interesting because it concerned the relationship between Israel and the most powerful nation on earth the U.S.A. Washington DC is the home of many sophisticated people: diplomats, politicians, civil servants and academics but end time theology is strong even there. The U.S. Government stance on the most sensitive of all American foreign policy issues, the

middle East, is directly affected by the pre-millennial beliefs of millions of US citizens, for Israel plays a central role in all its hopes and expectations.

Grace Halsall, a speech writer in the 1960's for President Johnson and the author of "Prophecy and Politics" explained that there was a secret alliance between Israel and the Christian Right and that anyone in the U.S.A. feels free to criticize Britain, France or Germany but no one feels free to criticize Israel because U.S.A. Christians have made an icon out of the Land of Israel. Support for Israel is far more prevalent among American Christians than Jews. There are 14 million Jews in the world but 50 - 60 million Christians support Israel because of the Bible. U.S.A. Jews for Jesus have a messianic synagogue composed of Jews who believe in Jesus as Messiah and they believe if you want to know where we are in God's time table you must look to Israel.

Another speaker said that there is an indication that the rejection by the Jewish nation at the beginning of the Church Age will somehow be reversed at the very end. Also there have never been so many Jewish people who have embraced Jesus since the first century and that this fact has prophetic significance. The end time war spoken of in Revelations may involve Russia or China, but Israel is the focal point and Jesus will return there to the Mount of Olives at the appropriate moment. Sometime in the last 7 years before Messiah's return the Temple will be rebuilt on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem which is supposed to be the place where Abraham prepared to sacrifice Isaac. The Temple's ancient festivals, rituals and animal sacrifices will be reinstated. The plans for this are well advanced and are being undertaken by orthodox Jews in Israel aided and abetted by U.S.A. Christians. Architectural drawings for the 3rd Temple and over 50% resumption of Temple administration for animal sacrifices and required utensils are prepared. In a museum called the Temple Institute all these things are on display. If and when these morning and evening sacrifices are re-introduced it will cause uproar among the animal rights activists, and this another speaker declared will cause a confrontation and anti-Christ will call a conference.

The Jewish question is of great interest, but it should not be forgotten that many Palestinians are Christians too and they read the same Bible. Fundamental issues of justice for Palestinians are being ignored by the American Christians. Another speaker remarked that when an interpretation of the Bible ends up supporting Jewish settlements on the West Bank that displaces Palestinians and takes away their land and water rights and the future for their children, what kind of Biblical theology is that? The final words from this speaker which closed the programme were salutary; he said "Jesus is the Prince of Peace and Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Jesus would be weeping over the kind of fundamentalist American theology that is almost pro-war and conflict so that their interpretation of theology can be fulfilled. It is as if they are saying the world is getting worse and worse; let's celebrate because we are being vindicated."

When Russell reprinted The Netherton Debate and invited those interested to send for a copy it brought us quite a few new contacts. Many of these new friends have been most kind and generous in sending contributions toward the printing costs and postal charges which are incurred in sending out the Circular Letter and other booklets including The Debate. We are most grateful for these donations as postage in particular is a great drain on our funds. Those of us over a certain age will recall when postage charges were more reasonable, for we find it astounding that it now takes about 7 shillings in old money to stamp an envelope containing a single copy of the Circular Letter.

Our own members too continue to support us year after year with regular and generous contributions to help us to keep going. I say "us" really it is Russell who is the mainstay of the work that goes into the steady and regular appearance of the C.L., and all the quality reprints of our old booklets and other more recent writings. His efforts are selfless and with the production of the C.L., his own written contributions to it and a constant stream of difficult and sometimes not very pleasant correspondence, it is no exaggeration to say Russell has a full time job. We thank Russell for his unique contribution and also all those brothers, sisters and friends who support us with money and kind words. It is all much appreciated and we will continue until we are no longer needed and Jesus is here to direct us to the tasks He has in mind for us,

Love to all, Helen Brady

Heights and Depths

1 Kings 12. Jeremiah 38. Mark 12.

The text from the back of a car in front of me as I write says “Seven days without prayer makes one weak.” Scripture in fact suggests that if we fail to approach the Father for that length of time we are probably dying! Another quote says “All you need is God, and prayer brings you to Him.” So we begin to see that life without prayer is life without God, the Author and Finisher of our Faith. There is a danger that like the world around we pray only in extremity. When all else has failed, when we feel abandoned and hopeless - then we pray. Everyone of us, surely, knows this is not the way to be. Men (and women of course) of prayer are Men of God. Paul, who expressed weakness in his achievement of spirituality, was the one who also exclaimed “I can do ALL THINGS through Christ which strengtheneth me.” (Philippians 4:13). Let us never forget that we too can claim this same wonderful privilege.

Somehow we have to find ways of putting into practice what we preach. What we are all seeking is the commendation of Jesus, as recorded in Mark 12 today to the scribe who questioned Him. Love of God and of each other was quoted by the Lord as being the greatest commandment - and agreed wholeheartedly by this scribe who was then told: “Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.” Most days many of us feel anything but near the kingdom. It is when we are in this state of depression that the Word is waiting to raise us up to Heavenly Places in Christ Jesus. In the same chapter the Lord points his disciples attention to the widow and her offering for the Lord.

Is it possible to imagine anyone in a more depleted and distressed condition than this widow? She had lost her mainstay, her companion, her guide, and her help when her husband left her to struggle on alone. Seemingly her purpose in living was gone if she understood and believed in resurrection then she looked for the day she would see him again, but until then - and her own decease, she had nothing to look forward to. Even her means of support had ebbed away and she was now destitute without help in the world, but seeing Him who is invisible, only.

She did not argue with herself that God would rather she spent her last farthing on her own sustenance, but from a willing heart and in confidence in God she put her hand on the chest and dropped in “Even all that she had.” Spiritual devotion on that scale takes some understanding, and even then for most of us there is little hope of emulating it. We, like the others in the treasury of the Temple, give, of our abundance (however small that ‘abundance’ may be - it is a fortune for most by comparison with this widow). She did not look for reward, for commendation, even for recognition, but she had them all from Jesus. “Your Father, that sees in secret, will reward you openly.” We cannot delude ourselves, the Lord knows and sees all that we do, and is aware of the motivation behind each act. To those who truly seek for Glory, Honour and Immortality in God’s Kingdom, by emptying themselves now. He will give Everlasting Life. Those who think they can find and cherish life now will lose it then. Somehow we have to find ways of being poor in this age (the opposite of ‘worldly wise’) so that we can have the True riches committed to us “in that day.”

In every age there have been those who trusted in themselves, and not in God, who fail to please Him, and those who as Proverbs 3:5 “Trust in the Lord with ALL their heart” (this passage is worth learning as our own watchword and instruction). Today’s Old Testament shows us just two such characters as an example of each type - there recorded as “our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things...” (1 Corinthians 10:6).

Rehoboam could have been a splendid and regal king of the whole nation like Solomon, his father. He made one bad mistake which cost him everything holding on to a small fragment of power by the skin of his teeth. Failure to ask counsel from God, rather than men. You couldn’t have got much higher than Rehoboam in his inheritance. Preceded by David, then Solomon he had the possibility of continuing the kingdom in all its glory and splendour, new Temple and all. He asked for guidance first from the wise counsellors of his father, then from his contemporaries, who knew little of God’s ways but much of the wisdom of the children of this world, wiser, so they thought, than the children of light. 1 Kings 12 shows us graphically the result of such a foolish course. “My father chastised you with whips. I will chastise you with scorpions” was hardly calculated to endear anyone to the new king. Only One has the right to mete out

punishment, and that for Sin - our Heavenly Father. Rehoboam failed to acknowledge this, and Solomon's wisdom, God given, had forsaken the heir. May we be ever thankful that the real heir to David's throne retains the wisdom, knowledge, and power to execute righteous judgment, and that He will shortly do so. Let us not be wise now in our own eyes, but fall on Him with whom we have to do, for His mercy is everlasting.

Down at the other end of the scale there was one of God's prophets who seemed to suffer worse than most for his message of Divine and impending retribution in store for King and People alike. Jeremiah, far from inheriting a kingdom or being exalted to a position of high rank, was thrown into a pit for his pains. Like Joseph before him he must have wondered why the purpose of God is not always worked out without suffering for His servants. Joseph's pit at least was dry, Jeremiah's was wet. Can we imagine the way he must have felt?

Have you ever stood in mud, or on a very soft beach, and felt a wave of panic as the ground beneath seems to be sucking you down? That must have been Jeremiah's experience. How long, he may have questioned, before he would be so engulfed by the mire that there would be no hope of ever coming out? A slow and inevitable death, just for speaking the word of the Lord - for trying to WARN the people, so that they could repent and be healed. Although it is unrecorded either of Joseph or Jeremiah, is it conceivable that both in their situation would not have prayed for Divine assistance, and both received it.

One of the colourful passages of Scripture occurs today with Jeremiah's deliverance. Ebedmelech the Ethiopian (Jeremiah 38) recognizes the plight of the man of God and taking "Old cast clouts and old rotten rags..." makes a sling let down to support Jeremiah under his arm pits and so lifts him back to the light of life. Although a side study, it is interesting to note on how many occasions Ethiopian Eunuch's have played a hand in God's purpose.

As a sort of reminder to king Zedekiah in a later speech Jeremiah tells him (verse 22) (Jerusalem Bible) "Yehweh has shown me a vision of all the women left in the palace... being led off and singing: They have misled you,.. your fine friends! Are your feet sinking in the mud? They are up and away!"

