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Editorial

Dear Sisters and Brothers and Friends, Loving Greetings.

When we read in the Bible about the lives of the characters that come so vividly to life in its pages, we cannot fail to recognize characteristics similar to those we see in ourselves and in our relatives and friends.

The people of long ago react to each other and to the events in which they are caught up just as we do. Some of them when faced with testing situations succeed and some fail. Nothing really changes, for human beings are the same now as they ever were in their loves and hates, their small or fatal mistakes and in their noble aims and their selfish or selfless acts. All human life is here as a newspaper used to say above its headlines.

But some people do such inexplicable awful things, even those we know and trust, that we are forced to ponder on the reasons for their actions. Why we ask ourselves did they do or say that dreadful thing? Therefore when we read about the last few tragic hours of Jesus' natural life one character emerges with particular and unhappy clarity: Judas Iscariot. We feel repugnance at his part in the ghastly events that preceded Jesus' death. Judas's behaviour must have come as a great shock to the other disciples and even to some extent to Jesus Himself. Why did Judas do what he did?

His name Iscariot might possibly be an Aramaic adaptation of SICARIUS, the Latin for "Dagger man," implying that Judas was a zealot partisan. Iscariot is more likely, however, to mean simply ISH ('man') KERIOTH, from Kerioth, a town south of Judea in which case Judas would have been the only non-Galilean amongst the twelve and therefore the odd man out to some extent.

Jesus was a clear reader of personality and He must have first called Judas and made him treasurer or accountant of the little company. It seems very unlikely that Jesus would have given Judas this job if it was

to be a source of temptation to him. Nor is it likely that Judas would have joined a band of itinerant and penniless preachers if he was a greedy and petty pilferer. The lapse of time between the events of the crucifixion and its recording perhaps accounts for the fact that John calls Judas a thief 'possessed of a devil' or 'the son of perdition.' The disciples had all let Jesus down in one way or another in their time and this may have made them, in retrospect, more fierce in their condemnatory words about Judas.

Did Judas intend to force Jesus into declaring Himself Messiah, at the height of the Passover feast, when support was ready to hand? One theory is that Judas was probably the most passionate nationalist of the group, of shrewder stuff than the rustic Galileans and swift to recognize the potential of Jesus, 'mighty in words and deeds' to be the Messiah long awaited by such as he. Three years close acquaintance with Jesus must have convinced Judas of Jesus' Messiahship, but also of his genuine inability to declare Himself. If Judas was deeply disappointed and frustrated at what seemed to him like Jesus unreasonable reluctance to openly declare who He really was and seize power, Judas by pushing Jesus' at what he thought was a tactical moment may well have felt he was acting for Jesus own good.

It is possible that Judas never dreamed that Jesus would actually allow Himself to be killed. Once, however, the plot was under way there was no brake to apply.

Whatever the motives that prompted Judas' betrayal of his Master to choose to do it with a kiss seems particularly inexcusable and incomprehensible. In any circumstances a kiss is an intimate token of affection between people. Judas could have touched Him on the shoulder or just pointed Him out to the soldiers, although it would be likely that some of them knew Jesus already because of His fame. Did Judas still feel a real affection for Jesus in spite of what he was doing to Him or did he hope Jesus would remember only the kiss, the mark of affection and not the betrayal and suffering that it augured? I think Judas knew the awful thing he was setting in train and the kiss was to persuade himself that what he was doing was acceptable, but it makes the blood run cold to contemplate it even at this distance.

The thirty pieces of silver for which Judas betrayed Jesus is apparently about the equivalent of less than ten dollars or four pounds sterling - that is the purchase value of a foreign slave in the Old Testament times, or the amount claimed by a Jewish slave if his master drew blood in New Testament times. If Judas was as greedy as is often supposed, he could have extorted far more from the high priests.

Judas is not mentioned at the trial before the Council, though undoubtedly he must have given evidence, for it required two witnesses to convict. Nor is he mentioned at the later trial before Pilate or at the crucifixion.

When Judas saw the terrible result of what he had set in motion he took the money back to the high priests and threw it down and in Matthew 27:3-5 it says he went out and hanged himself. However Luke's account in Acts of an accidental death, known to all the people of Jerusalem, seems according to some Bible students, more likely to be accurate. But both accounts link the death of Judas with a cemetery for foreigners in Jerusalem called Akeldama, The field of Blood, the site of which is today still to be seen south of the Western Hill, across the Valley of Hinnom.

One writer says the following about Judas:-

"Another enigma of the story is not why but what did Judas actually betray? Was it just a convenient place of arrest away from the Passover crowds? Was it Jesus' secret admission to His Messianic identity? This alone could and did result in His conviction, but it came from His own lips, 'I am,' with all the purposefulness of the Son of Man who came to give His life a ransom for many."

Love to all. Helen Brady.

Tribute to our late Brother Leo Dreifuss

It is with sadness we report the falling asleep of our brother Leo Dreifuss after a short illness. He left “A short life history” for the benefit of the person responsible for conducting his funeral in which he wrote:

“I came to this country in 1939, when just under 18 years of age, as a Jewish refuge from Germany. Two years later I was taken into the family of the late Brother Fred and the late Sister Lottie Lea, who had no children of their own and so I became their “child.”

We were a happy family and it was there where I learned about our Messiah, Jesus Christ, His mission while on earth, about His miraculous birth, crucifixion and resurrection and about the signs of the times. I became convinced of the truth of what they taught me and so was baptized into His saving Name.

The three of us lived happily together as one family until eventually first Fred, then nearly five years later, Lottie, joined the large number of those who died in faith, awaiting the resurrection. A few years later I moved into a residential care home.

Professionally I worked as a Mathematician, first at Liverpool in the telecommunications industry, then as a lecturer at the Wigan College of Technology, where, incidentally, I also was a student.”

The short funeral service was conducted at the graveside by Brother Geoff Hampton. It was pleasing to see so many people at the service: some of Fred and Lottie Lea’s relatives, several of his fellow lecturers from Wigan Technical College, two or three from the residential care home, his own doctor, and local people who knew him through shopping in the village. Everyone we spoke to regarded him as “a very gentle man” and a “man of compassion” and these strengths can be seen in his writings over the years and for which he will be remembered with much affection.

Russell.

Who Is God?

Who is God at The Burning Bush?

In the Bible, words spoken in the First Person are not always proof of the identity of the speaker. For example, at the burning bush Moses heard what appeared to be the voice of God saying “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” (Exodus 1:3-6). It even says that “Moses was afraid to look at God.”

At first glance it would seem to say that God was present in person and that Moses was hearing the genuine voice of God. However, there is more information here about the real identity of the speaker. The voice that Moses heard was not actually that of God Himself. Back in verse 2 it says that “the angel of the LORD appeared to him.” It was the angel who spoke in the first person as though it was God speaking.

Angels act as God’s agents. They do not speak for themselves. When they speak in the first person as though it was God speaking, it is because they are God’s messengers, communicating the words of God to the hearer.

Who is God to Aaron?

In the same way Moses became “as God” to Aaron. (Exodus 4:16). Not that Moses was God but that he was to “put God’s words in Aaron’s mouth.” When Moses told Aaron what to say to Pharaoh he was giving him God’s words, not his own. Moses stood in God’s place, to be God’s human messenger (angel) to Aaron.

Who is God to Pharaoh?

In the same way Moses was also “made God” to Pharaoh (Exodus 7:1). Aaron was Moses’ “prophet” speaking to Pharaoh the words that God gave to Moses. “Thus says the LORD... let my people go.” Aaron did the actual speaking but it was Moses, not Aaron, who stood in God’s place to be God’s human messenger (angel) to Pharaoh.

Who is God in Psalm 8:3,4?

This is another place where a Hebrew word, most often used for God Himself, actually refers to someone who is not God. The “Son of man” (Jesus’ favourite title for Himself) is made (created) a “little less than ‘God’ (RSV, NASB, NEB) or “the angels” (KJV - but margin note says “God”). The Hebrew word is “Elohi.”

That “angels” is the valid translation is shown from its use in Hebrews 2:6-9.

Who were the “Gods” in Psalm 82:6?

This leads to another piece of useful information about the application of the word “God” to ordinary human beings.

On one occasion Jesus was accused of “making himself God” because, as a man, He said that God was His Father (John 10:31-33). However the accusation was false. What Jesus had actually claimed was not that He was God but that He was the Son of God (verse 36). But He also pointed to Psalm 82:6 where the word “Gods” is used of ordinary, men who are “sons of the Most High.” (The Hebrew word for God in this Psalm is “Elohim”). Jesus is not saying here that He is God; rather He is saying that if other men can be called God because they speak for God, then it is also valid for Him as both Son of man and Son of God, to claim the same authority and status for Himself.

Who were the “Gods” in Exodus 21?

Another less obvious place where the same Hebrew word “ELOHIM” is used about men is Exodus 21:6 (KJV). There it is translated “Judges.” (It is also translated that way in Exodus 22:8,9). We are meant to understand that the Judges, though mere mortal men, spoke on behalf of God when they rendered just judgement from God’s Laws.

Who is God when Jesus speaks?

The above Scriptures show us that both men and angels can be sent to stand in place of God, to carry messages and speak God’s words to others. When that happens it does not mean that the messenger is actually God in person! It means simply that God has sent an AGENT to stand in His place and speak for Him. It should not surprise us therefore to find that as Son of God, Jesus claims similar authority to stand in God’s place to speak God’s words to us: “For I have not spoken on my own authority; the Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has bidden me.” (John 12:49,50).

But we must not make the mistake of saying that means that Jesus is God! Jesus went out of His way to leave us in no doubt that He Himself was not God. He said clearly that His Father is the only true God (John 17:3). Jesus is someone else. He is the Son of God.

When theologians “interpret” other verses in a way which contradicts that plain statement from Jesus Himself, confusion is certain to follow!

Brother Allon Maxwell

Letter regarding Brother Pat Brady's article entitled

“RECONCILIATION - ATONEMENT” published in our last Circular Letter:

Dear Brother John Stevenson, Greetings in the Name of Jesus our Lord. Regarding Pat Brady's reply to your comments I find that he is still not very far removed from accepted Christadelphianism which our Brethren Hold, father and son, endeavoured to enlighten him and those dozen or more with his similar views.

Both Brother Ernest Brady and I wrote to him at that time but we found that difficulties which faced Christadelphians were similar to what Pat Brady is now putting forth; the late Brother Hold and his son, Bill also found the same situation and could not entertain fellowship with them on such an unstable position which in fact was not a correct and scriptural definition of the atoning work of God in Christ as the result of Adam's sin.

The context of Pat Brady's reasoning is way out of line. There is a lack here of appreciation of the priority of the situation. 1. Redemption is first, not forgiveness. 2. If Adam had been forgiven, where the need to pass the "sentence of death by sin" and also pass it on to Adam's posterity who personally had not sinned? I ask, what is the "death by sin"? And what is the death that did not come by sin? The answer to the latter is plain - it is the common death experienced as a result of being created in a corruptible and dying nature and not a penalty on account of Adam's sin. Adam had no choice in the matter of his corruptible nature but he had a choice as to continuance of his temporal life, or accelerating its loss in the day he sinned (24 hour day) by bloodshedding.

The common or natural death did not pass upon us by Adam's sin, nor could it by our personal sins, seeing we were not alive at the time to transgress any law. What then is the position of Adam's posterity from the beginning? It is that there is a need to be reconciled to God through an understanding of the Word of reconciliation. The Word of reconciliation demands acceptance of the fact of being alienated from God by Adam's sin only. Reconciliation does not and is not meant to prevent our natural death but the death by Adam's sin which passed in a legal sense on all men for the reason many people fail to understand and therefore blind themselves to the Love of God. For as Paul teaches, God concluded all under Adam's sin, not because all sinned personally but because they were in the loins of Adam when he sinned and were therefore accounted as members of his body and sold under that sin and to that personified Slave-Master styled "Sin." Thus with Adam and all in his loins, redemption and reconciliation was necessary to escape Sin's Wages for services rendered, which Scripture teaches as being Judicial Death - in consequence of being under the Law of Sin and Death.

