

# The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 240

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## Editorial

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends,

Loving Greetings. In Proverbs 6 v. 6 we read "Go to the ant thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise." I had never given this verse much thought but I should have known that there is not a word or injunction in God's book that we should not do well to examine carefully and follow. So when I read a detailed piece about the ant I was utterly astounded at the complexities of its existence, and indeed there is absolutely nothing sluggardly about the ant and the life it leads.

The ants form of society encompass the full range of those of man, from small communities of a dozen to vast cities with a population of several million. Some are hunter-gatherers or agriculturists, militarists, pacifists or slave owners. Their behaviour echoes many other human traits. They are, for example, obsessed with personal hygiene – their front legs acting as a brush and comb with which they remove every speck of dirt before anointing their bodies with their oily spittle. That obsessiveness extends to the spotlessness of their homes. They carefully collect any waste and dump it some distance away while ensuring the immediate environs are swept clean in a wide circle extending to ten yards or more.

They tend their sick and injured nursing them back to health, and dispose of their dead in specially designated morgues. When not working they play ball games, rolling grains of wheat back and forth between each other and engage each other in wrestling matches, catching their opponents with their mandibles in a variety of holds, while a crowd of onlookers stroke the contestants with their feelers, cheering them on. Periodically they come together in great assemblies, sitting still and silently together as if meditating.

Their sociality and intelligence find their highest expression in their architectural skills, which shew great ingenuity in adapting their homes to the prevailing soil and climate. The most impressive of all are the leafcutters *Atta laevigata*, who grow a unique species of mushroom. This is a complex enterprise that may involve the combined efforts of eight million ants living in close proximity. First, the largest skilled workers cut the leaf into manageable sections, dropping them to the ground. These are then transported homewards where smaller ants plant them out as compost for the mushrooms, and which the smallest ants of all then weed and tend. Recently a Brazilian entomologist Luiz Forti described the internal structure of their vast underground metropolis, and to do so he filled it with eight tons of liquid cement and eighty thousand gallons of water, then he excavated their now 'petrified' home over several weeks. The building that emerged was equivalent, in human terms, to a medium-sized skyscraper extending over an area the size of the Pentagon. It

contained eight thousand chambers for mushroom cultivation connected to each other by an intricate network of tunnels, the construction of which required the ants to have shifted forty tons of soil.

There is of course a strong instinctual element to this behaviour, but it is very complex behaviour considering that it involves such a tiny part of God's creation. The ants are also gifted with a keen intellect, as shewn by their creative response to novel situations. In the 1920s a German entomologist, Hans Ewers, suspended a bowl of sugar by a string from the roof of his tent. For the first day the ants climbed up the string and returned by the same route, each clasping a grain of sugar. By the following day they were taking a short cut, leaping the short distance out of the bowl onto the ground. The third day Dr Ewers found just half a dozen ants in the bowl rolling the grains of sugar over the side to be picked up and carried off by their fellow workers on the ground below.

When reading this incredible detail of ant activity you have to keep reminding yourself that this is a description of the life and times of the tiny creature we see scuttling about our gardens or on some occasions inside the house.

Knowing that God has lavished such care and interest on the ant it makes you feel less surprised somehow that God has taken so overwhelming an interest in the human species of His creation, a species He has endowed with seemingly endless possibilities and capabilities. We are the most blessed part of creation, for God has chosen to reveal Himself to us as a loving father, a father who loves us enough to offer redemption, salvation and eternal joy, an unspeakable gift of grace made possible by the sacrifice of His beloved and only begotten Son Jesus.

"I am the root and the offspring of David and the bright and morning star." Revelation 22:6.

Love to all. Helen Brady.

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## **Predestinated According to the Good Pleasure of His Will Ephesians 1:4-12**

What a great revelation of the loving and merciful Creator we have been called upon to acknowledge and accept as our Father, through His Son Jesus, when we read the Epistle of Paul to the believers at Ephesus!

What better hope; what better assurance could we have than Paul describes in Ephesians 1:4,5? "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will..."

We can also be assured that "even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" – "for God hath not cast away his people" which he foreknew. (Romans 11). Jesus Himself confirms that this is so where He says to the Jews who believed Him not, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:28.).

If you look up the following scripture references you will see that our present position and relationship to Jesus and the Father is not one of our own choosing, neither by our own works, and it makes us feel very humble and very grateful even as the Psalmist who said "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" But then with Paul, we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the

angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour and who will have dominion over the work of thy hands, when thou hast put all things under his feet.” (Psalm 8:3-6).

Now, the references as follows: Romans 1:1-6, Titus 1:1-3, 2 Timothy 1:9, Ephesians 1:4, Romans 8:29, 1 Peter 1:20, Revelation 13:8, Galatians 4:4.