So the picture is clear. Those in the depths, who place their trust in God alone, will be redeemed, even from the pit of death. Those who exalt themselves will be abased, even to eternal death. No one forces the choice, it is left to individuals. In being brought to the dust of death, His feet nailed to a cross, His body broken and beaten, Jesus extends, even in that extremity, God's love to us unworthy of even His glance. He looks. He calls. He helps, and as surely as Ebedmelech brought up Jeremiah from the pit so He does it for us, in loving care like the "cast clouts" designed to save unnecessary pain. He does it all for us- Today and every day. What are we doing for Him? The weight of our sin hangs heavily on His cross. The lack of our faith is a burden He carries, the desperation of our nature is something He knows. Because He could see ahead to the Glories of the Kingdom He willingly allowed Himself to suffer and to be degraded to the utmost, so that having suffered He is able - now - to succour those who suffer, for righteousness sake.

Brother Richard Virgin.

Brother Phil Parry writes: -

1997 A.D. has been so far an eventful year in many respects. The Nazarene Circular Letter No. 166 has also proved interesting especially the Editorial by Brother Russell Gregory showing the adverse reactions of many to his and our efforts as members in demonstrating the original Gospel of Salvation to people whom we felt would understand seeing that the Holy Scriptures were the basis of our efforts. But what do we find? "This and that is unscriptural" - but no proof from Scripture that it is, but that "it does not agree with the Clauses of the Christadelphian B.A.S.F, which are the basis of our belief and fellowship." Thus we are obliged to confirm their position of lack of freedom to read the Bible individually for themselves but must submit to those who are appointed by vote and not by the Spirit to rule their minds. I am speaking by experience and so has Brother Gregory. Incidentally, I was invited to purchase a book at the lower cost of somewhere in the region of fifty pounds from a source in Australia "The History of The Christadelphians."

I am afraid that if our late Brother Ernest Brady had decided to write his memoirs they would have contained a lot more history and exposure of the true facts than Christadelphians would want to read themselves, or care for the public in general to read. I think Brother Brady decided against his original intention for the sake of those who were being kept in the dark and from mutual discussion, so that if, in coming to the Truth it would not be through exposition of the current dishonesty and bigotry but through appreciation of the Love of God and His Son Jesus. The Nazarenes know only too well why the Netherton Debate was held up and the Christadelphian Contract to print and release it never honoured as promised. Also payment for the venue doubled to the Nazarenes by making an added collection to what fee had already been agreed and paid by them. The evidence of this is available. The younger generation and many of the older, do not realize the half of what has gone on in the Christadelphian history and what is still happening now in our own day; if they did at least those who have respect for truth would have cause to feel ashamed. But your Editors and leader-writers know what is going on and will have to answer for it in due time seeing they believe they will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. They indeed are the cause of the Truth being suppressed and kept from their flock in England, America, Australia, Tasmania, New-Zealand, Africa, the Middle East, and the isles of the sea and Europe. In actual fact, the world.

I am not surprised at the complaint against “The Small Voice” people, coming from Tasmania through the medium of “The Logos” magazine and giving the impression that “The Small Voice” challenge was unfounded in regard to the nature of man and Jesus Christ – not being in harmony with the teaching and acceptance of the Central Fellowship Clauses of the B.A.S.F., and since the days of Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts. I have read some of the “Small Voice” magazines and find they are justified by Scripture in their challenge of the generally accepted teaching of the Clauses in the B.A.S.F. but they have not reached the important understanding of the Atonement as yet.

Like the Tasmanian complainer, the Nazarenes also believe the Truth is exclusive and we cannot associate with those who have renounced essentials of the One Faith but we are always ready to discuss the essentials with them, especially in pointing out what constitutes the One Faith in contrast with much of the teaching of Dr. Thomas and R. Roberts as compiled in the B-A-S-F. and styled “Truth to be received” when it is the manipulated teachings of men, exclusive of the Holy Scriptures.

Take for example Clause V, Where in Genesis can this teaching be found? It is not in the record, therefore Clause V is a forgery; and the Apostle Paul is quoted out of context to support it. Clause VII states that God made promises to Adam but none were made to him, Clause VIII states that God’s promises had reference to “Jesus Christ who was to be raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David, and who though wearing their condemned nature, was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience and by dying abrogate the law of condemnation for himself and all who should believe and obey him.”

What a paradoxical statement! Can any intelligent and logical thinker and student of the Bible believe that such nonsense has been accepted unreservedly by the Ecclesias of the Central Fellowship since the days of Dr. Thomas and R. Roberts?

In reading the Scriptures I was informed that Abraham was accounted righteous by his faith and was called “The friend of God.” David despite some of his serious mistakes, was said to be “A man after God’s own heart.”

What then of this condemned line? And why does it not begin with Adam or at least with Cain? Simply because there is contained in this Clause VIII a very subtle view concerning the nature of Jesus and though Adam is not mentioned, it has to be supposed that when Adam sinned God condemned his nature, making it worse and more inclined to temptation and sin than it was before. Taken either way, it makes Jesus the seed of the serpent not the seed of the woman, and involves Abraham and David in the same. Therefore the whole of the Central Fellowship message is not based on Salvation by faith in the promises to Abraham and David confirmed in the blood of Jesus, but belief in a man who was not entitled to the name Saviour at his birth but, as a man in Tasmanian put it to me in a letter, “Jesus needed salvation himself” quoting Zechariah 9:9 and accepting the version in the marginal reference “Saving himself.” A sincere Hebrew would have been horrified to think that a coming Messiah of Israel needed to save Himself. If perfect obedience did not entitle Jesus to life for ever how could His dying abrogate a law of condemnation

for Himself? Such a law would in effect justify His death. You cannot abrogate a law which condemns you by suffering its penalty, even the malefactor on Calvary's tree knew this, so you must credit him with more intelligence than those who accept this Clause of Confusion worse confounded. Incidentally, the Central Fellowship have not accepted all the teaching by Dr.Thomas. It was pointed out in the Nazarene Circular Letter 166 and referring to the passage in "Elpis Israel" on page 213 where Dr.Thomas refers to "The death of the substitutionary testator," that some person or persons of the Central Fellowship must have altered this in a reprint, certainly not in Dr.Thomas' lifetime or with his consent and surely, to remove words having a clear meaning and replace them with another having a different meaning (in this case "Mediator") is nothing short of forgery. I still have the correct edition of Elpis Israel and I distinctly remember pointing out to one of our new members this very statement by Dr.Thomas on page 213 not realizing the forgery in a later reprint which Brother Brady evidently had. It just shows the Christadelphian fear of the phrase "substitution" in relation to the Sacrifice of Christ because of their shallow understanding of the death which came by sin in contrast with natural death by God's creation.

At this juncture I would like to comment on the words of Brother Ray Gregory's friend Paul. He says,

"In the first paragraph of the preface the statement is made that Adam and Eve "were created Corruptible, that is, they were subject to death at creation as were all other creatures which God had made very good." This is not true. Man was created neither mortal nor immortal."

In the sense of which friend Paul mentions a law for man but not for other species of creation he is right, for mortal means subject to inflicted or judicial death by breach of law, but law as a condition of obedience for continuance of natural corruptible life had not entered as Adam's creation, therefore Adam could not be styled mortal but corruptible. Nevertheless, Adam's disobedience did not change his corruptible nature which was already capable of death (a preferable phrase to "subject to death") at creation, but it changed his moral and legal standing in the sight of God. In other words, he was under sentence of death by Divine Law, not physical law and needed redemption or must perish with all in his loins. You, Paul, then continue by saying "So man's death, his mortality was as a consequence of sin and you quote Genesis 3:17-19 which promises Adam life, not death, and Eve to be the mother of all living which Adam was quick to perceive through God's mercy and provision in allowing him to live out his natural life which we know was 930 years. You have used two words, "Man's death." What death do you mean? There are two choices here, death by sin, and death by natural creation. We can be delivered now from the death which came by sin but we cannot avoid natural death when we choose. It is your references to Genesis and Romans with your mind indoctrinated with false Christadelphian theories of Apostate Original Sin which create as you state, all kinds of erroneous ideas. Death is for those who serve Sin, not those who serve God.

Sin pays you your wages for services rendered - Death. God pays no wages - He gives to unprofitable servants in Christ Eternal Life.

Think more seriously while there is time.

A Christadelphian lady from Gloucester wrote to me "Christadelphians do not believe as they do simply because of what Brethren Thomas and Roberts wrote, but because of the Scriptures to which they directed attention." Was their false teaching of Clause V the result of Robert Roberts directing them to the Scripture account in Genesis 3:17-19? Or was it not their acceptance of his added and false interpretation?

Except for the words "Adam broke this law" nothing else in Clause V confirms the above reference to Genesis 3:17-19 and is therefore a direct corruption of the Word of God with many of the references having no bearing on the matter. Incidentally, one example of this is the reference to 2 Corinthians 1:9 where Paul speaks of himself and his brethren contending against the opposition to their teaching even to the possibility of dying for the faith of Jesus Christ or as he put it in verse 8 "That we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence (margin - answer) of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead; who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."

This wresting of Paul's words suited the compiler of Clause V yet any person who understands the Atonement would know that no genuine disciple of Christ has anymore the sentence of death in him nor over

him, but is passed from death to life. Even those responsible for the marginal reference “answer” instead of “sentence” could see from the context what Paul meant. But Oh what some will stoop to in order to gain support for a rotten prop!

Brother Phil Parry.

Letter from Allen R. Harding:-

Russell Gregory, Genesis Chapter 1 culminates in a proposition put forward under the title “God” but entering into discussion with others designated “Let us,” “To make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion” (Psalm 8) “over the works of thy hands.”

Making is a process and used of Abraham, “I will make of thee a great nation...” But what the word “man” visualized only later revelation reveals. The first stage of making was that “God created man in His own image in the image of God created he him,” The “likeness” would be the product of eating of the Tree of Knowledge with what Proverbs 1:7 says is the essential first step - “The fear of the Lord.” Aligned with it was access to the Tree which sustained life in the body created from the dust of the ground...for “ever” Vaion, whilst that access was allowed.