We must not confuse the physical with the legal position, therefore as Dr. Thomas put it correctly (among some of the mistakes he penned), a Ransom had to be paid for release from this slavery of the Law of Sin and Death, making the purchaser the new owner or Master.

I therefore quote his words which incidentally the main of his followers reject because they have failed to understand the subject; "Redemption is release for a ransom, all who become God's servants have been released from a former lord by purchase, the purchaser is God and the Ransom paid the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without spot and blemish."

Some Christadelphians have often asked who the Ransom Price was paid to; well, well, their own adored Pioneer in whom they boast had brought the Truth to Light has named him as their professed former Lord (after their baptism), but Paul describes him in more detail in Romans as Master Sin in abstract language. (Romans 6:2). "Dead to sin," (6:6), "Should not serve sin." (6:13-22), "No more servants to sin" Paul could say of his release through the Ransom Price of the blood of Christ, "For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death (Romans 8:2).

We must not confuse the terms "In Adam" and "In Christ. To be in Adam is to be in him when he sinned and not after his typical redemption through the Lamb slain and which foreshadowed Jesus the Lamb of God the very substance. Through the Sacrifice of Jesus the natural corruptible life of Adam was allowed

to take its course of 930 years and thus as his descendants, we also owe our natural existence to the sacrifice Jesus voluntarily made, in this sense He gave Himself a Ransom for all, but all are not aware of this, enlightenment is necessary for people to understand why Jesus suffered willingly on Calvary, for indeed it had promise of more than natural existence.

Jesus confirmed this when He declared “I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly.” Proof that if through the disobedience of Adam many be dead under law, there must be a necessity of being alive unto God to be able to serve Him. This is all achieved in the way appointed and by the Grace of God through His Son and our belief and faith in what is taught clearly by the Apostle Paul to Romans, chapter 5, verses 15 to 21, also Romans 6:6, keeping in mind of being concluded under Adam’s sin, the “Sin of the World” and by baptism, having died symbolically into the death of Christ and risen to newness of life in him (verses 11 & 13) yielding our new members unto God as those who are alive from the dead. “For God so loved the world (His created man), that He gave His only begotten Son (a man), that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

I have touched on the Federal Principle of being either “in Adam” or “in Christ” – not in both at the same time, this latter is implied in Christadelphian teaching but is not the view taught by Paul, for as he says, ‘In Adam all die, even so (by contrast) in Christ all are made alive who are His at His coming’ (my wording), and His before that event.

Pat Brady’s heading entitled “Reconciliation - Atonement” does not in his following words convey the views I have put forth nor the views of the Apostle John to whom he has referred - 1 John 2:2, for in fact John is addressing people who have already been reconciled through the Atonement.

What is important afterwards in the teaching of John is the work of Jesus at the right hand of God as advocate and High Priest on behalf of those who are members of His household interceding on their behalf having been tempted and tried as they, yet without sin, and could therefore have compassion on their failure to live up to His standard though of a nature capable of doing so. So John says of non-deliberate sin, “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us.” His one Sacrifice for sins forever on the Federal Principle ensures that the sinner needs no other sacrifice to offer; he need only confess and invoke the Name of Christ in prayer and in faith. The Children of Israel under Moses needed to supply their own sacrifice for individual sin, but every year the High Priest offered a sacrifice for his own sin and one also for the people, showing that the only valid sacrifice to take away the Edenic Sin and that under the Mosaic Law was that of the anti-type, the substance of that foreshadowed - even Jesus.

This is the whole teaching of the Apostles of Jesus whom He appointed to continue His work during His High Priesthood in Heaven at the Right-Hand of His Father, for on earth He could not be a Priest - Hebrews 8:4.

It appears to me at this point that Pat Brady implies that Jesus ascended to the Right-Hand of God in the nature of flesh and blood, although he says it (the blood) was offered by Jesus to God in Heaven as His whole sacrificial life till death, and that He did it as High Priest which the quotation from Hebrews 8:4 refutes. It cannot be denied that Jesus as Heir of God, forsook that which was His by birth in order to prove by obedience in all things God’s justice in condemning Adam’s disobedience. He knew that Adam’s life had been spared through God knowing from the beginning that He Himself in the likeness of the nature in which Adam transgressed would justify His Father and fulfil His Will by willingly laying down the equivalent life Adam owed to the Divine Law and under which all in his loins were included by imputation. It was life in the blood which was the debt, not a carcass of human corruption turned to dust. Jesus laid down His life in the shedding of His blood but His body did not corrupt and turn to dust, yet this is what Christadelphians require and also Pat Brady.

We accept wholeheartedly and we have always believed and taught the following quotation of Pat Brady’s words: “Jesus submitted to death because He knew that God in His wisdom would not have required it if we could have been saved without it.”

Unfortunately this is followed by several statements which deny this very truth, such as: “Jesus did not pay the penalty for Adam’s sin, He gave His life as a ransom to deliver us from the penalty of our sins.” “The ransom price was in no way equivalent to the debt forgiven by God. If it was it would have secured

the release of only one sinner and Jesus would have needed to stay dead forever to secure that one sinner's release."

Then follows Pat's description of what the Ransom Price amounted to which was, to put it briefly, the unblemished character of Jesus on His own behalf to display perfect righteousness before God.

In other words Pat Brady is saying that the life in the blood of Jesus was not the Ransom but the perfect character He displayed before God which also led to His death. Also he continues "The punishment due to us for sin is freely forgiven by God in His great grace and mercy." In such a statement he excludes the name of Jesus and His sacrifice as being a Ransom for many but merely a martyrdom in His own interest to achieve righteousness and His death on Calvary was in no way equivalent to the debt forgiven by God. If it was, it would have secured the release of only one sinner and Jesus would have needed to stay dead forever to secure that one sinner's release." In other words, Pat Brady is saying that the character of Jesus was the Ransom Price - not His natural life in the blood and also he ignores Paul's teaching on the Federal position namely that the sacrificial death of Christ was not for Adam or the many whom God concluded under Adam's sin, so that by the righteousness of one Jesus Christ and His unforfeited life in the blood, the equivalent debt of life, not character, could be paid. As I said earlier all that Pat is saying borders much on Christadelphianism and the various views their writers declare in their magazines even to the extent of contradiction and confusion. It appears to me that Pat wants to be different from them so he brings out his own theories.

Under his heading "The Problem with Substitution" Pat cannot accept that Jesus by His perfect obedience (and freedom from imputed sin at birth) was able to lay down His natural life as the substitute for the sinless life Adam lost under law and should have died by the infliction of the shedding of blood. This was demonstrated in Eden where the sin-covering foreshadowed Jesus as a substitute for Adam's sin - not our personal sins. How could Jesus be a substitute for our personal sins when we had not even been born or known what God required? But we were all constituted as sinners in the loins of Adam and therefore can be constituted righteous in Christ in the legal and moral sense as Paul explains in Romans 5 and 6, whereby on enlightenment we can, through association with the death of Christ pass from the death that came by sin to the life that came through Christ (without any physical change).

The life then we live is under our new master, having died unto Sin, our former owner, we live unto God and our approach to Him is through our High Priest unto whom we can confess our personal sins and obtain forgiveness through the merits of His intercession and His sacrifice which we have acknowledged as for us also as servants of God. Pat Brady's view of substitution is similar to that of the Christadelphian, the latter being based on their understanding that the common death of Adam we all experience is the penalty God passed upon him, whereas this would mean the same penalty was on Adam when created, how then could it be death by sin? Again they affirm that if Christ died as a substitute we ought not to die and Jesus ought not to have risen. But is not this exactly the case with Adam when he violated the law? The sentence of death was not carried out - he did not die in the day he sinned. He was allowed to live because a substitute which fore-shadowed the death of Christ without sin was foreseen and therefore Adam was redeemed and our own existence was assured so that we also might have natural life in order to enter the covenant and the race for eternal life through the high calling of God in Christ.

The answer to the Christadelphian view of substitution is in the words of Jesus in John 5:24 where Jesus could not be referring to natural decay and death but the death which passed on all men legally by Adam's sin. We read therefore in the present tense Christ's words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

Is it not then obvious that the penalty upon Adam was not a 930 years life sentence but a loss of his present existence at the time he sinned, that is, judicially inflicted death by bloodshedding as experienced by Jesus?

But as Adam was a sinner he would not have existed anymore but Jesus being free from sin at birth and sinless by conduct, oblivion was not His due; yet He had paid the debt owed to the Law and never received back the debt of life paid for in resurrection He had not that life in the blood but a body energized by Spirit.

Adam did not die the death by Sin, Jesus died the death due to Adam - we are expected to die that death in symbol and as servants of God having believed what Jesus did for us we have died in Baptism into Christ's death and passed from death to life, but if we sin wilfully we are then amenable to the second death which is also judicially inflicted as was the first. But in the typical lamb.

I hope Pat Brady will see the points raised, for if he supports at all the Christadelphian view of physical condemnation in literal flesh with natural death as the penalty, then baptism is useless, the condemnation is still there, ye are yet in your sins, ye have not died unto sin through Christ Jesus. Christ's death a mere martyrdom and conditional contract of obedience? Please think again Pat.

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” - Romans 8:32 to 34.

Brother Phil Parry.

Foot note: There is much truth in this article by Pat Brady with which I am bound to agree but in the sense he expresses his own interpretation of some of the quoted Scriptures I am at variance and hopefully this will be seen in my comments. Pat's first paragraph refers to our personal sins where I have pointed out his omission of Adam's sin and those constituted under it on the Federal Principle that God might by one man's obedience and righteousness constitute all under His Son. This of course by enlightenment belief and faith in a correct understanding of God's Atoning work in Christ. The obstacle being an incorrect understanding of the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus on the false basis of belief that natural death was the penalty for sin. This has been corrected and explained.

P.P.

Brother Eric Cave also gives his analysis on Brother Pat Brady's article

“RECONCILIATION - ATONEMENT” :-

Brother Pat Brady's opening paragraph misunderstands the word 'propitiation' which is always used as a noun, not a verb in the New Testament. Jesus is "the propitiation" in 1 John 2:2 - "God sent him forth to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:10 (Greek *hilasmos* "God hath sent him forth to be a propitiation (Greek *hilasterion*) through faith in his blood" (Romans 3:25) - and in Hebrews 9:5 *hilasterion* is rendered "mercy seat" - "And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat." Nowhere is the word used in the sense of action to influence others to be favourably disposed to anyone. Jesus did not propitiate His Father, He Himself was the Mercy Seat. In the LXX *hilasterion* was used with *epithema* (a covering) to describe the lid of the ark, though later the *epithema* was dropped and *hilasterion* describes the ark. Hence the scriptural doctrine of reconciliation or restoration was effected by means of the Mercy Seat and a better example would be that of Gomer being restored to Hosea who bought his erring wife back to himself, by ransom. Esther does not illustrate the meaning in this case.

God did not send Jesus (paragraph 3) specifically to endure all our sufferings and temptations, those were incidental to Him learning obedience; God sent Him "To redeem them that were under the Law that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:5). One man had sinned. The penalty for disobeying or provoking God was immediate violent death. But "mercy rejoiced against judgment" (James 2:13) and God accepted the shedding of the blood of the lamb(s) as a substitute for that of Adam and Eve. But the blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin; Adam was now in bondage to 'Sin' for his servants ye are to whom ye yield yourself servants to obey." Adam and all his progeny had yielded themselves bondslaves for ever unless someone paid the penalty of sudden violent death in his place, which Jesus of His own freewill actually did and redeemed Adam and all his progeny (the whole world) from the death required by Law. What Jesus 'displayed' on the cross was the love of God in sending Him for us and His own love by fulfilling the divine plan of salvation. It was His life, not His death that demonstrated that there is "no excuse for sin."

Until Brother Pat Brady recognizes the Bible doctrine concerning 'death' he will continue to make the errors manifest in his 5th paragraph on page 17 where he says:-

“The end point of our probation is death (Hebrews 9:27) and so it had to be for Jesus if he was to be “made in all points like his brethren”, leading them out of death itself (Hebrews 2:9,10). We needed a sympathetic High Priest to plead our case before God and a merciful and understanding judge, one who had been tempted in all points like us, including suffering and death (Hebrews 2:17 & 4:15). Jesus' suffering and death were necessary to qualify him for those positions and to qualify him to be King of the world.”

Let me list the errors in that paragraph;-

When God created man, a natural animal living soul he had, like all living creatures, a limited life span. Moses teaches us that in Numbers 16:29 where he says of Korah and his company “If these men die the common death of all men; or if they be visited after the visitation of all men then YHWH hath not sent me. But if YHWH make a new thing and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked YHWH.”

Moses then, speaks of two types of death, sudden violent death for provoking YHWH (foreshadowing the second death in the lake of fire at the judgment), and the common or natural death of all flesh which includes visitational death by famine and (Ezekiel 14), noisome beasts, sword or pestilence before they had reached the natural life span appointed to the human species.

When Adam sinned he 'provoke' YHWH and should have perished that day for “in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” - it was that sentence which was a 'new thing' in Moses day because it was suspended in Adam's case and not inflicted, as I have said, not only because “mercy rejoiced against judgment,” but also because to have carried out the sentence would have eliminated the human race entirely and God had said “be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth” and His Word can never return unto Him void. And so Adam was permitted to revert to his eco cycle of birth, growth, maturity, decay and death which in his case and at that time was set by God as 930 years.

Pat Brady says that “the end point of our probation is death and so it had to be for Jesus.” Not quite true; natural death, yes, unless we are alive and walking in Spirit when Jesus returns when we shall not see death; certainly not true in the case of Jesus whose death on the cross by wicked hands was not the common or natural death of the flesh, for He was the heir, He was from above, not from beneath, He was a Son in His Father's house. Like Adam His life on earth was in His blood, blood which drained from His body by the nails and the scourging and the Roman spear, so that after three days His terrestrial body became a celestial one. The linen clothes were left in place, the napkin about His head wrapped together in a place by itself. His resurrection body came out of those accoutrements just as it did through the locked door to appear before His disciples a few hours later, to Mary, or the other women and the two walking to Emmaus. Not a Spirit, but a celestial immortal incorruptible recipient of all power in heaven and in earth who dined with them. (John 21:12).

Pat Brady says “We needed a sympathetic High Priest to plead our case before God.” Not so! What could Jesus say on our behalf to His Father that His Father did not already know? He Himself is appointed Judge of all the earth. Can He plead with Himself?

The word translated “advocate” in 1 John 2:1 is completely false. An advocate is a lawyer appointed by a plaintiff to slant the evidence in his clients favour. Plato demanded the death penalty for advocates who distorted the evidence! Literally “*Parakletos*” means “one called alongside,” which is why it is applied to Jesus seated at the right hand of the Father, as is also the case with the translations “Comforter” in John 14,15 and 16. The LXX terms Job's comforters “evil *parakletores*,” though no one seems to know why the suffix 'ores' is used by the scribes responsible for the LXX. Just as Moses was engaged in leading a nation from Egyptian darkness to the promised land, so the disciples were engaged after the death of their Lord in leading a new people from darkness to light. God provided the angel of the presence to be alongside Moses and speak with him “face to face.” In like manner the glorified Christ sent His angel from heaven to assist His disciples in their task, to fulfil those tasks laid upon them in John 14,15 and 16.

Pat Brady says “we need a sympathetic High Priest to plead our case before God” but that sympathy and compassion has already been exercised and manifested by His sacrifice. That He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins in response to our daily prayers is not in doubt, but He doesn’t have to ingratiate Himself with God before He can bestow that forgiveness, for as I have said, He is already the appointed Judge and in any case could not say anything to His Father that His Father does not already know. Only in Hebrews is Jesus spoken of as a High Priest in the New Testament and as a Melchisedec priest who received the offerings of Abraham and blessed him. It was Moses who pleaded with God for Israel, not Aaron. The duties of the Aaronic priesthood do not include that of “pleading for his households cause in heaven.” Rather were they to be a minister of the sanctuary and the tabernacle to offer the prayers of the people and receive and dispose of their sacrifices and to convey to the people the Laws and pronouncements of their God. As the only begotten, Jesus was the heir, He did not have to suffer and die before He qualified “to be King of the world.” He did so voluntarily and because He loved and loves His Bride. “Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” (John 13:1).

In his last paragraph of this section on Reconciliation - Atonement Pal Brady quotes 1 Corinthians 15:3 as teaching that Jesus died for our sins because His death ratified into force a New Covenant which contained a promise for those who accept the covenant. Actually 1 Corinthians 15:3 says that Jesus died for our sins according to the scriptures and then goes on to speak of resurrection rather than atonement. It is not accurate to say that Jesus is our Redeemer because we have forgiveness of sins in His name; He is our Redeemer because He has ransomed us from the bondage of Sin into which Adam sold himself, for his servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey and it was the redemption price of a violent death due to the Law which Adam had incurred that Jesus paid to redeem Adam and all in his loins which Adam had sold to the devil King Sin. A Judicial death which only Jesus could pay for He was never in Adam’s loins and He paid the price with His own blood to redeem Adam and all in his loins.

“By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin.” But the ‘death’ that resulted from breaking that law was not the common or natural death of all living creatures but the legally imposed penalty for “provoking God” and if Pat Brady can keep that fact in mind, then he will have no difficulty in deciding between ‘Substitution’ and ‘Representation.’

With love in Christ Jesus our Lord, C.E.Cave.

“WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY ?”

We read in the Gospel according to John, chapter 6, that at one time Christ had followers besides the twelve apostles, but when Jesus told them things hard to be understood and as they realized that much faith was required to accept His preaching, they went away from Him. There were only twelve left and even one of those was a traitor, so that during part of His ministry He had only eleven really faithful followers.

Christ had talked to them about the children of Israel eating manna in the wilderness. This was a type of Christ, a type of the bread of heaven giving life - eternal life. The manna in the wilderness merely sustained those who ate of it during this present life, but Christ revealed Himself to them as the true Bread from heaven and then He told them things which to the Jews of that time were really new. We must remember that Jesus was speaking to the Jews who only had the Old Testament as the source of inspired knowledge. Many of the things preached to them are quite evident to us who have the New Testament as well as the Old to draw on but required even more faith from those to whom they were first preached because of their very newness.

For example, in this sermon in John 6 Jesus tells them of the resurrection which, though revealed in the Old Testament, is not dealt with in great detail. He tells them, “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44). Or, “Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:54).

No doubt this saying puzzled them. It is easy enough for us to understand who can read the whole of the New Testament, but what about those Jews of Christ’s day? It is true the faith required was not blind

faith; there were the many miracles Jesus did which were a sign that He was indeed the Messiah sent from God. Nevertheless, some of His sayings must have appeared strange. He said Himself that He would speak to them in parables, and it was only to His faithful disciples to whom He explained their meaning afterwards. However, there were eleven faithful ones whose faith that this man was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, contrary to all appearances, was sufficiently strong to stay with Him through all His trials to the last (although only Peter really followed Him to the very end and even then denied Him).

When there were only twelve left Jesus said to them “Will ye also go away?” and Peter, always ready to let the Master know how willingly he would follow Him, quickly answered “Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” Those apostles showed a supreme example of faith and love for the Master. Think of it. The Jews generally thought that this was just another fanatic, another pretending to be the expected Messiah. There were several such persons at that time. There was sufficient evidence, let us be frank, for the doubters and sneerers to make the most of. After all, the Romans were still their rulers. Jesus did not take the kingdom by force when He had the chance. What would mere human reasoning make of this? Human reasoning would make us wonder at times whether there was not something in it after all in what the Pharisees had to say of Him? Was this man genuine, after the many recent claims by pretenders to be only followed by disappointments? Yes, that fact that Jesus did nothing at all about getting rid of the Romans by force was something which His enemies could constantly rub in. This also applied to His repeated assertion that He was the Son of God; something hard for the Jews to reconcile even today, never mind when it was first preached to them. Then in addition to all these puzzling statements there came the one about His being the Bread of Life. He truly set them a riddle when He said, “Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life...”

Yet among all these bewildering statements and temptations, from people casting doubt on Christ’s claim, the apostles had the strength of faith to hold on to Him. I wonder what we would have done under those circumstances. Would we have been as the twelve or as the seventy whom He sent out at one time but who left Him when they realized the temptations involved? What is important is in which group are we now? Are we prepared now to follow Christ wherever He leads, whatever trials and temptations we are to pass through to the end of our probation? Are we as the twelve, or shall we in the end turn out to be as one of those disciples who left Him when temptations seem too hard?

Listen again to Peter, “To whom shall we go?” There is no other Saviour. If we deny Him He will deny us. If we forsake Him, we cannot expect God to have any dealings with us. No, God’s word is very definite about those who accept the Lord, and then turn away. Better not to accept Him in the first place than accept Him, only to turn our backs on Him later. But while God is against those who turn away He does want people to be converted to consider it carefully before taking that step, rather than take it rashly on the spur of the moment. Jesus says in one of His parables to the people (Luke 14:28), “For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?... so likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.”

When somebody wanted to follow Jesus He even discouraged him; “The foxes have holes,” He said, “The birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” God does not want a rash decision. He does not compel man to serve Him. He wants man to serve Him of his own free will and He does want us to keep with Him after having made the choice. “No man, having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God.”

There is another point worth noting; Jesus knew from the beginning that He had a traitor among the twelve but it made no difference; all the while during His ministry He treated Judas like the other eleven. This is a great example of love. God is love and Christ, the manifestation of God, is love also. How would we have acted? How do we act if we suspect somebody in our company to be plotting against us? Yet the most we can do some times is to suspect. We cannot tell the future. Christ had no need to suspect; He knew who was the traitor before He even committed that treacherous act.

God knows before hand what we are going to do. A solemn thought. God knows now what I don’t know that I am going to do. God knows now whether you or I are going to go astray or are going to remain faithful, or whether you or I are going to fall and to die spiritually having lost the race for eternal life. But let us think of this also; suppose God knows that I am going to yield to temptation or that through some sin or continuous bad living I am going to lose the race for eternal life, it makes no difference to the present.

God loves me whatever He knows that I am going to turn out. It is after actually committing a sin and not repenting that He is going to judge men. Meanwhile it makes no difference to His love towards me even though He knows that I shall at a later time turn away under temptation. The judgment is on sins committed, when the person has shown by his acts what he is. We have a free will. We choose and if we choose evil it is entirely our choice. The responsibility for the consequences is ours. Such love and foreknowledge is incomprehensible to our minds. We have a free will; we are judged by what we do and yet God who knows our decisions before we even think about them, still loves us even if we are going to turn out for the worst.

God puts up with evil in the world now, as Jesus declared in the parable of the wheat and the tares. "Let both grow together until harvest." Remember some day harvest time will come along. Some day the judgment will be a present reality. Then we shall be judged on what we have done when our deeds will be made manifest. Let us then be with the faithful and with Jesus, abiding In Him. Only if we abide in Him to the end of our probation can we be sure of the crown.

Brother Leo Dreifuss (May 1986).

Following the distribution of our last Circular Letter we received the letter below from Brother Lawrence J. Lee of Birmingham: -

Dear Russell, Thank you for sending me the various booklets and your magazines. They have been most informative of the things that you stand for. Having read and understood most of the beliefs that the Nazarene Fellowship deem as their understanding of the Atonement from the scriptures, I have come to the conclusion that there are fundamental misconceptions in your grasp of this important doctrine. In fact your writings have helped me to see things a little clearer from the standard Christadelphian point of view, and have served to only confirm to me that the Christadelphian understanding of these things is the correct way of seeing them.