Man fell short of the glory of God, proving he must have obtained both image and likeness for a period of time, and not for several millenia did God proclaim to the shepherds (Luke 2) the “new creation” in the babe born this time by the will of God and not the will of man (John 1:13).

The babe grew in favour with God and man to be baptized by John Baptist with God’s approval. This is my “beloved” son in contrast to the son that had fallen short.

Being wrongly addressed as “Good” Master Jesus witnessed that there was none good but God (Matthew 19:17) and in Luke 13:32 stating He would be perfected on the third day.

The resurrection was the triumph over this “imperfection” which leaves the question, What was it? And defined by John Baptist as “the sin of the world.” This included in some manner, Jesus.

May I ask a question? When did God complete His work of making the first man in His image and likeness? The usual answer is a quote from Genesis 1:31, but was the “making” complete?

Not until the angels rejoiced to see the perfected man born in Bethlehem stand again upon the earth victorious over the imperfection. In the meantime the Old Testament records the history of the law setting before a fallen race “Life and Good” and “Death and Evil.”

I look upon Genesis 1 as a revelation of the Divine purpose to those who were to carry out the “making.” It is the blue print in Engineering terms of the Kingdom to be established on the earth, not with doubting terms like “if” or “maybe,” but the positive reality finally proclaimed as God saw everything that He had made and behold (“Look upon it”) it was very good. May we all witness that wonderful day.

Could God bless them and say unto them “increase and multiply”??

In Chapters 2 and 3 it records the making of man and the woman but nowhere the “blessing” if God did not bless them then as John states.

The race of humans on this earth are not the result of “God’s will” but Adam eating of a tree without the fear of God to give wisdom in the knowledge revealed.

They have taken possession of God’s planet earth, meant for obedient subjects with obedient children to have dominion over its wonders. Alas! Dr. Thomas describes the “chaos” Elpis Israel page 1 paragraph 2.

They continue to seek knowledge but seems without wisdom to prove a snare. Radioactive rubbish is the most recent that has to be cleared up having helped to spread the source of cancer.

I am sure God did not proclaim those born of the will of man blessed or good. Jesus

Himself testified His imperfection in being born of a woman whose origin was contrary to the will of God.

Note Mary in her rejoicing like the angels, "All generations will call me blessed." The promise to Abraham, "In thee and thy seed shall all nations be blessed." The blessing withheld in Genesis.

The cup of wine which we drink in memory of Christ is termed the cup of blessing. To those who believe to them gave He power to become sons of God. The blessing of Genesis to be finally triumphant at the resurrection and Kingdom. Jesus had a human body which in the course of nature like all others born of the will of man - "In Adam all die."

Jesus chose life and good and the "I" who set the choice rewarded the realization of Jesus that the body born contrary to God's will should be put to death so willingly accepting crucifixion of the wretched body that also thought contrary to the will of God. The only goodness came by the law setting before Him life and good. The law could not give life in its ordinance but Jesus destroyed that which had the power of death. The 'I' who could make the wrong choice.

I think I have got my point over and I would like your answer to the matter.

Yours in Israel's Hope,

Allen R. Harding.

P.S. Please pass on to Mr Parry whose contact with me a few years ago caused me to look into the question of "Clean Flesh."

* * *

First Reply to Allen Harding's letter

Again you write in the same vain as your letter published in our Circular Letter No. 162, pages 10 and 11, making assumptions to suit your own thinking. Many Scriptures have two or more applications and when God said "Let us make man in our own image and after our own likeness," this was fulfilled in Eden with the creation of Adam and Eve. Their creation was complete and sufficient for God's purpose when He saw everything He had made and it was very good. A second application may be the ongoing calling out a people for His Name but this is not to be reckoned as exclusive of the first.

I cannot agree with your next two assumptions. Firstly you write, "The likeness would be the product of eating of the Tree of Knowledge... in... the fear of the Lord." This is an highly imaginative claim. This tree represented disobedience and you surmise Adam could have eaten of it with God's approval "in the fear of the Lord" yet the law God gave to Adam was that he should not eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Secondly we are not told that Adam would continue to live while he had access to the Tree of Life. I see Jesus Christ as the "Tree of Life" for the righteous but that doesn't prevent the righteous from dying in the natural way before His second coming

In the third paragraph you say "the new creation in the babe born this time by the will of God and not by the will of man." The first Adam was also by the will of God and was also "very good." I see no difference between these two Sons of God in their initial state. When the one had fallen short there is seen a contrast, of course. (You contradict yourself in the last paragraph where you write, "...the body born contrary to God's will should be put to death so willingly accepting crucifixion...")

I question whether Jesus was wrongly addressed "Good Master."

When we consider other sayings, illustrations and parables of His, for examples Matthew 5:45, "God maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust," Matthew 7:17, "every good tree bringeth forth good fruit... A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit... by their fruits shall ye know them," Matthew 12:35, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things," Matthew 20:15, "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?" Jesus Christ was good because God was dwelling in Him - "I and my Father are One." When He said "There is none good but God," He was saying that the goodness you see in me is of God.

With regard to "being perfected" this was dealt with in our last C.L. (No. 166), where it was shown that the perfection here referred to lay in being incorruptible and had nothing to do with Jesus Christ having sin-in-the-flesh or a "wretched body" as you express it towards the end of your letter. The body of Jesus was not base, contemptible or filthy. It was a body of God's creation, fearfully and wonderfully made and very good.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ was necessitated by His righteousness resulting from His determination to do His Father's will. It had nothing to do with overcoming supposed physical defilement or imperfection. He was victorious over temptation and temptation is not an imperfection but an opportunity to do the will of God. The choice of keeping the law or not is with us all. Why do you continually confuse physical and moral when they are not the same?

The race of humans on this earth are not "the result of Adam eating of a tree without the fear of God..." as you state, but the result of God's blessing of procreation. Genesis 1:27, "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply..."

The blessing of marriage is indeed a great one and is illustrative of Christ and the Church. Marriage is a privilege and is honourable; a wonderful blessing if husband and wife are prepared to live as God wishes, in a Christ like manner, forgiving one another as Christ forgives us. With the standard of forgiveness shown by our Lord every marriage would be a joy. This is a great blessing which every married couple ought to take hold of.

You state that disobedient man has taken possession of God's earth which was really meant for obedient subjects and imply they frustrated His original plan so He had to change course and devise a means of Redemption. This is absurd and would mean that man outwitted God. God knew what He was about in His Creation and His purpose is being worked out as He saw it would be from the beginning. Before Adam was created God saw the necessity for the second Adam - His own Son to redeem the human race. This is what Scripture tells us. It is not wise to alter what is written.

You say, "Jesus Himself testified His imperfection in being born of a woman whose origin was contrary to the will of God." Jesus testified no such thing, again you are implying sinful flesh and again Christadelphians have never shown sinful flesh from Scripture, only in their conjecturing.

Of course Jesus had a human body like the rest of us and the life in that body was a new creation from God, and because it was a new creation with God as His Father then Jesus Christ was not "in Adam" and the expression "in Adam all die" did not apply to Jesus Christ. When we are baptized we come out of Adam and into Christ, If Jesus was in Adam then we too would still be in Adam after Baptism.

You write, "The wretched body that thought contrary to the will of God." We think with our minds not our bodies. God gave us bodies to house our minds and it is our minds that He wants us to develop into good characters well pleasing to Him, We have been given life in order to develop character so that we can be blessed with life eternal. Our physical bodies are of little moment. "Fear not them that are able to destroy the body and then have no more that they can do."

Again you refer to blessing and again it is a blessing of God to man. It is the blessing of Redemption, of Jesus Christ dying for the sin of the world and taking our sins upon Himself and taking them away to be remembered no more, and never to be held against us in any future judgment. Redemption took place at Calvary two thousand years ago.

I'm sure when faced with the agonizing torture of crucifixion we can believe it true that Jesus wished for a way of escape from the ordeal yet He did not yield to the strong desire of asking His Father for twelve legions of angels to deliver Him in even so great a trial. To insinuate His desire was wrong is false because it was God who was prepared to give Him those twelve legions of angels had Jesus asked for them. In your view this would have shown God to be party to wrong doing.

You say the only goodness came by the law... Then you follow this by saying the law could not give life. So what goodness came by the law?

God deals with us as His children and I see the goodness of God in entrusting us with families, in continuing the life of Adam in the hope of bringing up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If we live as God would wish us to then parents would love their children as God loves us. When a young child does something wrong good parents will do all they can to make things better again. Good parents guide and encourage their children and set them guide lines of acceptable behaviour. Whenever those guide lines are breached the child is corrected in a Christ-like manner. Where forgiveness is as it should be, where parents are loving and not harsh nor judgmental one would expect to find a family as God would wish to see it. What greater blessing could our heavenly Father give in this present mortal life? Present blessing are just as real and true as future blessings.

I find your writing very sad and the words of Jesus to the Laodiceans come to mind:-

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased in goods and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”

Brother Russell Gregory.

* * *

Second Reply to Allen Harding's Letter:-

Comments on Allen R. Harding's Reasoning from Genesis

I remember answering Allen's same reasonings some while ago when I found, as I still do, that like John Thomas he tries to formulate God's plan upon the basis of his own thinking and understanding, when it is well known God knew from the beginning of Creation all that would come to pass in the time He has allotted for the completion of His purpose, as the Apostle Peter said, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18).

I am convinced that God has designed His Word whereby people can discriminate and by logical reasoning find the treasures of wisdom contained in it. I grant Allen this freedom but not to the extent of refuting what is plainly declared. In pursuing his own theories Allen makes a difference between image and likeness implying that likeness relates to developed character, but Paul does not use it in this way - Romans 8:3. In effect Paul; says, "God did not send His Son in flesh that belonged to Sin (bondage), but in the image or likeness of it, the physical flesh and blood being the same but its owner, God the Father." Psalm 100:3 confirms this very thing, "Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people and the sheep of his pasture." Being His sheep we are His flesh, not Sin's flesh. Possessive case.

I disagree with Allen that Adam lost the image and likeness of his creation. I accept he lost his relationship as a Son of God by his sin but redemption having been provided and accepted in the Lamb slain, who can refute whether good character as an adopted son did not continue for the rest of his life?

Under the surface of Allen's reasoning lurks the implication of imperfect nature as a result of Adam's sin, the Clause V myth of the Roman Apostasy and he does not hesitate to involve Jesus in it, refusing to

accept Him as the New Man from conception, although admitting He was born by the will of God and not the will of man and accepting God's approval of His Son at the Jordan.

Now, the well known Christadelphian quote to lower the nature of Jesus as imperfect, "There is none good but One that is God." Jesus was not referring to flesh and blood but the superiority of His Father as the Creator of all things and upon whom all depended for life. Jesus regarded Himself as a servant though a Son. Matthew 20:28.

The resurrection of Jesus was not a triumph over flesh and blood, His was a triumph over the penalty of Adam's sin by remaining sinless and giving His life as payment of the debt Adam owed to the violated law which Adam could not himself pay without perishing, being a sinner.

The remainder of Allen's letter is to me a confirmation of the Norris teaching of sin-in-the-flesh. A misinterpretation of Paul's teaching in Romans 7:18 and a failure to discriminate and reason logically that Paul could not be speaking as a man converted to Christ or even as a wretched man who had not been delivered from his relationship to the law of sin and death, for Romans 8:2 declares in his own words that through Christ he had been delivered.

I accept the plain teaching of God's Word and have no intention of garnishing it with theories and ideas that do not harmonize with what it has been preserved to do on the important matter of salvation from the alienated position of Adamic federal sin passed upon, not introduced physically into all men whereby until the physical body is changed to incorruptible the position is hopeless.

This is Christadelphianism which Allen is trying to excuse and retain. My answer therefore is "Ye are yet in your sins" if ye have not accepted redemption in Christ NOW, not at His return.

If, as you say Allen, I caused you a few years ago to look into the question of "Clean Flesh" what have you learned from looking into it if the Roberts and Norris teaching still governs your mind?

Brother Phil Parry.

“Mortal” and “Immortal”

Showing their meaning from the Scriptures as distinct from common usage

Lexicons transmit the meaning attached to these words up to 'date of issue,' and where known, the origin of same. Different shades of meaning are given to the words as a result of local usage, which in time became universal and by such, words often are given a meaning the very opposite to that they originally meant. Examples : the word "Let" originally meant "to hinder," but has since been employed as meaning "permit" (see also "scan" and "apology," etc.).

There is so much in 1 Corinthians 15 in common in the natural and physical sphere that the term "Mortal" (originally restricted to the legal, spiritual sphere), has since been employed to describe the natural man, and thus confusion has ensued re. the doctrine pertaining to such in Scripture, which Scripture rather enhances, employing the natural as a simile and basis for the spiritual.

As the result of the above, the term "Mortal" has now two distinct meanings, one legal, the other physical. The Legal is gleaned from the Scriptures; the physical from lexicons and current thought.

Derivation and Source of the Term "Mortal"

It came to us from the Latin and French zones and predicated dead or death states.

Latin:	ortalis, mors, mortis - Death.
French:	Mort - Death.
English:	mort-al (noun) - dead person. mort-al (adj.)-state of death, subject to death.
Mort-gage (N) F.	mort- Dead, Gage- a pledge = dead-pledge.
Mort-main (N) F.	mort- dead. Main - hand. L. mors, mortis- death, manus-hand = dead hand.
Mort-ally (adj)	Unto death- F & L. mors- death, facie-I make.
Mort-ify (V) L.	mortifico- I mortify. I make death - put to death.
Mort-ified (P)	Made dead.
Mort-ification (N)	Death of parts.
Mort-ifier (N)	One who puts to death.
Mort-aHty (N)	Death (and frequent death).
Mort-uary (N) L.	mortuus - one dead. Place of the dead.
Im-mortal (adj) L.	Not subject to Death.
Im-mort-alise (V)	Render not subject to death.
Im-mort-alised (PP)	Rendered not subject to death.
Im-mort-alising (PA)	Exempting from death.
Im-mort-ality (N)	Immortal existence, not subject to death.
Im-mort-ally (AD)	Exempted from death.

With these definitions before us let us take up the Scriptures and apply them legally, i.e., according to the Law of God.

In Romans 6:11, we are advised to “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead” (mortal). Dead unto what? The answer is, “Dead indeed unto sin” (Romans 6:2, 11 and 1 Peter 2:24). “Dead to the law” (Romans 7:4). Now note, “Through the law” (Galatians 2:19) which was itself “the ministration of death” (2 Corinthians 3:7) even “the letter that killeth” (2 Corinthians 3:6). On what principle if not on the Federal Principle? Is it not for Adam’s sin and is not this Adamic mortality (Romans 5:12,19)? Can you deny that such persons were rendered ‘subject to death per law’ (Mortal - adj.) and in submitting to this ordinance of God rendered dead persons per law (Mortal - noun)? Is not this mortality a legal affair and strictly so? When does their legal mortality (death) occur? When they reckon themselves dead (Mortal). Is burial prescribed? Yes, in the waters of baptism (Romans 6:4) in the cloud and in the Red Sea (1 Corinthians 10:2) into Moses

What are they said to do when they submit to this form of doctrine? They are said to “put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27). The Sacrificial covering provided by God in Eden for Adam’s sin (Genesis 3:21; 22:8, John 1:29, Exodus 12:13, Revelation 13:8, etc.).

Hence Paul; says, “This mortal (person under sentence of death - subject to death per law) must put on (in the appointed way) immortality” (not subject to death per law, not under sentence of death) (1 Corinthians 15:53, Romans 6:14, Ephesians 2:5,8) which then renders the person immortal according to the law of God. Now this person though now immortal, is still corruptible and this is possible from two sources also, viz. mentally and physically and as the Scriptures say; “First that which is natural then that which is spiritual.” We will first consider the physical man.

Corruptible: All but the uninitiated will agree Adam was created corruptible – subject to the laws governing his physical organism, which even in Scripture is termed a “natural man” in which sphere “man has no pre-eminence above a beast,” “ as one dieth, so dieth the other” (Ecclesiastes 3:19,20) i.e., as a result of natural physical decay. This natural death, as revealed in Genesis 3:19, “Because thou hast done this.” Adam, if obedient, might have escaped. But where, then, had been that glorious display of mercy and love? (John 1:29. and 3:16).

Now it is generally understood that Genesis 3:19 contains the death sentence for Adam for his sin, but if the reader will just glance once more at the sentence, commencing at verse 17, he may notice it is in the light of a prediction, telling Adam the result of the curse upon the (Adamic) ground, which curse is now is

introduced, introducing with it that much misunderstood federal principle in relation to Adam and his “sin” (Romans 5) which was done for his sake (or benefit), i.e., that he might have a few of his seed saved thereby; foretelling the result of misconception concerning this inclusion in his “sin” and the way from under this curse, thus: “Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee” (couched in figure, as a guide the Egyptians (doctrines) were described as “Pricking briars”). Numbers 33:55, etc. Ezekiel 28:24, Judges 2:3, Psalm 106.

The Jews are an example and our proof of this. They were natural physically corruptible persons and when put under the Mosaic Law they were thereby federally legally sentenced to death for the “sin” (which was per the ordinances legally described as transgressions of law) which they themselves did not commit, for the law itself was “the ministration of condemnation and of death” rendering them ‘Hors de combat’ (Romans 3:9) before they could commence ‘works of law’ to establish their own righteousness by works of law, hence by works of law (alone) shall no flesh be justified (in expecting to escape death per law). Hence being the ministration of condemnation and of death as a sentence, it is “Scripture (that) hath (shut up together or) concluded all under (Adam’s) sin” (on the Federal Principle) “that God might (through the one act or same means) have mercy upon all” (Galatians 3:22, Romans 11:32) who respond; as he literally did in Eden, where the only possible universal salvation occurred, by saving Adam, through Christ and His sacrifice.

Now Paul shows us that man is also mentally corruptible, for he said he “Feared lest their minds should be corrupted (as Eve’s) from the simplicity of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus” (2 Corinthians 11:3). This is mental corruption.

As the phrase “put on” indicates a legal procedure in the case of the mortal, we suggest that it is also the case in connection with the “putting on” of incorruption, for we have the victory over this death by belief in the truth, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; hence when we submit to baptism, then is fulfilled the saying “death is swallowed up in victory which God gives us; for when we pass from death unto (sentence of) life. Prior to this mental putting on the mind was (and still is in other sections) corruptible, but, by understanding and receiving the truth they put on incorruption, the uncorrupted word of God. But Paul shows them something further - a mystery - something concealed, viz. that it is not complete here, for they are to be physically changed, and with the dead who are asleep in Christ, rendered physically incorruptible.

It is this reference to the physical that sends some minds adrift, but the fact that “to put on” indicates a prescribed form of doctrine, should enable us to keep it in its proper niche. If incorruption here does not apply to the word of truth, then I am at a loss to understand the figure employed, for I perceive no such simile in the transformation of the corruptible substance to incorruptibility.

The physical change is a fitting climax to the work of God who created man corruptible for the natural sphere, with a view to His ultimate creation of them “incorruptible” to redound to the glory and honour of God, their Maker and Redeemer.