Without going into all the differences which you say the scriptures teach us 'simply,' I will endeavour to just look at one aspect of your teaching which I find does not fit in with my understanding of the Bible. It concerns the publication "Ernest Brady to Richard Mellows." As I say there is much in this booklet one could take issue with, but we will just consider a comment made on page 11 (2nd paragraph, last part),

"Clearly Jesus was in the mind and purpose of God from the beginning of Creation, and in His infinite wisdom He foresaw what would happen to Him; that He would be rejected, hated and finally put to death by evil men. God did not plan or desire this; far from it; it was men acting freely of their own volition, but He stood back and allowed events to develop into that final wicked tragedy because Jesus accepted the charge laid upon Him by which He could redeem the race."

This is simply just not true! It was planned and determined in God's will right from the beginning because Hebrews 10:5-12 tells us so, twice in fact!

"Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the Law; then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

The inference from verses 5 and 6 is that God found no 'pleasure' (i.e. to be pleased with, or to find acceptable) with animal sacrifices, yet in contrast God would find acceptable the sacrifice of His Son, which Jesus (as prophesied in the Psalms) had come to perform in accordance with God's determined will and purpose. Hardly a picture of God not planning or desiring the sacrifice of His Son! The whole context of the writer to the Hebrews argument here in chapter 10 is in the aspect of literal sacrifice as an offering for sin, not just a 'life' of sacrificial offering. But the Bible goes further than that in telling us of God's involvement in this offering of His Son at Calvary. What about Isaiah 53:4-6 for example?

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

This passage in Isaiah clearly indicates the purpose of Christ's suffering and death, that we might have 'peace,' that we might be 'healed,' that He might carry our 'iniquity' to the cross. But Isaiah 53 goes even further in describing the Father's involvement with the offering of Jesus, and begins to explain the reason why God's love for the world over-ruled that of His love for His Son. Just look for a moment at verses 10 & 11.

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."

We cannot get it any plainer than it is put here. Three times in one verse we see clearly the Father's involvement and requirement in Christ's sufferings. I.e. 'The LORD,' 'he,' and 'thou.' Now we may wish to argue about who the 'he' and 'thou' is referring to, but the inference is of course that it relates to 'the LORD' or 'YAHWEH.' But certainly there is no getting away from who 'the LORD' is referring to! Unless we wish to argue that the memorial name indicates the angels, who bear God's Holy Name, and even then the angels are only doing God's bidding anyway, so still the Father is involved in some way. Now in my estimation this passage very clearly indicates the 'will' of the Father. Put simply, that God's 'pleasure' (i.e. 'to take delight in' - Strong's) was that Jesus underwent the bruising, the grief, in other words all the horrors of the cross, that we might receive forgiveness of our sins as verse 11 goes on to say.

Now no one for a moment is saying that God Himself inflicted personally these cruel things upon His Son, despite what many of your articles say Christadelphians are saying, as if God was doing this in some sort of vindictive way! I do not know any Christadelphian who would say that, however by compelling (i.e. God's will) His Son to undergo the horrors of the cross, God was knowingly sending Jesus to that terrible fate.

So what we are saying is that for God to achieve the ultimate goal of salvation for mankind, it became necessary for Him to lay aside His great love that He obviously had for His Son, to compel Jesus to go through with the crucifixion, (remembering of course, that Jesus still retained His free will, as was demonstrated in the words in Gethsemane, 'O my Father, if it be possible, **let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt,**' (My emphasis) for the sake of **mankind**.

Now far from demonstrating a vindictive God as you would lay at the Christadelphian door, we in fact see the complete opposite, a God of intense love for us, which was prepared to put on one side His love for the Son for our sakes. There is no better way to show this principle of God's love through the sacrifice of Jesus than in the account of Abraham and the instruction to sacrifice Isaac. I am sure that you don't need me to emphasize the number of connections we are intended to make between this incident recorded in Genesis 22 and that of the Father's intention through His own Son Jesus, but just to confirm the link let me list a number of obvious connections:

* 3 times in Genesis 22 (v.2,12 & 16) Isaac is referred to as 'thine only son' ('only begotten son' - See Hebrews 11:17). Jesus was the only begotten Son of God.

* Abraham attempted to sacrifice Isaac on mount Moriah. Jesus was slain upon the same mount.

* The wood was laid upon Isaac (note: by his father Abraham, verse 6), the cross (stake) was laid upon Jesus.

* Abraham upon the third day received Isaac back again (as if slain - see Hebrews 11:19). Jesus was raised upon the third day.

But there are others (just as significant connections which I believe we are intended to take note of). The first point we have already mentioned above, that being of the fact Abraham laid the wood upon Isaac his son. Now we either accept the narrative is making a particular point here, or just making up the narrative (which the Bible never does!). I.e. that Isaac would carry the wood to his own sacrifice, just as Jesus would carry His own cross to Calvary. If we can accept that principle (and no doubt much besides!), then we must also accept the fact that we are told it was Abraham who placed the wood upon Isaac. Now it would have been just as easy for the passage to tell us that the two young men with Abraham placed the wood upon Isaac, but it doesn't say that, does it? Surely we are being taught something here of significance.

If Abraham throughout Genesis 22 represents in type God, and we have seen ample evidence to make that conclusion, then surely by implication it would be God who would place the cross (stake) upon His Son Jesus! Now we know this was not the case, because John 19:16,17 plainly states: "Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha." The common practice among the Romans was to compel the criminal to carry his own cross to the crucifixion site. So how can we reconcile this apparent contradiction? Well as we have already explained in looking at Isaiah 53:10,11 it does not become a problem at all once we realize that God was involved in the Salvation He wished to bring about through the death of His only Son. So although the Roman soldiers carried out the act of placing the cross upon Jesus, it was in accordance with God's will and purpose that this should be, so as we have already seen, that the way may be made open for our salvation through Christ. Far from God taking then an inactive role, He was there right beside Jesus encouraging Him to go on to the bitter end.

The next point I wish to make is this. If either Abraham (by obeying God's will) or Isaac (by trusting his father's will) had failed to go through with this terrible instruction, then it could not have succeeded. In other words, both parties had to be willing (for whatever reason) for it to have worked to the satisfaction of God (for God did test Abraham to that end, Genesis 22:1). In this lies a fundamental principle about this whole incident. It was because both parties complied to this (more so for Abraham than Isaac perhaps, because Abraham received the specific instruction from God), that God's future intention with His own Son Jesus, was manifest by the act of sacrifice.

Another point is that we must also realize the passage in Genesis 22 specifically stresses the point that only Abraham and Isaac were involved with this human sacrifice, the young men are left behind and do not accompany Abraham and Isaac. The passage again I would suggest is making a valid comment for our learning here. In reality it must foreshadow that only two parties will be involved in the sacrifice of Jesus, i.e. Jesus and His Father. Now again we must stress that God did not nail His Son to the cross, or in any way perform the act of crucifixion, any more than placing the cross upon His Son, but nevertheless Genesis 22 is clearly indicating to us that for the sake and love for mankind the Father was there at the side of Jesus willing and encouraging Him to continue to the bitter end.

Finally then, I have tried to explain as simply as possible why I cannot accept your views that God just 'stood back and allowed events to develop' in the last moments of Jesus' life. To me scripture clearly states far from God standing back, He was actively involved in the events as they unfolded, and willingly wished these things to develop so as to bring salvation for mankind. As I have shown from Genesis 22 God would be very much involved, by the instructions given to Abraham.

I have enjoyed the publications sent to me, but to save you further expense I request that there will be no need to continue sending them, for as already stated, having examined them I have come to the

conclusion that you are wrong scripturally on a number of points. You may wish to write in reply to this letter, but I will understand if you don't. I have listened carefully to your many arguments and in most of them (especially on the nature of man and Christ), you present what I would term a very 'humanist' point of view, not willing to accept the price required for Christ to pay for 'sin in the flesh.' God does not reason from a human derived 'fairness' aspect. We have all been given this 'flawed' human nature, inherited from Adam (including Christ), to make us realize our need for salvation, so that God may be exalted the more and we made to realize our utter dependence upon His mercy. There is no injustice in this, because it is God's prerogative that these things are what they are. (See Romans 9:10-26).

Thank you finally for sending me your literature. Yours faithfully, Lawrence J. Lee

1st reply:

Dear Lawrence, I have carefully studied your letter and followed your arguments though cannot agree with your conclusions. We must each decide for ourselves what we will believe of course. However, there are some matters which I feel I must bring to your attention because of the serious consequences of following wrong understanding. The first is that it is imperative we appreciate the difference between those who do God's will and others who do not do His will yet they fulfil His purpose.

Twice you have used the expression "God's will and purpose" and have thereby caused confusion in your arguments in supposing that those whom God uses to help forward His purpose are also doing His will when in fact they are evil people. The difference is seen perhaps most clearly when we consider the crucifixion. Jesus Christ did God's will; those who crucified Him fulfilled God's purpose. In no way did they do God's will. They were murderers. They were God's enemies.

There are many illustrations showing this distinction between God's will and purpose in Scripture. Another is Moses who did God's will, in contrast with Pharaoh who fulfilled God's purpose in eventually driving the Israelites out of Egypt to go to the land of Promise.

The quote from Ernest Brady in your second paragraph is therefore in complete agreement with Hebrews 10:5-12. Bearing in mind this distinction between those who do God's will and those who fulfil His purpose (albeit unwittingly) we see it was not necessary for God to plan the Crucifixion; He knew what would take place and knowing this He was able to plan our Redemption, for He turned the evil deeds of those murderers into a blessing for all mankind and especially so for the faithful. In any event it was Jesus Christ who was in control of events leading up to Calvary. On the one hand He refused to answer questions which may have led to His release and on the other, He provoked His accusers to act unwarrantably. When reading the accounts of those last days prior to His death I marvel at Jesus' determination in making certain He lay down His life. He made abundantly sure it was not taken from Him but that He laid it down of His own free will.

As for the notion His Father laid aside His great love for His Son, I find this contrary to Scripture. Did not Jesus Christ say "I lay down my life for the sheep, therefore doth my Father love me" and did not His Father send angels to strengthen Him in those last hours, when He sweat as it were great drops of blood? Of course His Father continued to love, encourage and support Him with great admiration, knowing it was for the joy set before Him.

Again, you say God compelled His Son to undergo the horrors of the Cross. No, He did not. Jesus Christ had the choice of abiding alone or being crucified for us. But then again you say Jesus Christ had freewill thus you are facing two ways at once.

The next matter which needs addressing is your understanding of Isaiah 53, for here I believe you are again in serious error. You emphasize by underlining "yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." But "esteem" here has the meaning of "imagine" or "fabricate" and is a word that is usually used in a malicious sense. (See Strong's Concordance). We are being told Jesus Christ was NOT stricken, smitten, and afflicted of God, but that it is malicious people who would imagine such a thing. It seems to

me that it was this gross misunderstanding which led Robert Roberts to formulate Clause 12 of the B.A.S.F. part of which states that Jesus “was put to death by the Jews and Romans who were, however, but instruments in the hands of God...” In other words Clause 12 tells us that God was responsible for killing His own Son!

Little wonder you find it necessary to say “There is no injustice in this because it is God’s prerogative that these things are what they are” and “God does not reason from a human derived ‘fairness’ aspect.” But the truth is that all we have has been given us by God and when He says “Come, let us reason together...” we are able to reason with Him using the human faculties which He has given us. Isaiah 55:8 shows that God’s ways and thoughts are higher than those of wicked men but never are we told that we cannot attain to His ways and thoughts; indeed, this is what Jesus Christ asks of each of us. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

A little later you quote and underline “Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him...” however, God’s pleasure was not in the bruising but in what was being accomplished by Jesus Christ as “The Lamb of God” “in whom” He was “well pleased.” The notion that God was pleased to kill His own Son smacks of superstition which surrounds all false worship. The Roman Catholic Church is rife with superstition and some of it is to be found in all its daughter churches and Christadelphia has not escaped.