The following is for your earnest consideration from the Emphatic Diaglott:-

Romans 5:18, “therefore indeed as through one offence, sentence came on all men to condemnation; so also, through one righteous act (not the many acts of Jesus’ life) sentence came on all men to justification of life.”

Read also verse 19, “for as through the obedience of one man, the many were constituted sinners, so even through the obedience of the one, the many will be constituted righteous” - re constituted. Is it physical or legal? Galatians 2:19. “Besides, I through law died by law, so that I might live by God.” Can you honestly consider the above in any sense other than the legal?

I have been as brief as I possibly could owing to your letter calling for the answering of so much. You are at liberty to print all you receive from us if you so desire.

A. and L. Wilson.
B.

“REMEMBER”

Jesus did for us what we could not do for ourselves.
We are bought with a price.
The Just for the unjust,
That no man... calleth Jesus accursed-
That if natural death was the sentence, then the death of Christ by crucifixion was in vain.
That without the shedding of blood there is no remission.
If corruption was the price Jesus did not pay it.
There is ... now no condemnation... in Christ Jesus

A Brief Summary

The thoughts arising out of the notes on “Mortal” and “Immortal” in this ‘reply letter’ are greatly strengthened by the consideration of the words. Can they be applied to God or Christ? We say they are legal terms, and never refer to God nor His Son, in Scripture, You will probably say this is untrue, and quote 1 Timothy 1:17, which reads “Now unto the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God,” also “But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” - 2 Timothy 1:10.

The following is the Emphatic Diaglott appendix: -

“Immortal” - deathless; does not occur once in the original, and only once even in the common version, 1 Timothy 1:17, where it ought to be rendered “incorruptible” It applied to God.”

The R.V. and E.D. read “incorruptible” in each place and therefore prove the physical and not legal.

As the term “mortal” means “subject to death” (legal per law) this cannot apply to Jesus as He was legally free from the sentence passed upon all “in Adam” though He was physically the same. The term “immortal” can only be applied to Him in this sense.

The ‘fall’ which necessitated Jesus being legally free is ample proof (in the absence of any Scripture) as to the change being physical. The ‘fall’ was moral - legal. The change was of relationship. This never applied to Christ.

The other places where the word “immortality” occurs are 1 Corinthians 15:53,54;

Romans 2:7 (each apply to man, not to God nor Christ, and is rendered “incorruptibility” in E.D.; and in R.V. “incorruptible”) and 1 Timothy 6:16. This is the only place where the word is applied to God, and is rendered in the E.D. text as “Deathlessness.”

As all others are rendered “incorruptible,” and that God was never subject to death, legally nor physically, the text must be understood as physical, underived and possessor of all things.

Look at these terms from the legal standpoint and there will be no need to ponder over the difficulty of having a physically condemned Christ, and a morally sinless Christ

Dear reader, give the foregoing subject your due consideration and may the supposed “difficult subject” of Jesus Christ and Him crucified appear to you in all its simplicity.

Letter from Eric Phipps dated 29th June 1997:-

1. Dear Russell Gregory, in the May/June issue of your Circular Letter you see fit to quote on pages 7 and 8 an extract from a letter I sent to the Testimony magazine and published in the April 1997 issue. This was in refutation of the belief in the inherent mortality of Adam and Eve when created by God.

2. Your purpose in quotation is to give support to your erroneous meaning and distinction between certain words namely mortal, immortal, corruptible and incorruptible which form the foundation of your unscriptural understanding of the Sacrifice of Christ. It seems quite evident from your remarks that the havoc (your expression) caused by the incorrect meaning you give to them, is with you and your community with the confusion of thought you exhibit by your inability or unwillingness to rightly divide the word of Truth.

3. It is to be regretted that before commenting on my correspondence in the Testimony you did not carefully read the section from Elpis Israel to which I made reference. Had you done so you would not have fallen into the pit which you yourself have dug. In an endeavour to extricate yourself you first have to paragraph on page 8 of your Circular of May/June. But your correction is no more correct than the original statement which the writer clearly indicated and meant, namely that Adam and Eve being created corruptible (as he believed) were therefore subject to death when created. You now wish to leave out the expression "were therefore subject to death at creation" which you state causes confusion evidently because readers would, quite properly take it to mean that they were created mortal (which you say you do not believe) but were created corruptible which you define as subject to a natural death which is "a rest from one's labours until the return of our Lord." Mortality, as distinct from corruptibility came later following transgression of the law of God. By this you mean the imposition of a sudden violent death cutting short, as a punishment, his natural death, which was averted by the killing and shedding of the blood of a sacrificial animal as a substitute. Jesus who possessed a "free" life (that is free from mortality) because he never sinned, submitted voluntarily to a violent death due to mortals as a substitute, once for all.

4. In this you aver that you follow Dr. Thomas and agree with his teaching. Nothing could be further from the truth.

5. Your artificial distinction between corruptible, mortal and natural death makes confusion worse confounded, is quite inadmissible and unscriptural and finds no place in the writings of Dr. Thomas. In the first place Brother Thomas did not believe, as we have pointed out, that Adam was created inherently mortal. As he wrote "In the Paradise of Eden mortality and immortality were set before the man and his companion. They were external to them." This I quoted in refutation of those who believe otherwise.

6. But supposing I had written "Adam was created inherently corruptible" (as you insist I should have said to be in keeping with Dr. Thomas) then I should have been at variance with him and not in agreement. Brother Thomas did not teach that our first parents were created either mortal or corruptible in the sense in which you use either word. You evidently mean the latter word to be an inherent natural death as distinct from mortal or sudden and violent death. This false distinction lies at the heart of your heresy.

7. To be corruptible is to be capable of being corrupted which is the sense in which Dr. Thomas uses the word as he makes clear. He states (in the section of Elpis Israel to which I referred) making reference to Adam and Eve "though corruptible they were not mortal. In this sense therefore I say that in their novitiate (before they transgressed) Adam and his betrothed had a nature capable of corruption but were not subject to death or mortal." So that in the mind of Dr. Thomas there was a direct relationship between corruption and mortality or death in any form. He goes on to point out that "capacity must not be confounded with implication. A vessel may be capable of holding a pint of fluid but it does not follow that there is a pint in it or any at all." The message of that statement is quite clear. Whilst our first parents were corruptible, that is capable of corruption and of mortality, when in their present "very good" state they were in possession of neither.

8. As mortality and immortality were external to them when first created so likewise corruption and incorruption were external to them. Immortality and incorruption were predicated upon them choosing, of their own volition, to do good or to do evil. The whole purpose of their temptation in Eden was to place that choice before them. In the event they chose to do evil. But what was the cause of that decision? Let the apostle Paul answer the question. Writing to the Ecclesia at Corinth in his second letter he wrote as recorded in chapter 11 verse 3:- "But I fear lest, by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

9. So that Eve before she transgressed was corruptible, but not corrupted, but became so by listening to, accepting and then acting upon the subtle words of the Serpent. By this means her mind became corrupted and transgression followed and the wages of sin being death, she became mortal. In other words, as by her own volition prompted by making the serpent mind, her mind, she became corrupt in mind, so her body by the judgment of God became subject to that process of corruption which ends in complete dissolution in the grave. The one is a corollary of and sentence upon the other. So that “contrary to widespread belief in the Nazarene Fellowship the Bible does teach that Adam and Eve became subject to corruption (corruptible) because of their sin.”

10. Moreover, we as their descendants, by hereditary law are subject to the same corruption and for the same reasons having minds and bodies corrupted by sins. Jesus Himself likewise took part of the same that through death (His own) He could destroy that having the power of death that is the diabolos (the Serpent), having overcome it in His mind whilst He was living having never succumbed to its beguiling influence either from within Himself or from without.

11. By so voluntarily submitting to the death of the Cross - a command He had received of His Father - He demonstrated God's righteousness in its condemnation and in the manner of His death, the heinousness in the sight of God of the exceeding sinfulness of sin in its carnal form - the diabolos. As however He was not responsible for its possession and having never transgressed it was not possible in all justice to allow His body to see corruption. So God raised Him from the dead and made Him after the power of an endless life to die no more. Glory, honour and immortality are now His and among the sons of men, His alone. In all this Jesus was our Representative, not a substitute for us.

12. The animals sacrificed under the Law of Moses were not substitutes because they could not take away sin. The shedding of their blood, by faith in the mind of the offerer, acted as a covering for sin for the time then present. They were typical, representatives of the antitypical Lamb, the shedding of whose blood should take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

13. Then and now faith in the underlying principles and the meaning of them are essential to salvation. They are the means through which God in His love and mercy has given to us hope of salvation.

14. By rendering the necessary obedience of that faith in baptism which enshrines these principles, we have our sins forgiven for Christ's sake and become constituent parts of a multitudinous Christ that, at His return we may share in His glory, honour and immortality.

15. The foregoing is the teaching of the Word of God and therefore that of Dr. Thomas. It is in opposition to that of Edward Turney, Ernest Brady and the Nazarene Fellowship.

Yours sincerely and in the defence of the Truth, Eric W. Phipps.

* * *

In reply to Eric Phipps letter:-

Dear Eric Phipps. Thank you for your letter in response to my Editorial in the last issue of the Circular Letter.

It is pleasing to see you express my view so clearly with regard to my understanding of the meanings of corruptible and mortal and you have gone to great lengths to write so much in an attempt to show where I am wrong in my observations. I am sorry but I do not find your views so clear that I could express them in like manner.

You will see I have numbered your paragraphs. This is to make cross reference easier.

In paragraph one you say that your letter referred to in The Testimony was to refute the belief in the inherent mortality of Adam and Eve at creation. At least we start off in agreement. I too do not believe Adam and Eve were mortal at creation,

Paragraph 2. As a Christadelphian I too could not see the distinction between mortal and corruptible, neither did I know much about the federal principle although this was explained to some extent by Dr. Thomas - it was explained more clearly by Edward Turney.