Finally, I wish to thank you for your thoughts and the time and trouble you have taken in writing. We have not been given ‘flawed’ human nature (another superstition) nor do we need to be encumbered with flawed human reasoning; our need for salvation derives from our sinfulness, not our nature. Law gives choice - to obey or not. Sin is transgression of God’s Law, which sin Jesus Christ in His love for us is prepared to forgive.

It is not our natures God condemns; but our sins.

Yours very sincerely, Russell.

A copy of Brother Lee’s letter was sent to Brother Phil Parry for his comments, which he gives as follows:-

“To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them.” - Isaiah 8:20.

I have recently been acquainted with the contents of a letter from a member of the Christadelphian community in which he states that after reading various books and magazines which were sent to him which were most informative of the things Nazarenes stand for including their understanding of the Atoning work of God in Christ from an understanding of the Scriptures, he concludes that there are fundamental misconceptions in our grasp of this important doctrine. He says our writings have helped him to see things a little clearer from the standard Christadelphian point of view and serves only to confirm to him that the Christadelphian understanding of these things is the correct way of seeing them.

I would remind him that as an ex-Christadelphian myself I found from a study of the Holy Scriptures and with no access to Nazarene literature (suppressed in my case) that the clearest and most acceptable doctrine of The Atonement was not the standard Christadelphian point of view and in fact was a doctrine avoided as much as possible from the platform because the only views they were allowed to put forth at all must conform to those of Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts, the latter’s views contained in the B.A.S.F. which Scripture destroys as the teaching of men - hence the above title from Isaiah 8:20.

I therefore thank God that His light entered my brain and caused me to know Him and His Son in a clear light from that of Doctored Christadelphianism where manipulation and violation of the Scripture and its contents is essential in upholding their views. An example of this I find in his statement that we have “very humanist” points of view, “not willing to accept the price required for Christ to pay for “sin-in-the-flesh.” God does not reason from a human derived ‘fairness’ aspect. We have all been given this ‘flawed’

human nature, inherited from Adam (including Christ), to make us realize our need for salvation, so that God may be exalted the more and we made to realize our utter dependence upon His mercy. There is no injustice in this... (Romans 9:10-26).”

I have never read in Scripture that the life in the blood was the price Jesus paid for ‘sin-in-the-flesh.’ I presume it is meant here that Jesus had sin-in-the-flesh also. And does not God make a request to Israel of old, “Come now, and let us reason together...”? Were not they human beings capable of reasoning? Was not Adam created with the capabilities to reason according to what God told him? And are we to accept that God changed Adam’s nature to a lower one so that he would not be capable, or his descendants, of being obedient in all things and that in consequence no flesh should glory in His presence? Did not Jesus in the same nature glorify God and not Himself? I detect a lot of the “Slain Lamb” doctrine here by R.Roberts so I will endeavour to put some of it where it belongs - the Rubbish Bin, and rely on Holy Writ.

A good place to begin is Hebrews 1 where it is acknowledged that the Creator spoke in times past by the Prophets and later on by His Son whom He had appointed heir of all things by reason of His foreknowledge and not through a compulsory death as falsely taught by some. We follow on to Hebrews 2:9-18; God’s will being respected by He whom God appointed as Captain over His children for their salvation, became perfect for God’s purpose through His suffering and trial of faith (verses 9 and 10). Jesus sanctified Himself by sinless character and for the sake of His brethren He did so, that both He and His brethren could be categorized as all of One (The Father) (verse 11). Now in verses 12 to 18 the reasons are all explained by the inspired writer and to any person unbiased by the false doctrine of sin in the physical flesh as an element of fixation only removable by experiencing literal death, it can be clearly understood. Regarding therefore verses 14 and 15 it would be wise to question how anyone regarded to be under the Power of Death could destroy that Power by suffering under its penalty and deliver others also who were under that same Power which some say is the Devil or “Sin-in-the-flesh.” It is obvious that sin can be manifest in physical action of the flesh by transgressing Divine Law, but the Sin is not a physical element - it is abstract, the same physical act in one case can be sinful and in another similar act, not sinful; an example being adultery. It is all a matter of Divine Law, so that sin cannot be the present situation continually as contended by those who believe it to be in the physical flesh. This is what set me on the right path of Light in my conclusion that Sin could not be an injection into the physical flesh in the way doctors use the hypodermic needle but can only be applied as transgression of law, or personified as that which opposes the will of God. Paul uses the latter quite often in Romans. The Apostle James says “Resist the Devil and he will flee from you.” But how can he if he is a physical fixation in the flesh and said by some people to be also in Jesus and that He destroyed the devil in Himself by His death on Calvary?

Temptation was a natural disposition with Adam and Eve when created. They lusted for things that were lawful to their appetites as appointed of their Creator and none of the things they desired to eat to satisfy their hunger was considered a sin. Jesus desired bread in the wilderness to satisfy His hunger but this was not regarded as a sin. Temptation is not sin but when law enters and forbids certain acts which could cause sin and the temptation is allowed to take its full extent then it is sin, for sin is transgression of God’s Law and not an element in the physical flesh. Even animals have the element of reasoning in their brains, some more than others (as can be said for human beings unregenerated by the Spirit Word), but in animals it is called instinct, but whatever it is, must be the result of God’s Creative work and appointment. Animals are not responsible under Divine Law (as were Adam and Eve), but their flesh and blood was dependent on food of some kind to live out their lives as God determined and appointed it in the various species.

The same with Adam, his nature was not intended to last for ever; it would have needed a change for this to take place, but he had to prove himself worthy of change to Angelic Nature through respect for the word of his Creator in restricting his liberty to partake of a certain tree, not because its fruit was poisonous to cause decay and death - Adam’s nature was already in that condition at his creation though termed of God “very good.” Why anyone should believe or say that we have flawed human nature given to us to make us realize our need for salvation so that God may be exalted the more and we made to realize our utter dependency upon His mercy and that there is no injustice in this, is absolutely against all scriptural teaching of Jesus and His Apostles, and it may be thought that expression of this view amounts to giving praise to the Creator, but in effect it is insulting to His Justice, Love, Mercy and Truth. If Ernest Brady’s letter of reply to Richard Mellowes had been read without bias this fact would have convinced the reader. Or should have. How in the world can we inherit from Adam a ‘flawed’ nature different from that of his creation? Are we to believe in evolution? That sin can be transmitted through our reproductive system making it to be described

as 'flawed' nature of our species? - that our flesh and blood, and that of Jesus, is not the same as when Adam was made a living soul? - that when Eve was presented to Adam that God did not say they were joined together as one flesh?

Did not Jesus believe that His Jewish contemporaries were of the same nature as the human male and female in Eden before any transgression took place? And did He not exhort the Jewish rulers for what they were wrongly doing, saying, "What God hath Joined together let not man put asunder"? Why then, as you have done, reject God and His Son by saying we are not the same nature which He, the Creator, joined together in Eden?

The nature in which Adam transgressed in Eden was the same nature God created as a living soul capable of dying naturally or of being put to death - the former by a process of decay and the latter by Divine Judgment through breaking of His Law. How then could it be possible to condemn sin in the nature which transgressed if that nature no longer existed but was changed as stated in B.A.S.F. Clause V? Some turn to Dr. Thomas for help and guidance - and what has he written? This:- "Sin had to be condemned in the nature which transgressed in Eden." It is obvious that the nature which transgressed in Eden is descriptive of the man Adam as God created him - "Very good" in kind and condition and confirmed in Clause IV of the B.A.S.F. where it is stated that in this very good nature Adam was placed under law through which the continuance of living (natural existence) was contingent on obedience." Now, it is admitted that Adam broke this law (see Clause V), therefore if continuance of his life was contingent on Adam's obedience, why did God allow that life to continue? Surely the sentence of death is a legal one and needed no change as Robert Roberts falsely stated in another place - "It required what men call a miracle to depress to the level of the beasts that perish the noble creature God had made." God did nothing of the kind. Adam was under legal sentence to die in the day he violated the law; God in His Love and Mercy foresaw a way out without setting aside His justice in condemning Adam's sin - not his nature. He foresaw another Son of His own provision who in the likeness of the same Adamic nature as created, would in due time by perfect conduct in a life of trial and suffering, Justify His Father in condemning Adam's sin and that of others and willingly lay down His own life to enable His Father to redeem Adam and all who were in his loins when he sinned. So please note, Jesus was never in the loins of Adam, in the same way that Adam was formed from the dust of the earth, so from Mary, who also was dust and ashes, God produced Jesus so that both Adam and Jesus were Sons of God- the first failed and needed redemption, the second succeeded and needed no redemption.

The Nazarene Fellowship are noted for praising and thanking God for His great Love and Mercy in sparing Adam's life through the gift of His Son who delighted to do His will in all things that God might be Just and the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus and the reason for which He was born - not in 'flawed' nature, but a nature like Adam's in which it was possible to please God. How else could God be said to be just? It-would be unjust to have to perform a miracle upon Adam to defile him further after he had sinned and to transmit a sinful element to his posterity and more injustice still if the reason was that no flesh should glory in His presence, for indeed God takes delight in people rendering obedience to Him. But in so doing they must know His will and become His servants, therefore the Nazarenes believe that all owe their natural existence to the Sacrifice of Christ as foreshadowed in Eden when God provided the coats of skins as a covering provisionally for Adam and Eve's sin but ratified when Jesus died on Calvary, in that it was human life that was forfeit to the Law not the life of an animal.

Many people cannot understand the teaching of the Nazarenes, it is 'new wine' to them and 'old bottles' cannot receive it, as Jesus said of vain tradition of men in His day and which still apply in our day. People are brought up to believe that the condemnation and death by sin is inherited by physical descent from Adam and in this way we are said to be "In Adam." If this were so then we also should be said to be "In Christ" by inheritance and physical descent which cannot be. Scripture teaches that to be in Christ we become Abraham's seed, so neither does this teach physical descent from Abraham nor inheritance for Jew or Gentile of the promises to him. It involves a legal and moral transaction through enlightenment, belief and faith in the Atoning work of God in Christ.

Chris Maddocks, a Christadelphian, produces this "old bottle" doctrine in the Testimony Magazine, 1999, in speaking of the so-called defilement of human nature, Clause V of the B.A.S.F. which is no more than the reasoning of the natural minded man unregenerated by the Spirit Word. Brother Eric Cave has his answer, exposed it as such, with the Apostle Paul also confirming it to be the case, 1 Corinthians 2:4-16, "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost

teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

I will go no further than to remind people who reject the gifts of the Holy Spirit in these days that Jesus declared to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot see the Kingdom of God, that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Marvel not at this that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” (John 3:5-7). See also Colossians 3:1-4.

Christadelphians profess to have been immersed in water but still believe they have the condemnation of sin and death in their flesh. Consequently this has not been removed – the penalty which to them is physical inheritance of natural death is still there, unremoved.

They may protest but it will avail nothing until they renounce the unscriptural Clauses of the B.A.S.F. formulated by man.

I only read recently from Mark 13:26,27 “And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.” This is only one example refuting the idea of judgment to prove the worthiness of those “in Christ” and with this I conclude, hoping some will take heed to the doctrine which is not mine but His that revealed it to me.

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. P.Parry.

Time and again we hear of eminent Christadelphians who say they do not know what is in the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith; therefore they do not know to what they are committed. We reproduce here the 30 Clauses which they are supposed to support and preach as infallible truth according to the Editor of “The Christadelphian.” The Bible references have been left out as the majority of them are not relevant anyway being misused. We have included the 35 Doctrines to be Rejected. No Bible references are given for these in the B.A.S.F. as it would be all too obvious that several of them are contradictions of Scripture!