But this paragraph is interesting because you claim that our purpose is to give support to erroneous meaning and distinction between mortal, immortal, corruptible and incorruptible which form the foundation of our unscriptural understanding of the Sacrifice of Christ. Yet, strangely you have shown yourself in agreement with us.

Paragraph 3. Regarding the alteration to the booklet "The Usage and Meaning of Muth Temuth and B'yom" the expression "subject to death" applies to being mortal and not necessarily to being corruptible. As I was the author of this preface, I had the right and duty to make the amendment, and the amendment is in agreement with Dr. Thomas as you quote him in paragraph 7 regarding Adam and Eve, "though corruptible... in their novitiate - were not subject to death."

Paragraph 4. I say I follow Dr. Thomas here whereas you state "nothing could be further from the truth;" so where do you stand? We shall see.

Paragraph 5. You say "Brother Thomas did not believe that Adam was created... mortal." We are in agreement,

Paragraph 6. You write "supposing I had written 'Adam was created... corruptible' then I should have been at variance with him and not in agreement." No you wouldn't! We have just seen above that Dr. Thomas said that Adam and Eve were corruptible in their novitiate. In paragraph 9 you confirm this is also your own view - "So Eve before she transgressed was corruptible..."

What do you mean when you say, "In the sense in which I use either word." I agree with the way in which Brother Thomas used them and use them in the same way.

Paragraph 7. You write, "corruptible is to be capable of being corrupted which is the sense in which Dr. Thomas uses the word." Agreed. Then you quote from Elpis Israel, "though corruptible they were not mortal." If one can be corruptible without being mortal then corruptible and mortal are distinguishable terms. Who is making the artificial distinction? I am in agreement with Dr. Thomas on this and it is you who are confusing the matter.

Again what do you mean when you say, regarding Adam and Eve when in the garden of Eden, they were in possession of neither corruption nor mortality? Do you mean they were alive and that the sentence of mortality had not yet been passed upon them? If so then I agree. They were created corruptible but became mortal when they were sentenced to death for sin.

Paragraph 8. Mortality, immortality, corruption and incorruption "were external to them." This is more jargon. "Immortality and incorruption were predicated upon them choosing of their own volition, to do good or to do evil. The whole purpose in Eden was to place the choice before them." This choice was not confined to Eden of course; it is choice which is put before all who desire to become sons of God. Law gives that choice, and choice gives us opportunity to serve God and at the same time build characters acceptable to him.

When you quote Paul's words from 2 Corinthians 11:3 you are introducing another application of the word corrupt. "But I fear lest, by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." It does not follow that someone of a corrupt mind has a corrupt body. People of the worst possible corrupted character have uncorrupted bodies being alive. You are confusing things which cannot be logically associated. All living creatures are corruptible but not of corrupt minds. In 2 Corinthians 11:3 Paul is talking of character, not flesh.

Paragraph 9. Certainly Eve's mind became corrupted in the way which Paul explained, but there is no evidence whatsoever that this corruption affected her physically. But yet again you state that when Eve

transgressed then the wages of sin being death she became mortal. This is how I understand it too. And before she became mortal you have agreed that she was corruptible. However, you again contradict yourself when at the end of this paragraph 9 you state that “the Bible does teach that Adam and Eve became subject to corruption (corruptible) because of their sin.”

I would here like to give what I believe is by far the best definition of the serpent or devil - it is the personification of man’s will when opposed to God’s will. If this definition is kept in mind at all times when studying Scripture it will help our understanding of many passages,

Paragraph 10. In the foregoing paragraph you say regarding Eve that “she became corrupt in mind, so her body... became subject to (the) process of corruption.” In this paragraph you say that “by hereditary law... Jesus Himself likewise took part of the same” corrupt mind and body, though Scripture tells us He was altogether undefiled.

Scripture uses the term corruption in different ways. The natural body is corruptible at death, but the mind is corrupted, or defiled, by sin. The Bible does not teach that our bodies are corrupted by sins. There are Christadelphians who say this and there are many Christadelphians who know better to our certain knowledge.

Sin-in-the-flesh is an absurdity nowhere to be found within the covers of the Bible. It is an idea which some Christadelphians keep telling each other until they believe it must be true! Corruption of the body occurs after death when the body decays and disappears; corruption of the mind is loss of moral integrity.

Paragraph 11. You say “A command He received from His Father.” If by command you mean that for Jesus Christ to have failed would have been sin, then no it was not a command for had He called for “twelve legions of angels to save Him” from that hour, it would not have been sin. It was to fulfil His Father’s will and for the joy set before Him in bringing many sons to glory. “Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends - Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.” “A new commandment I leave with you, that ye love one another as I have loved you.” To love God with all ones heart mind, body and soul and love ones neighbour as ones self was already the great commandment but what was greater about this new commandment of Jesus was that we should do even as He had done - by going the extra mile, giving ones coat also, turning the other cheek, giving ones all for others as He has done. Doing more than the Law of Moses stated or required, and willingly so to please our heavenly Father.

“The sinfulness of sin in its carnal form - the diabolos.” More jargon, “As however He was not responsible for its possession and having never transgressed it was not possible in all justice to allow His body to see corruption.” It was not possible in all justice that He should be crucified! It was a great miscarriage of justice; Jesus was slain by wicked men. For God to give Him sinful flesh and then require that He be crucified because of it makes God a monster! But if Jesus’ body didn’t see corruption, then corruption is not the punishment for sin, nor for sinful flesh. Sin required judicial death, not natural decay and dissolution.

Paragraph 12. You say “The animals sacrificed under the Law of Moses were not substitutes because they could not take away sin.” Therefore, I say it follows that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was a substitute because it took away the sin of the world! What are you admitting to? I don’t think you meant to write this paragraph.

Nevertheless I do not agree with your assumption that the sacrifices for sin offerings under the law were not substitutes. They were, otherwise the peoples sins would not have been covered for the time then present to be taken away when the Antitypical Sacrifice was made on Calvary. Would not the first-born of Israel have perished if they had not slain the first Passover lamb? It was the lamb that was slain as a substitute for the first-born and it would not make any sense to suppose it was slain as their representative.

Paragraphs 13,14 and 15. You say that “Faith in the underlying principles and the meaning of them are essential to salvation.” I say understanding the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ should be a first priority and not the principles you have tried to explain but better than these! The principles of redemption, ransom, the price

paid, being bought with a price. Understanding the true principles of redemption, ransom and sacrifice reveal an intense beauty of love in God's purpose in Christ Jesus.

The principle of salvation is not to condemn the sinner but to release us from sin. Sin is condemned because its wages is death, but the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus brought life and immortality to light. It is our needs which are met in redemption, not the Lord God's. The Lord God gave His Son for us, to take away our sin, His satisfaction is in seeing His purpose fulfilled by Jesus Christ bringing many sons to glory and giving life eternal, removing all condemnation. Giving, not condemning; revealing the full agape love of the Father and the Son, unpolluted, untainted and altogether lovely. Providing us with a relationship with the Father whereby we receive His tender mercies and loving kindness in the forgiveness of our sins evoking in us a response of love and gratitude.

At one time or another Dr. Thomas had and taught more of the truth than most of his followers appreciated or recognized. Robert Roberts certainly took backward steps to Church of England doctrines when the B.A.S.F. was formulated. Dr. Thomas knew nothing of this and it was left to Edward Turney and others to make clear what Dr. Thomas had found with regard to the truth. In effect, Robert Roberts disfellowshipped Dr Thomas.

Yours sincerely in seeking truth, Russell Gregory.

Comments on an Interesting Subject and Open for Discussion

While talking on the phone to one of our members he mentioned how our being in isolation from others of our belief and faith was a disadvantage to being able to discuss certain passages of the scriptures in order to exchange our respective views and understanding based on the Scriptures themselves and in harmony with Paul's words in Ephesians 4:8-16, which is the lesson we should learn and not be led away by the set views of people who have harnessed themselves to the rules of a creed based on error and contradiction and therefore unable and helpless to explain a certain subject without adding to or taking away from what is truly expressed.

A man who has come to understand much of our teaching and still remains a nominal Christadelphian, told me that his general view of that denomination was that when a member was asked a question on a difficult Biblical subject, would not say, "I cannot answer it," but would either invent an explanation or repeat the views of what others had expressed – it must not in any event violate their Creed.

I will give you an example of this: after we had resigned from the Christadelphian Central Fellowship, Rene's mother died some years after but had remained a nominal member though more in sympathy with our views. At the funeral service which we both attended, my Brother-in-law gave a lengthy address in the course of which he cited the words of Jesus to Martha, and one would have thought a man of such supposed intelligence of Scripture should have known that Jesus had said nothing at that time of going to heaven or of His return. Now because Christadelphians believed that natural death was the penalty for Adam's sin and all in his loins, in his quoting of the words of Jesus, in order to make it fit the Christadelphian view he was forced to add to the words of Jesus a statement Jesus did not make, and because he was ignorant of the real meaning of what Jesus was teaching. Seeing there were other non-Christadelphians present he had to make it fit rather than explain what was also a puzzle to himself. John 11:25, "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" Martha's answer was "Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world." Evidently Martha understood the words of Jesus as they also pertained to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, "God is not the God of the dead but of the living for all live unto him." That means, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" - John 3:36. My Brother-in-law quoted with an interpolation as follows, "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me - at my return - shall never die." Jesus did not say "at my return." It was obvious to me at the time that Christadelphians

could not understand or explain the words of Jesus to Martha. Besides, how would their doctrine of the judgment seat of Christ harmonize? This was their dilemma which in this case forced the unjustified adding to the word of the Spirit.

I have also witnessed the same thing at Church and Chapel funerals where the minister leads the coffin and in most cases I have heard it expressed, "He that believeth in me, though he die yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

Most people do not understand, including most Christadelphians, and although the subject concerned the resurrection, the main point of the statement of Jesus is missed and unacceptable to those people who subscribe to the Christadelphian Statement of Faith, the main point being, "I am the Life," for if any believe that Jesus needed redemption then He could not be "The Life" and John 3:36 is refuted, and the doctrine of Federal Sin is ignored though taught by Paul in Romans. Even in this case Jesus is teaching the Federal position of legal death in Adam and the option of living in Him. As He said, "I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly," two stages mentioned here, a passing from under the sentence of legal death to a sentence of legal life through the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ.

The Nazarenes believe and teach this. Dr. Thomas taught it but Christadelphians refute it. Deny it if you will, but give us your proof from Holy Scripture.

Brother P. Parry.

The Two Sauls

We read in the Scriptures of two important personalities by the name of Saul; Saul the son of Kish, who became King Saul, and Saul of Tarsus who became the apostle Paul.

They were two very different personalities, and we want in this exhortation, to see what we can learn from these very differences. First the little they have in common; both were of the tribe of Benjamin, both experienced a sudden change in their lives and not much is known about either before that change. The change in the life of the first Saul; occurred when Samuel, as it seemed right out of the blue, anointed him King. Absolutely nothing is known about him before then.

Just as sudden was the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. A little more is known about his pre-conversion life. He was a zealous Pharisee, a pupil of Gamaliel, a prominent teacher. At that time all teachers practised some trade and Saul's, as his name was then, was that of a tent-maker. It was as it turned out later, that very zeal of Saul that caused God to make use of it after turning it in the right direction-

But let us first return to Saul the son of Kish. He seems to have made a good start in the Lord. There must have been something in his personality which God saw fit to make use of when He sent Samuel on that anointing mission. But he did not turn out to be the man after God's own heart as did his successor, David. He was very tall and reading between the lines, it seems that his stature pleased the people. He impressed people and this seems to have gone to his head. One of his faults was that he liked personality worship, as became evident when he failed to exterminate the Amalekites completely. Samuel left him. Saul pulled him back; he wanted to be the great man in front of the people. Then there was that evil spirit which was jealousy; and just let us contrast this with the magnanimity of the man after God's own heart who on two occasions spared the life of Saul when God delivered him into David's hand.

As time went on Saul's standing with the Lord drifted from bad to worse and at his death he sought after witchcraft. This was especially distasteful for one of his good acts was the putting away of those who had a familiar spirit - what is nowadays termed mediums, wizards, etc. - and then he himself consulted one. It was a true example of the proverb "don't do as the person does, do as he says."

Now to the other Saul, the one from Tarsus. We shall from here onwards refer to him as Paul. His personality was the very opposite to that of the son of Kish. Paul certainly had no time for personality

worship; he was extremely humble but he was also a great teacher. There was something unique in Paul's personality; a sound balance between humility and zest, the ability to speak and to teach. He had a knack of putting things simply to the unlearned, he did not speak above people's heads - a mistake of some teachers. A good example of his ability to put things over simply was his speech to the Athenians when he took hold of a monument "to the unknown god," and started from there. This is good teaching technique; always to start from something the student knows to teach him something he doesn't know. This speech is very interesting in another way. Paul's epistles are usually regarded as hard to be understood and many of them are, as we must all admit at times, and in this respect we are in the good company of the apostle Peter. But let us not forget his simple epistles. There is in Paul's epistles much practical advice, put very simply as in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 13, and indeed much of 1 Corinthians. Concerning his speech to the Athenians we do well to read it again Acts 17:22 to 31 to see a model of good teaching that anybody can understand. Then there is Paul's ability to be all things to all men in order to gain some. A characteristic well to take note of. None of this 'holier than thou' attitude or 'I am the teacher, you are the pupil, I command you to obey.' And incidentally, we often find that people of the true aristocracy are quite accessible. Paul certainly was, and he was of the upper class; a prominent Pharisee, teacher's class, born a Roman citizen. But none of this went to his head, as happened with the son of Kish.

Now let us have a closer look at the human side of Paul. With great men it is easy to overlook their ordinary everyday cares, their joys, their worries, and their faults. Paul was not without them, howbeit only minor ones are recorded. He lost his temper when he called the high priest a whited wall. He quarrelled with Barnabas over whether to take John with them on their forthcoming missionary journey. This was especially bad since Barnabas was the very one who introduced Paul to the disciples at Jerusalem who, of course, at the time greatly distrusted him before they had heard of his conversion. Barnabas was a great friend of Paul and it's a pity it came to this. But looking to ourselves, if when we are judged we have nothing worse recorded against us as quarrelling and losing our tempers, we should not be doing too badly. It is just as well that these two incidents are recorded, like incidentally, David's sin. It shows that these great personalities were human without excusing their faults. And then how often are we worried with little or big things on our minds. Again we are in good company with Paul for he had his worries, quite apart from his sufferings. One example is recorded for us in 2 Corinthians 11:28 - "the care of all the churches..."

And finally a quick trace through Paul's striving for approval on that Day. He did not make the mistake of so many getting on in life who became over-confident, high minded and neglecting God. As recorded in 1 Corinthians 9:27 he was aware that he had his responsibility. He knew he had to tow the rope like everybody else and if not careful could become a castaway, but he made it and towards the end of his life was able to say (2 Timothy 4:8), "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing." May we strive to be one of them. Let us not get into the state of King Saul who breathed his last completely forsaken by God.

A further point worth noting is that King Saul, it seems, made a reasonably good start in the Lord but then went from bad to worse. Paul, the other Saul, unknown to himself at the time made a bad start, on his own admission he termed himself chief sinner (1 Timothy 1:15) because he persecuted the church. But then he progressed, making up for his early shortcomings, by an outstanding zeal.

All of us have started badly - bondservants to sin, we cannot even get into favour with God. But when God opened our eyes to the truth we had the opportunity of a fresh start. Let us hold fast so that when the end of our probation arrives, be it death or the Lord's return, we shall be among those to be greeted with Christ's words of approval, "Well done."

Another thought worth noting - Paul knew that there was a crown of righteousness laid up for him, so where does this leave those who preach a mortal resurrection followed by a judgement? Would Paul not be extremely disappointed to say the least, if he found himself in front of a tribunal to find out whether or not he deserved his crown after all? Let us endeavour to be as certain of our crown at the end of our probation as Paul was of his.

Brother Leo Dreifuss

Further to the comments on our booklet “The Usage and Meaning of Muth Temuth and B’Yom” in our last C.L., Brother Phil Parry writes:-

Dear Russell, I was also struck by Brother Ray’s friend stating that at creation Adam was neither mortal nor immortal. Friend Paul is correct insofar as these terms are properly understood and do not relate to natural decay and limited existence of the species, animal and human. But the Christadelphian view, since R.Roberts especially, has been that of believing Adam to have a nature superior to ours at present, yet inferior to that of the Elohim, a nature not found in the Scriptures nor taught by the Apostles of Jesus. I agree with friend Paul that the command to Adam was given as a test. Failure to obey this law would bring death. But what death has he in mind? It appears that he makes the same error as he is warning against, and in quoting Genesis 3:17-19, Romans 6:23; Romans 5:12-18, he stultifies his own argument through using these quotations to follow his statement, “So man’s death, his mortality was as a consequence of sin.” This is an error and a failure to accept the fundamental and basic scriptural teaching of the Genesis account and that of Paul the Apostle in his epistle to Romans.

Adam’s natural death was a result of God sparing him the judicially inflicted death in the day he sinned. His sin was provisionally covered through the shedding of blood of the lamb slain, so that by this typical redemption he was able to live out his natural span of life in a second period of probation. The real antitypical sacrifice (Jesus) having not yet come to ratify God’s provisional covering for Adam’s sin, so he must sleep in the dust to await the result of his second probation, which sleep was not a penalty as will be the case of those who have died in symbol by baptism the death that came by sin which by bloodshedding Jesus suffered for them.

If natural death is the penalty for sin, then Christ died in vain and baptism is futile.

Our friend Paul must decide that if Adam had remained obedient, how long his obedience could have lasted without a change of nature, for it is obvious from Scripture that his limit as a living soul was 930 years and he died, not because of his sin but because his nature was not that of the angels. As the Apostle Paul put it plainly, “First the natural then the spiritual - the first man Adam was made a living soul,” We also are living souls. No, friend Paul, you cannot get away with your “Adam began to die” statement. I have the impression you are speaking of man’s death as his return to the dust as the penalty for sin, but the Apostle Paul does not teach this in his epistles as the death that passed upon all men. He is teaching about the legal sentence of death which passed upon all men and the means provided whereby men enlightened to it can avail themselves, through the sacrifice of Jesus, of the opportunity to be made free from it. This is impossible if the sentence is natural death by decay as the penalty. Not only so, viewed from this standpoint none can be saved for in no way has natural death as a penalty been removed. You can speak of baptism as much as you like but the penalty is not removed, you still die naturally and resurrection is not the answer to your theory; Redemption must come first and foremost. Viewed from the legal standpoint all should be clear and you must admit friend Paul, that you began your comments with the word “law” in respect of Adam but you then make the words of Genesis 3:17-20 a penalty whereas it spoke not of dying by sin but continuance of life. Please note, Adam considered Eve as the mother of all living, not the mother of all dying. Brother Ray has explained this to Paul quite clearly as I see it but seeing that Robert Roberts was too confused to even understand Edward Turney’s views one cannot expect others who follow R. Roberts to understand.

If Adam failed his second probation through God’s mercy and the sacrifice of Jesus, then the death he was spared in the Garden of Eden awaits him judicially in “the second death.” This applies to all the redeemed who reject God and His Son by wilful sin and count the blood of Jesus wherewith they have been sanctified an unholy thing, thereby despising the Spirit of Grace (Hebrews 10:19-29).