THE BIRMINGHAM AMENDED STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Foundation: That the book currently known as the Bible, consisting of the Scriptures of Moses, the Prophets, and the Apostles, is the only source of knowledge concerning God and His purposes at present extant or available in the earth; and that the same were wholly given by inspiration of God in the writers, and are consequently without error in all parts of them, except such as may be due to errors of transcription or translation.

Clause 1: That the only true God is He who was revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by angelic visitation and vision, and to Moses at the flaming bush (unconsumed), and at Sinai, and who manifested Himself in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the supreme self-existent Deity, the One Father, dwelling in unapproachable light, yet everywhere present by His Spirit, which is a unity with His person in heaven. He hath, out of His own underived energy, created heaven and earth and all that in them is.

Clause 2: That Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, begotten of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, without the intervention of man, and afterwards anointed with the same Spirit without measure at His baptism.

Clause 3: That the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the earth was necessitated by the position and state into which the human race had been brought by the circumstances connected with the first man.

Clause 4: That the first man was Adam, whom God created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life, “very good” in kind and condition, and placed him under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience.

Clause 5: That Adam broke this law, and was adjudged unworthy of immortality, and sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken - a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.

Clause 6: That God, in His kindness, conceived a plan of restoration which, without setting aside His just and necessary law of sin and death, should ultimately rescue the race from destruction, and people the earth with sinless immortals.

Clause 7: That He inaugurated this plan by making promises to Adam, Abraham, and David, and afterwards elaborated it in greater detail through the prophets.

Clause 8: That these 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.

Clause 9: That it was this mission which necessitated the miraculous begetting of Christ of a human mother, enabling Him to bear our condemnation, and, at the same time, to be a sinless bearer thereof and, therefore, one who could rise after suffering the death required by the righteousness of God.

Clause 10: That being so begotten of God, and inhabited and used by God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh - yet was, during His natural life, of like nature with mortal man, being made of a woman, of the house and lineage of David, and therefore a sufferer, in the days of His flesh, from all the effects that came by Adam's transgression, including the death that passed upon all men, which He shared by partaking of their physical nature.

Clause 11: That the message He delivered from God to His kinsmen, the Jews, was a call to repentance from every evil work, the assertion of His divine Sonship and Jewish Kingship; and the proclamation of the glad tidings that God would restore their kingdom through Him. and accomplish all things written in the prophets.

Clause 12: That for delivering this message. He was put to death by the Jews and Romans, who were, however, but instruments in the hands of God, for the doing of that which He had determined before to be done, viz., the condemnation of sin in the flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, as a propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins. All who approach God through this crucified, but risen, representative of Adam's disobedient race, are forgiven. Therefore, by a figure, His blood cleanseth from sin.

Clause 13: That on the third day, God raised Him from the dead, and exalted Him to the heavens as priestly mediator between God and man, in the process of gathering from among them a people who should be saved by the belief and obedience of the truth.

Clause 14: That He is a Priest over His own house only, and does not intercede for the world, or for professors who are abandoned to disobedience. That He makes intercession for His erring brethren, if they confess and forsake their sins.

Clause 15: That He sent forth apostles to proclaim salvation through Him, as the only name given under heaven whereby men may be saved.

Clause 16: That the way to obtain this salvation is to believe the gospel they preached, and to take on the name and service of Christ, by being thereupon immersed in water, and continuing patiently in the observance of all things He has commanded, none being recognized as His friends except those who do what He has commanded.

Clause 17: That the gospel consists of "the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ."

Clause 18: That the things of the Kingdom of God are the facts testified concerning the Kingdom of God in the writings of the prophets and apostles, and definable as in the next twelve paragraphs

Clause 19: That God will set up a kingdom in the earth, which will overthrow all others, and change them into ‘the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ.’

Clause 20: That for this purpose God will send Jesus Christ personally to the earth at the close of the times of the Gentiles.

Clause 21: That the Kingdom which He will establish will be the Kingdom of Israel restored, in the territory it formerly occupied, viz., the land bequeathed for an everlasting possession to Abraham and his seed (the Christ) by covenant.

Clause 22: That this restoration of the Kingdom again to Israel will involve the ingathering of God’s chosen but scattered nation, the Jews; their reinstatement in the land of their fathers, when it shall have been reclaimed from “the desolation of many generations;” the building again of Jerusalem to become ‘the throne of the Lord’ and the metropolis of the whole earth.

Clause 23: That the governing body of the kingdom so established will be the brethren of Christ, of all generations, developed by resurrection and change, and constituting with Christ as their Head, the collective ‘seed of Abraham’ in whom all nations will be blessed, and comprising “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets,” and all in their age of like faithfulness.

Clause 24: That at the appearing of Christ, prior to the establishment of the kingdom, the responsible (namely, those who know the revealed will of God, and have been called upon to submit to it), dead and living - obedient and disobedient - will be summoned before His judgment seat ‘to be judged according to their works,’ and ‘receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad.’

Clause 25: That the unfaithful will be consigned to shame and ‘the second death,’ and the faithful invested with immortality and exalted to reign with Jesus as joint heirs of the kingdom, co-possessors of the earth, and joint administrators of God’s authority among men in everything.

Clause 26: That the Kingdom of God, thus constituted, will continue a thousand years, during which sin and death will continue among the earth’s subject inhabitants, though in a much milder degree than now.

Clause 27: That a law will be established which shall go forth to the nations for their “instruction in righteousness,” resulting in the abolition of war to the ends of the earth; and the “filling of the earth with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.”

Clause 28: That the mission of the Kingdom will be to subdue all enemies, and finally death itself, by opening up the way of life to the nations, which they will enter by faith, during the thousand years, and (in reality) at their close.

Clause 29: That at the close of the thousand years there will be a general resurrection and judgment, resulting in the final extinction of the wicked, and the immortalization of those who shall have established their title (under the grace of God) to eternal life during the thousand years.

Clause 30: That the government will then be delivered up by Jesus to the Father, who will manifest Himself as the “all-in-all;” sin and death having been taken out of the way, and the race completely restored to the friendship of the Deity.

DOCTRINES TO BE REJECTED

1. That the Bible is only partly the work of inspiration - or if wholly so, contains errors which inspiration has allowed.
2. That God is three persons.
3. That the Son of God was co-eternal with the Father
4. That Christ was born with a “free life.”

5. That Christ's nature was immaculate.
6. That the Holy Spirit is a person distinct from the Father.
7. That man has an immortal soul.
8. That man consciously exists in death.
9. That the wicked will suffer eternal torture in hell.
10. That the righteous will ascend to the kingdoms beyond the skies when they die.
11. That the devil is a supernatural personal being.
12. That the Kingdom of God is "the church."
13. That the Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ merely.
14. That Christ will not come till the close of the thousand years.
15. That the tribunal of Christ, when he comes, is not for the judgment of saints, but merely to divide among them different degrees of reward.
16. That the resurrection is confined to the faithful.
17. That the dead rise in an immortal state.
18. That the subject-nations of the thousand years are immortal-
19. That the Law of Moses is binding on believers of the Gospel.
20. That the observance of Sunday is a matter of duty.
21. That baby-sprinkling is a doctrine of Scripture.
22. That "heathens," idiots, pagans, and very young children will be saved.
23. That man can be saved by morality or sincerity, without the Gospel.
24. That the Gospel alone will save, without the obedience of Christ's commandment.
25. That a man cannot believe without possessing the Spirit of God.
26. That men are predestined to salvation unconditionally.
27. That there is no sin in the flesh.
28. That Joseph was the actual father of Jesus.
29. That the earth will be destroyed
30. That baptism is not necessary to salvation.
31. That a knowledge of the truth is not necessary to make baptism valid.
32. That some meats are to be refused on the score of uncleanness.
33. That the English are the ten tribes of Israel, whose prosperity is a fulfilment of the promise made concerning Ephraim.
34. That marriage with an unbeliever is lawful.
35. That we are at liberty to serve in the army, or as police constables, take part in politics, or recover debts by legal coercion.

In our last Circular Letter we printed Brother Eric Cave's report on the article "Death and Life - The consequences of Adam's sin and their removal in Christ" which appeared in "The Testimony" magazine for July. We now print Brother Eric Cave's letter to the editor of the Testimony concerning this first instalment:

Dear Brother Tony, May I correct some of the inaccuracies and unwarranted generalisations in the article by Brother Chris Maddocks in the June Testimony.

He begins with what he terms the "culmination of 6000 years of man's rebellion against God" when in fact the majority of mankind throughout history have been ignorant of the God of Israel and therefore can hardly have rebelled against him. And of those men and that nation to whom He revealed Himself, there have been many, and even the whole nation at times, who obeyed God and merited the terms righteous, obedient and blameless, as they sought to do His will. Ezekiel in his 18th chapter makes it plain that God does not impute to the children the sins of their parents.

He appears to have misunderstood Romans 8:22 by making the Greek "*ktisis*" refer to the whole natural world which God created, whereas the New Testament always uses it in relation to 'mankind.' Vine says "It is a significant confirmation of Romans 1:20,21 ("For the invisible things of him from the creation [*ktisis*] of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse; because that, when they (the Jews) knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imagination (Cp. 1 Peter 1:18,19) and their

foolish heart was darkened”) that in all nonchristian literature these words are never used by Greeks to convey the idea of a creator or of a creative act by any of their gods. The words are confined by them to the acts of human beings.”

This restriction of *'ktisis'* to those who knew the truth and against whom God reveals His wrath is well argued by Brother and Sister Walker in chapter 6 of “Romans in the Light of John’s Gospel.”

But Brother Maddocks claims that “the consequences of Adam’s offence affected the whole of creation, not just man, for we read “cursed is the ground for thy sake... thorns and thistles shall it bring forth.” If that generalization were to carry such a meaning how is it that the spies needed two men and a pole to carry one bunch of grapes, or why does God speak of the land as a land of milk and honey wherein the people would be blessed with the fruits of the womb in man and beast as well as corn, wine and oil? Or Joel say that the land was as the garden of Eden before the invader? Surely common sense requires that as the thorns and thistles would cause Adam to perspire and the land fail to yield her increase for Cain, then those punishments were individual to Adam and to Cain for their sins and not universal as Brother Maddocks imagines. Even stranger is his contention that God cursed all animals because of Adam’s sin! Did He reward the perfect and upright Job with all those thousands of cursed animals when he gave him 14000 sheep, 6000 camels. 1000 yoke of oxen and 1000 she asses? I trow not.

Brother Maddocks is heading in the wrong direction when he declares that “following Adam’s sin “A process of decay hitherto unknown began to bring ‘death’ as its end product.” John Thomas disagrees and wrote in 1855:-

“Moses tells us that when the terrestrial system was completed on the sixth day, that God reviewed all that he had made and pronounced it ‘very good,’ But in what sense was it ‘very good’? In an animal and physical sense; for it was a natural and animal system, not a spiritual one. Such a system is essentially one of waste and reproduction and was organized with reference to what God knew would come to pass.” (Herald of the Kingdom” - July 1855).

John Thomas also said:-

“Seeing that man had become a transgressor of divine law there was no need for a miracle for the infliction of death; all that was necessary was to prevent him eating of the tree of lives and to leave his flesh and blood nature to the operation of the laws peculiar to it.” (1869).

Brother L.G.Sargent, commenting on this later writing of the doctor said in an editorial “There was no need of a miraculous change to bring death: the man had merely to be left to the working of his animal nature.” (Christadelphian - March 1969).

John Thomas calls the creation of our terrestrial system one of “waste and reproduction” and so it always has been, far more seeds and births taking place than are needed to maintain any species, but it was a ‘very good’ system inasmuch as the surplus reproduction provided the essential sustenance for the omnivorous and carnivorous species which Job reminds us were created in the beginning when all the sons of God shouted for joy and which was unquestionably functioning perfectly before Adam sinned. As the doctor claimed it was part of the fundamental law of the physical system of the six days.

Brother Maddocks declares that “We need to reflect upon the changed circumstances brought about by sin” which he declares for Adam and Eve consisted of “looking upon each others nakedness in a carnal way” having previously “only fulfilled their desires in legitimate ways” and “Consequent to eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil they had the capacity to satisfy their lusts unlawfully and this they duly did.” But when and where is the evidence for such speculation? Brother Maddocks claims that “having embraced the mind of the serpent they naturally sought out that which was evil” - again no evidence is offered. When are we told that Adam continued to sin? Did Adam teach Abel to sin? Was not the serpent also created “very good”? Since when has nakedness between husband and wife been evil? How could the only man and woman in the world fulfil their physical desire for each other in “an illegitimate way”?

Scripture tells us that God said IN THE DAY thou eatest of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil THOU SHALT SURELY DIE (dying thou shalt die) and the use of the infinitive absolute, the doubling of the Hebrew, confirms the certainty that, IN THAT DAY Eve was worthy of death, yet the only death recorded in Scripture was that of the sacrificial lamb(s) for “mercy rejoiceth against judgment” (James 2:13) and God accepted the blood of an innocent animal as a substitute and temporary covering of their sin; whose skins provided a daily reminder to the guilty pair that the covering was only temporary and surely Adam, who was “not deceived” yet loved Eve even as Jesus loved His Bride, and could not bear the thought of being separated from his helpmeet, bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh therefore took also of the fruit of the tree that he might share her punishment, whatever it might be. Life without his lovely bride was unbearable. Had God carried out His law there would have been no human race to inhabit and multiply hence Adam and Eve were allowed to live out their natural span (930 years) when “mercy rejoiced against Judgment.”

Presumably it was to support his speculations that Brother Maddocks invents the idea that whilst acknowledging that there was no change in the nature of the man and the woman it was the “condition” of that animal nature that altered! and claims that

“If we were to analyse Adam before and after the fall under a microscope the difference we would see is a principle of decay at work. We would see cells dying. That is, we would see the inworking of death, a process commenced because of disobedience.”

What a peculiar creature God created. A man without hair or nails or outer skin, unable to move or breathe lest he activate his body liquids, unable to moisten his lips or blink his eye. Surely Brother Maddocks is aware that even the cells of a foetus in the womb divide and perish and our outer skin, our epidermis consists of dead cells waiting to be shed as is also the case with hair and nails etc. Was the editor ‘nodding’ when he allowed such nonsense to be printed in the Testimony?

With love in the Lord Jesus Christ. C.E.Cave.

* * * * *

In response, the editor of The Testimony magazine wrote:

“Dear Brother Eric, Thank you for your letter... I think you have raised some significant points regarding what Brother Maddocks has said, though I don’t think there are any proven inaccuracies in the article that call for correction. Now that you have rejected part of the Statement of Faith, thereby rendering it necessary for you to be disfellowshipped, I’m not in a position to publish a letter from you, especially on matters relating to the aspect of the Statement of Faith that you no longer accept...”

I have not received any other letters about the article. There are three more, the first of which you’ve probably seen by now. No doubt you will have further points of disagreement as the series progresses.

At the end of the series I may decide to review some aspects of it in an article, taking into account the points you made and others received.

May I also say that I very much regret that your thinking of the subject has gone along the lines that it has and hope you will yet reflect further and withdraw from your present position.

Sincerely your brother in Christ, Tony (Benson).”

* * * * *

Brother Eric Cave now reviews Chris Maddocks' second article in the series:

Dear Brother Tony, Thank you for your reply to my criticism of the first article by Chris Maddocks and your acknowledgement that I have "Raised some significant points which need to be taken into account."

I trust you will indeed "take these into account" because it is on the basis of false premises that "the consequences of Adam's sin affected the whole of creation, and not just man" and that "A process of decay, hitherto unknown began to bring death as its end product" that Chris Maddocks builds all his false conclusions in this second article.

His opening paragraph declares "Adam was formed in a 'very good' state (correct) and was therefore free from any form of defilement [correct) or decay (false)." Decay, or corruption was fundamental to the animal and natural system which God created as John Thomas and all believers understood from 1850 until after the death of the doctor (and many continued to believe, and still do). I quoted Lou Sargent, in March 1969, "There was no need of a miraculous change to bring death; the man had merely to be left to the working of his animal nature" and there are many such admissions in Christadelphian literature.

Chris Maddocks says "We demonstrated that he (Adam) was not created a dying creature" - But he hasn't, it is a false supposition. The death that God decreed as the penalty if Adam disobeyed his law had nothing to do with the common, or natural death of all living creatures as the end of their eco cycle, or as Moses confirms in Numbers 16:29, by visitation of famine, and Ezekiel 14, wild beasts, sword or pestilence- The death decreed as the penalty for breaking God's Law was a legal, judicial, violent taking away of human life as even Robert Roberts subsequently admitted and wrote "It was typical of a violent manner of death."

I quote from a former Christadelphian:

This is put beyond any question by the rite of clothing the man with the skin of the victim, signifying that the death of the animal sacrificed was the death from which he had been delivered. He died in a legal sense when he transgressed the commandment: he was legally restored to life after confession and repentance, with the life of the sacrifice. This principle is defined in connection with the prohibition of eating flesh with the blood. "The life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Thus when Paul says "By man came death" he is speaking in what may be called a doctrinal sense, of the death that really matters; that sentence which "passes upon" all men when they become responsible sinners, and which will be executed upon such as remain under condemnation when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed in the second death.

That this is correct is proved by the fact that the condemnation can be individually removed or remitted by faith and obedience "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" and Paul confirms his Lord with "There is therefore NOW no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." If the Christadelphian supposition that the condemnation resulting from sin was 'natural death' then those "in Christ" are still under condemnation, for they are still corruptible and dying, and so both Jesus and Paul are contradicted.

If 'death' in scripture is always the common or natural death, then Christ's words are falsified, because he says that believers have "passed from death into life." This is not 'prolepsis' (speaking of the future as though it were the present). Jesus is speaking of a death-state and a life-state which exists independently of our physical life or death.

Paul says “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” His use of the words “passed upon” implies that he is dealing with something in the nature of a law or of a sentence. Our natural death, what Moses calls the common death of all men, is not a sentence or a law passed upon us - we are corruptible and dying because we were so created as John Thomas declared (but which Chris Maddocks and the Statement of Faith deny).

“The wages of sin is death.” If this does indeed mean natural death, then God is unjust, because those wages are paid to good and bad alike, saints and sinners. Furthermore an additional payment is required of the wicked - “the second death.” Even human law does not punish a man twice for the same crime. Is God less just?”

I find it astonishing that Chris Maddocks is allowed three pages of the Testimony to prove that God does not mean what He has plainly said in Genesis. “Nowhere in scripture” says Chris Maddocks “are we told that Adam actually ate of the tree of life.” - Neither are we told that he didn’t and the Hebrew “Eating thou shalt eat” carries the same certainty as “dying thou shalt die” as Brother John Adey in his analysis, and Brother Alan and Sister Mary Fowler in “Exploring Bible Language” have declared. The use of the infinitive absolute in Genesis 2:16 implies ‘surely,’ ‘without doubt’ ‘certainty.’

Chris Maddocks says “The tree of life was not formed for Adam to feed upon either” - So why didn’t God put a prohibition upon it? How does he know it was not for eating? Chris Maddocks says “God allowed Adam to eat of any food bearing tree, but this did not include the tree of life or the tree of knowledge of good and evil” - So why did God thrust out the man from the garden lest he eat of it? Why does Chris Maddocks himself say in the next column “had Adam overcome he also would have been permitted to eat from the tree as a reward for his faithfulness”? Why does Chris Maddocks go to such wresting of the Word to defend the indefensible when clearly the tree of life was on ‘open access’ and its existence the only intimation we have of the means by which God maintained Adam and Eve as mature non ageing mortals to fulfil the express command to dress and till the garden?

God had said “IN THE DAY thou eatest of it (the tree of knowledge of good and evil) dying thou shalt die.” - Oh no, says Chris Maddocks, God meant to say “After 930 years thou shalt die” - all because he fails to understand, or refuses to accept that John Thomas was wrong in supposing that eating of the tree of life would confer immortality.

What sort of exposition is it that adds to scripture and claims that Adam was not permitted to eat of the tree of life when God had said “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat (Except the one forbidden tree)?

I await with sadness the next episode in this series. Eric Cave.

* * * * *

A further letter to the editor of The Testimony magazine:

Dear Brother Tony, I am a little puzzled at the statement in your acknowledgement of my protest against the second article by C.M.Maddocks where you say that I have misquoted your comments in your previous communication of July 27th.

You said in that letter “I think you have raised some significant points regarding what Brother Maddocks has said” and in the third paragraph of that letter you say “At the end of the series I may decide to review some aspects of it in an article taking into account the points you made, and others received” (my underlining).

My response was to refer to your acknowledgement that “I have raised some significant points which need to be taken into account” which would have been better put as “which may be taken into account” for which slightly pedantic error I apologize, and to repeat the object of the paragraph that I hope you will take my significant points into account.

As far as the quotation from Brother Roberts is concerned I think it was during his debate with J.J.Andrew but will try and confirm. However Brother Fry in “Echoes of Past Controversies” certainly said the same thing.

Herewith my protests against the third article by Brother Maddocks.

With love in Jesus our Redeemer and Saviour. Eric.

* * * * *

Brother Eric Cave reviews the third article in this series by Brother Chris Maddocks:-

Dear Brother Tony, ‘Testimony’ August, Page 299, “The Defilement of Human Nature” by C. Maddocks.

So now the secret is out, the mystery has been solved. All is clear. When Paul wrote in Romans 4:15 “Where there is no law there is no transgression” and when he wrote in Romans 5:13 “But sin is not imputed where there is no law” then he must have been deceiving us because on the authority of C. Maddocks sin is an inherited factor in all flesh, Paul must have been lying.

Equally Jesus has deceived us when He said “Except I had come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin but now they say, we see; therefore their sin remaineth.” And again, “This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men love darkness rather than light.” If sin is in the flesh how could Jesus say they would not have had it at all except He had come and spoken to them? Was Jesus also lying?

What the Bible teaches is that only those who are under the law are scripturally sinners. To claim as C. Maddocks does that “Just as we inherit death so we inherit sin” is a clear contradiction of what God is telling us and only if he rids himself of the damnable doctrine of physical condemnation can he hope to understand the clear and simple doctrine of atonement.

If the condemnation is physical the coming of light into the world could neither add to it or remove it. But if the condemnation is as Paul teaches a ‘legal enactment’ by which Adam sold himself and all his progeny in his loins to the bondage of ‘Sin’ or ‘the Diabolos,’ then this legal enactment passed upon, or hangs over all the human race, but only becomes operative upon those, and only those, amenable to it because they know of it. Then it opens up a conception of God’s purpose at once meeting the facts and satisfying the mind.

Paul says “Without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once (before his Bar mitzvah) but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died (figuratively).” Until Paul had been baptized into Christ and therefore delivered from the state of bondage under Adam to the state of freedom in Christ he was not able to declare “There is NOW no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Now in the year of our Lord AD 33/4 those who had been baptized into the Name of Jesus Christ had that legal condemnation of bondage to Sin removed and became Christ’s FREE men and women.

I warned in my previous protests where the false premises of C. Maddocks would lead your readers. Consider some of the confusing contradictory passages in this third instalment:

Page 299 - C. Maddocks says death is the wages of sin and was not therefore inherently in Adam from creation, and follows it up with the statement that it passed upon all men which does prove it to be an hereditary condition and concludes his first section with the assertion that the dissolution of our entire being into dust is the culmination of the “death” (presumably because of sin) we physically inherit from Adam. Yet as I pointed out in my critique of his first article John Thomas, Robert Roberts and all Christadelphians preached and understood at least for the first 25 years of their preaching that there was no change in the nature of Adam when he sinned.

Under the heading **“The Law of Sin and Death,”** C. Maddocks asserts:-

“As a consequence of Adam’s offence, all his progeny are born into a state of affairs whereby it is inevitable that they also become sinners, since they inherit his sinful nature.”