If our friend Paul still cannot comprehend these matters then I would recommend he read some of our booklets on the subject, at the same time ridding his mind of Christadelphian confusion which he has unwittingly advised is the trouble.

Brother Phil Parry.

“They That Passed By”

Mark 15:29

We know from the Scriptures that there will never be a mass conversion of people to the truth concerning the sacrifice of Christ as the means of redemption, and this applies to Christadelphians as well as to other popular denominations. To both the former and the latter tradition founded on the precepts of their leaders is more important than truth. This was very apparent to us when engaged recently in conversation with a few Christadelphians during a so-called Bible Campaign in the Forest of Dean area during August last. A leaflet advertising lectures in Coleford was put through our letter-box while we were away on holiday and amongst them was one entitled “Why was Christ Crucified?”

We were disappointed that we were unable to attend the lectures, especially the one mentioned, but it seemed like Divine providence when we saw these Christadelphians passing our door again a few days after our return home.

We say “passing” because this was a literal fact. I was in fact preparing to take our daughter to Coleford by car and there was not much time because I had to go to work on the afternoon shift. A young man passed my gateway carrying a Bible and what appeared to be a bundle of literature and I concluded he was a Christadelphian. It struck me as peculiar that he called at every house on my side of the road but passed by mine. I saw another young man, canvassing the other side and I spoke to him and told him I was sorry we had been away and unable to take advantage of the invitation to attend their lecture the previous week. His reply was “Oh, are you interested in the Bible?” I said yes and especially in the lecture on the Sacrifice of Christ. He replied “I am sorry but we have already given that one,” to which I went on “Perhaps then you can explain to me why Christ was crucified.” “Of course” was his reply. He did not know that I had been a Christadelphian for 17 years and that he would be explaining something I already knew. However, his explanation turned out to be the usual one used by Christadelphians in accordance with the B.A.S.F. and supposedly supported by Hebrews 7:27. He told me that Jesus, being of our nature, was under condemnation and had to die upon the Cross to show what was due to sinful flesh. He quoted the text mentioned and so I asked him “Did Jesus die for his own sins?” and he replied “Yes.” I then told him that I had always been under the impression that Jesus did no sin, so are you saying that Jesus was a sinner? Again he answered “Yes.” I then told him that even the Scribes and Pharisees could not convict Him of sin when challenged by Jesus Himself. I then told him that I had been a Christadelphian for 17 years but had never interpreted Hebrews 7:27 in the manner he was doing, as the writer was referring to “Sins” not to “flesh,” and Jesus had no sins to offer for. In any case He could not offer for His own sins even if He had committed any, as He was the anti-typical lamb of Eden and of the animal sacrifices under the Law.

Had Jesus ever sinned He would have ceased to be the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sin of the World (Adam’s Sin) and would have been in the same position as Adam, namely, in need of redemption. I told him that this treading of the Son of God under foot and counting the blood with which we are sanctified an unholy thing was the main reason for our leaving the Christadelphian Community. At this he looked up at the house and said “Oh, is this Sunnyside?” I replied “Yes; have you been told not to call here?” and he admitted that this was so. I then told him what Edward Turney had said to Robert Roberts in 1873, “You are always ready to do battle with the clergy and people who are under the deception of established religion but you are not so confident when faced with those who are not so superficial in their reading of the Bible.” I also told him that they had put in the local newspaper the account of how Robert Roberts had been heckled when he lectured in Cinderford years ago but he himself had been guilty of the selfsame thing when Edward Turney gave his lecture on the “Sacrifice of Christ” at the request of a few sincere Christadelphian brethren by whom he was highly esteemed. Robert Roberts had no time to debate in a reasonable and brotherly spirit but he found time to go home and write the blasphemous lecture “The Slain Lamb” which is one of the worst examples of indiscriminate use and wresting of Scripture which it is possible to find and it is a marvel that anyone with any sense of logic and reason can accept it. The young man seemed as if he wanted to evade the subject and he asked me if I had noticed the significance of the Russian entry into Czechoslovakia and its bearing on the return of Christ. I told him I was looking for His return and believed the accepted would be raised incorruptible and the accepted living changed to incorruptibility to live and reign with Christ a thousand years and at the end the responsible dead would live again to receive their judgment in accordance with Revelation 20:12-15. He told me I had got it all wrong; that all the responsible would be gathered for

judgment at the return of Christ. I promptly told him what Dr. Thomas said:- “I believe in the resurrection of the just at the coming of Christ, and the resurrection of the unjust a thousand years later. I taught this truth in Elpis Israel.” Therefore I told him if it was a truth it could not be disproved. He then asked me the question “Have you read any of our literature lately?” And I replied “Have you read any of ours at all?” And his answer “I have not.” I then told him to read some of their own more closely and see how much contradiction and confusion there is in their teaching.

I quoted as an example what Dr. Thomas said in reference to Adam:- “It required no change in his physical make-up; left to himself Adam would have returned to the ground by the natural process of decay which we all experience” (This is quoted from memory so it may not be accurate word for word but it is the sense of his teaching in several works).

Referring to the same thing Robert Roberts said:- “It required what men call a miracle to depress to the level of the beasts that perish the noble creature God had made.” These are from “Eureka” and “The Visible Hand of God” and anyone who considered it important to find the truth would recognize the contradictions between the two men and would therefore accept neither as reliable but turn to the only dependable source of information, the Bible,

Despite what the apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15:44-49 Christadelphians maintain that we have descended from a different man, a man whose nature was changed by the word of God, so that he became defiled by a fixation of evil, or sin-in-the-flesh. In their own words, according to Clause 5 of the Statement of Faith “A sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being and was transmitted to all his posterity.” I have never yet found in Scripture where the “transgression of law” by any man can be transmitted to his posterity. “Sin” is abstract; it is transgression of divine law, and Adam, in his very good state was capable of sinning and did sin, and God was not pleased about it, so I marvel that anyone should think that He would want to defile Adam and make transgression of law a physical law of his being and then condemn all Adam’s posterity for disobedience.

The term “condemned nature” is a Christadelphian invention. Adam’s nature was very good physically and was never changed or condemned. It was sin that was condemned. Human nature was created capable of reproducing itself and capable of obedience or disobedience. Reproduction was a physical law and could be transmitted to posterity like other physical characteristics but obedience or disobedience were not physical and could neither be transmitted to posterity or become a physical law of Adam’s being. To say that this is what the sentence of God did is to say in effect that God is the author of sin and this is exactly what Christadelphians assert in their Constitution or Statement of Faith when they mix or confuse the legal with the physical.

“The Law of Sin and Death” is a legal position into which Adam sold himself and the human race on the federal principle as explained in Romans 5:18,19. If this were not so it would be impossible for us to be made free from it at the present time. Also if we can be made physical sinners then we can also be physically made righteous if we accept the Christadelphian view of Romans 5:19. “Sin” and “Righteousness” are a matter of ownership in this context. We have the option of serving sin as a master or if we so desire we can be released from this master by complying with certain conditions. Under the law of redemption we can be bought or ransomed and so become servants of righteousness or God’s servants. The whole of Romans 6 is explanatory of this fact, hence Paul could say “For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Was Paul changed physically? Of course not. He was still a living physical body, but his legal status was changed; and mark this, you who do not like the term “legal” in religious matters, Paul speaks of the LAW of the Spirit of Life in Christ. Why a LAW - why not just the Spirit of Life? All these things have been explained time and time again in the literature of the Nazarene Fellowship, but rank and file Christadelphians have been warned neither to read it nor to speak of it openly. And so in their leaders are fulfilled the warning of Jesus in Matthew 23:13:- “Woe unto you, leaders and Auxiliary Lecturing Society! For ye shut up the Kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in; ye compass sea and land to make one convert and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves.”

Why? The answer is simple. The condemned Christ of your Constitution and the B.A.S.F. is a Christ which cannot REDEEM. You are still under the law of sin and death. If you think this offensive then so

also was Christ offensive and rightly so. My motive is merely to awaken you to the fact that Christ is indeed near but you are not in the right position to meet Him. Fill your lamps with oil while there is time. The household of Faith is being judged now by Him to whom all judgment has been given and who is a Priest for the age after the order of Melchizedec.

We read in Hebrews 9:22:- “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

Yes, Jesus is in the presence of God making intercession for His household. ‘For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified and under this new covenant God’s law is in their hearts and written in their minds and their past sins and iniquities remembered no more and where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God and hath counted the blood of the Covenant (full of sin) wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing (defiled Christ) and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?’ (He died for Himself?!).

“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 a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of our faith.”

Faith is the confident anticipation of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. We who are of the household of faith trust that the age-lasting priesthood and daily scrutiny of Christ will result in His appearing to us unto salvation. Those who, like that young man and his companions, deny that Jesus is judging His household now should read again 1 Peter 4:16-19:- “For the time is come (present tense) that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?”

Let sincere thinking Christadelphians ask themselves the question, “Did the high priest under the law enter every year boldly into the Holy of Holies with the blood of an unclean animal?” He would never have returned alive if he had done such a thing. Yet you say that the body and blood of Jesus was unclean and therefore unholy and that He entered heaven by this means. Would the high priest have had the audacity to kill a pig or a camel and take such an offering to the altar? Yet these animals are the true types of the ‘Christ’ you believe in. We implore you to go back to the Bible, from beginning to end, get your premises right, do not mix legal with physical and then if the Lord wills it, you may begin to understand the Sacrifice of Christ and how on the Federal Principle He was able to redeem or ransom His brother Adam and all the human race in him by giving His life in sacrifice.

Love to all in the Master’s service, Phil Parry.
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