John Thomas knew better and wrote in the “Ambassador” August 1869, page 216:- “Our flesh is constitutionally no worse than Adam’s flesh before the fall.” C. Maddocks also states in that section

“It is a principle of scripture that God rightly requires that all who share Adam’s sinful nature be condemned to the grave, but offers no scriptural proof of that silly supposition. Perhaps he should read 1 Corinthians 15:51 “We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality... O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

But I have forgotten C. Maddocks knows better than Paul and his oracle has brain washed him to assert “We have a nature which is physically defiled by sin in the sight of God, a NATURE which is under condemnation.” Strange that God created that nature and Jesus shared it.

Under the heading “Defiled by sin” C. Maddocks declares:-

“The truth of the matter is that wicked works such as those the Lord enumerates come from submitting ourselves to the law of sin.”

Which was true enough of our situation as well as Paul’s before he put on Christ and the diabolos fled from us, but then asserts the weary old lie “We have something which the Lord views as ‘uncleanness’ within us, for our flesh is hereditarily defiled. Obviously for C. Maddocks his baptism merely released him from the consequences of his own former sins and the sacrifice of Christ was not as 1 John 2:2 tells us for the sins of the whole world, to release the faithful from the bondage of slavery to King Sin into which Adam’s transgression caused all in his loins to legally belong, for his servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey.

Under the heading **“Unclean from Birth”** : -

The same false premise expresses itself in the silly conclusion that children are unclean because they have “the law of sin and death within them,” but fails to explain why Paul could assert in 1 Corinthians 7:14 “The unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy,” or even why Peter should say in Acts 10:28, “God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” Nor does his quotation from Job help his false doctrine for when Job says “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one” the Hebrew word so rendered only refers to those ceremonial and temporary conditions occasioned by issues or contact with unclean animals or food, etc. The uncleanness of which Job speaks has nothing to do with that moral relationship which transgression of God’s Law brought about. The poverty of C. Maddocks understanding of the divine word is clearly demonstrated in this section by his tearing out of context the phrase in the Psalm 58 “The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born speaking lies” and seeking to claim as literal that which is to any of normal intelligence a figurative passage. Did C. Maddocks or any man that ever lived witness a new born babe “speak lies”? Let him read vv 4 and 5 and hang his head in shame at such misuse of the Spirit Word. How dare he entitle his next section “The power of the Word” when he so demeans it?

“The Power of The Word”:-

More contradictions, more untruths. We now have serpent minds within us which even the powerful influence of the Scripture to assist us we cannot overcome! Even Paul was drawn captive by sin, the innate impulses to disobey are too strong for us, we are without strength to save ourselves from sin! Obviously C. Maddocks has never read Paul’s testimony that “There is therefore NOW no condemnation to them which

are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus HATH MADE US FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH.”

Once again obsession with his oracle requires him to deny the Word and in effect accuse Paul of lying. And not only Paul but John also in his first epistle asserts that “If we walk in the light (of God’s revelation)... the blood of Jesus Christ His Son CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN” and lest we should doubt this scriptural Truth applies it to little children, fathers and young men because the darkness has passed and the true light now shineth. But the power of the Word can have little effect on those who deny the present tense in which the Apostles write and are required by tradition to push all the wonder of salvation into the future.

“The Lesson from The Law”:-

Here again unsound exposition deriving from obsession with condemned and unclean flesh and an inability to recognize when the records must be understood metaphorically leads C. Maddocks to ignore the difference between the two Hebrew words tahor and Zakab. The one relating to ceremonial uncleanness from which a man was cleansed at eventide after the appropriate washings or which prevented specified animals from being acceptable sacrifices or food, and the other that moral alienation of mind and heart from fleshly as opposed to spiritual attitudes. But to speak of “the disease of sin” is mere rhetoric when the facts are so plain. The voluntary offering of the Lamb of God was not for Himself but for us, unlike the High Priest under the Mosaic Law Jesus needed not to offer for His own sins, for He had none. Were animals slain under the Law for their own sins? The Mosaic High Priest was not, and had nothing in common with the Melchizedec priest. Jesus came to redeem His people, not to display the just reward of sinful flesh. His crucifixion was the greatest offence of wicked men as well as the supreme act of filial love to redeem Adam and his progeny from the bondage into which Adam had sold the human race.

“Jesus Christ of our Nature”:-

More false premise. The adjective ‘sinful’ nowhere occurs in Romans. C. Maddocks is fully aware of the fact that the phrase “God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh” should properly be rendered “God sending his own Son in the likeness of Sin’s flesh (or flesh of sin) and all expositors have pointed out this error in the Authorized Version. C. Maddocks quite deliberately seeks to deceive us into believing in Original Sin rejected by the brotherhood until 1873. Jesus was made of a woman that he might share our Adamic very good nature and be tempted in all points like His brethren but He Himself was never ‘in Adam.’ God was His Father and no man ever had two fathers. He was never in bondage as were and mostly still are the children descended from Adam. Had He been so He could never have been a sacrifice for us. Yet C. Maddocks obsession compels him to write of “the diabolos in Jesus” which to any sober unbiased reader amounts to -blasphemy. How could God be in Jesus reconciling the world to Himself if the diabolos was in that ‘Holy thing’ born of Mary? Peter says that Jesus has redeemed us from our vain conversation (manner of life) RECEIVED BY TRADITION FROM OUR FATHERS (i.e. ‘handed down’ from our fathers) neither we nor our Saviour were born with any bias or tendency to transgress. We, but not Christ, acquire that tendency by association with the ‘world’ from our environment, and until C. Maddocks and others who follow the platonic lie of ‘sinful flesh’ and reject it, they will continue to deny and distort and twist the Spirit Word and ignore 1 Peter 1:18.

“Christ’s overcoming of Sin”:-

More confusion. On page 299 C. Maddocks tells us that the law of sin and death is a principle of moral corruption we have within us. Now in this section he has decided that it is ‘physical’ and can never be removed until the transformation of nature at the judgment seat. O what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive.’ He begins this malodorous muddle with an attempt to explain Hebrews 7:27 which in context reads “For such an high priest became us who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens: who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s, for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”

Only one brainwashed to believe that Jesus was under the control of the ‘diabolos’ could fail to see that the whole of chapter 7 of Hebrews is contrasting the Melchizedec priesthood of Jesus with the priesthood

under the Mosaic order, and not seeking parallels. But contexts have to be ignored when seeking to deceive and so C. Maddocks asserts that Jesus had to offer for His own 'sin nature.' Scripture says:-

1. He died for our sins.
2. He died for our transgressions, our iniquities.
- 3- He gave His life for the sheep.
4. He was delivered for our offences.
5. He was sacrificed for us.
6. He tasted death for every man.
7. He suffered for us, the just for the unjust.

And these are but a few of the testimonies, and neither C. Maddocks or any man can point to one verse in Scripture which testifies otherwise. Not one single verse tells us that Jesus Christ died for Himself or that He was included amongst those for whom He died. Or that He Himself needed redemption, or that He was a constitutional sinner. The very verse preceding the one under consideration states that Jesus was holy, harmless UNDEFILED and separate from sinners. To assert as C. Maddocks does that Jesus "had the diabolos within himself" can be nothing less than blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

“Our Involvement in Christ’s Victory”

More lies. C. Maddocks writes, “The cleansing work of the Lord Jesus was enacted under the Law by a sinner, who did need a sacrifice for transgression. How appropriate then in the shadowy representation of the Law, for the sinner to be cleansed for his own sin first, in order that he might then fulfil his office for the people.”

How can “The Testimony” print such blasphemy? When did Jesus ever transgress? When did He ever sin? How can a sinless man be a sinner? How can one of whom the chapter itself records as being separate from sinners yet be numbered amongst sinners? Even under the Mosaic priesthood an unclean sacrifice was rejected. The writer to the Hebrews says the High Priests of that Law had infirmity, but the word of the oath, which was since the Law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore. What a mockery of the holy child of Mary undefiled and separate from sinners is now identified as a ‘sinner.’ Abraham Lincoln once said ‘You can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time. Sadly Chris Maddocks has fooled even himself.

I write in sorrow. Eric Cave.

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2nd Response from the Editor of “The Testimony”:-

Dear Brother Eric, Thank you for... the letter commenting on the third of Chris Maddocks’ articles.

Regarding your ‘quotation’ from my earlier letter, you took some actual words from the earlier part of the letter, added to them an inaccurate summary of what I said in the later part of my letter and put it all in quotation marks as though it was one continuous quotation from what I actually said. As you seek to justify this in your letter it follows that I cannot be sure that anything which is presented by you as a quotation is in fact the actual words of the document quoted.

Shortly after your last letter Brother Maddocks sent me a copy of your comments which appeared in the Nazarene newsletter about his first article. I presume what was published was the letter which I believe you showed to (Brother and Sister X) and then modified before sending it to me. I therefore sent him a copy of your letter about his second article, which I presume will also be published by the Nazarenes. I am sending him a copy of your latest letter and will do so with anything you may send on his forth and final article.

Your letters remain the only comments received from readers. Whether anything further will be published, and if so when (we may want to wait and see what the Nazarenes publish in later newsletters) remains to be decided.

Sincerely your brother in Christ, Tony Benson.

TO MY FRIENDS:

IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS THAT YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS.

I have a dream. I had been thinking all day of the many dear friends I have made in my last 60 years as a Christadelphian. I had been reading yet again the Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith and what they have committed themselves to. I had read what the editor of the Christadelphian wrote about that commitment in his October '98 editorial, and what has just been published in the June, July and August issues of the Testimony under the heading 'Death and Life - the Consequences of Adam's sin.' But what I suppose caused my dream was the receipt in the mornings post of a small booklet from a friend entitled 'Outrage on Justice' which, although written in 1959 was new to me, no doubt because it was proscribed by the CMPA.

In my dream I was looking down upon a veritable sea of faces, many of them familiar ones. Above on my left was a great white throne, from which a gentle voice said "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends."

And a young man came out of the throng and said "One moment dear Lord, Are you not under a slight misapprehension? You laid down your life for yourself. Your friends were saved certainly, but as you were in the same condemnation as they your death was actually for yourself. You probably thought at the time that you were giving yourself as a ransom for all, for that is what you told your disciples but unfortunately the Statement of Faith was not available at the time, otherwise you would have known and understood that you were as unclean as those you came to save. Your very flesh was obnoxious to your Father, and therefore had to be destroyed on the cross for your own purging and the betterment of your body. You see dear Saviour, we have to beware of the idea of substitution: many people, even including your apostles got the idea that you died in their stead, but our leaders have told us that this would be unthinkable. God could not allow his innocent Son to bear the penalty due to sinners, and so we had to find a reason to punish you as well as us. We managed to find this in the mistranslation of Romans 8:3, and so we all of us now know that all flesh is unclean, even yours, and therefore your body had to be ritually destroyed for the condemnation of sin in the flesh."

As the young man paused for breath, the gentle voice came again and said, "Say ye this of him whom the Father sent into the world?" To which the young man replied "Pardon us Lord, but we know from the writings of our brethren, many of whom have university degrees, that human flesh is defiled by sin, and therefore cannot truly be clean, not even yours, even though you were begotten by the Holy Spirit, and therefore there was no injustice in God requiring you to submit to the suffering of a shameful death. It is proved by Clause 5 of our Statement of Faith that you were raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David, and that you were a sufferer in the days of your flesh from all the effects that came by Adam's transgression, including the death that passed upon all men, which you shared by partaking of their physical nature; and whilst what you say is very interesting, we have to accept the Statement of Faith as the editor says 'without reservation' otherwise we should not be allowed to break the bread which memorialises your unclean body given for yourself, nor drink the wine which reminds us of your sin defiled blood shed for yourself."

I would have liked to have known what followed, but I woke up.

Eric Cave