While on holiday in Scotland in May 1979 we stayed a few nights in Oban during which time, on the Monday of the 21<sup>st</sup> of that month my wife and I were instrumental in the baptism of our Brother John Carter, an ex-Christadelphian who in isolation had learned much from literature sent to him by Brother Brady on account of whom he thanked God that he had been enabled to see the Light and we heard him express those thanks to God many times while we were with him and shared his joy.

During our stay in the hotel I had a friendly conversation with a man sitting next to me while we were congregated after dinner in the lounge. It appeared he had come over with his wife from Canada for a holiday and was touring Scotland, but was actually a native of England but had emigrated some years ago. It was not long before we were discussing Christianity, the Kingdom of God and the resurrection. It was unfortunate that we did not meet again but I was quite struck by what he said about the resurrection. He was emphatic that the prerogative was that of the Creator, and resurrection was selective; it was confirmation of what I believed and yet had not even told him what my view was on the subject. It was indeed remarkable that I should come across an isolated case of this sort – a man who describes resurrection as being selective and in harmony with the teaching of Christ and His Apostles, in contrast with the erroneous theories held by many, namely, that the selection takes place after resurrection and a standing before a judgment-seat of Christ similar to a court of assize where a judge had to hear evidence from others before he can pass sentence of guilty or not guilty. In the latter case resurrection cannot be selective yet Paul speaks of many of the servants of God being tortured for their faith not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.

Now if we are expected by certain people to believe in a general resurrection of corruptible and responsible beings at the coming of Christ in order to be selected or rejected, where is the “better resurrection” of which Paul speaks seeing that corruptible resurrection applies equally to all? Surely we should not wrest out of their context any of Paul’s statements in reference to resurrection, or twist them in order to bolster up what could be a false premise on such a subject. Now we know and believe that all human beings owe their natural existence to the sacrifice of Christ and that when God prospectively slew His own Lamb in Eden to spare Adam the death he had incurred by sin, this also affected Adam’s posterity as members of his body. So Paul could say in his letter to the Romans chapter 5 verse 6, “For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly – God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” It is quite easy therefore to understand Paul’s teaching here. The sacrifice of Christ (His life) was a ransom for all and will never be offered again. This secured our natural existence but unless we associate ourselves with the death of Christ through faith and baptism, our redemption and reconciliation will not be secured and we shall not be saved by His life.

How could we have been sinners when Christ died on the cross? We were not in existence at that time and could not therefore actively sin. The answer from Paul in Romans 5 is quite simple again. He explains that we were in the loins or members of the One Adamic Body when sin was committed and so all Adam’s posterity were constituted sinners, but not subject to the penalty Adam incurred by individual sin which was ‘inflicted death.’ God spared Adam that death as we have stated through the death of Jesus which was inflicted. When we become enlightened that same penalty of inflicted death hangs over us and the only escape is symbolic death by baptism into the death of Christ and rising in newness of life.

The explanation of Paul is quite plain if we realize that Adam was already created corruptible and that by his disobedience all were reckoned as legally dead. (Romans 5:15). “Sold under sin” Paul describes as our “old man” in Romans 6 - or ‘body related to sin’ which in baptism is crucified with Christ that the “body of sin” might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin as a Master.

I am at a loss to conceive how a Christadelphian could write to me and say that the “body of sin” here quoted was physical – “a body of flesh and blood” when Paul was really stating ownership and relationship; a legal state which could be changed without changing the flesh and blood nature or destroying it in the physical sense, for it is a body of flesh and blood that goes under the baptismal water and it is the same body of flesh and blood that comes up again. Now if we are dead with Christ and consequently dead unto sin, what is natural death but a means of rest from our service to righteousness, to be renewed at the resurrection of the just in incorruptibility?

So much for the confusion that results from mixing the legal with the physical, and natural corruptibility with the death that came by sin.

I apologize for digressing a little from the subject of predestination but I had to show that despite the fact that God has predestinated certain people from the foundation of the world, this does not justify the theories of the Fatalists such as for example, “If my name is on a bullet or a bomb, nothing can prevent my death and what has to be will be, so live as you please.”

This is not biblical predestination as Jesus taught and as Paul teaches in Ephesians chapter 1; we have to do certain things, not sit back and do nothing just because our names are in the Book of Life. They can be blotted out by our own misconduct, and though Paul believed in predestination, this did not prevent him from exhorting the churches to strive at all time to make their calling and election sure. If we heed this advice and hold fast the faith, we can justify our election for we have indeed made a covenant with God through Sacrifice even that of His Son, and in due time He will gather His elect. The following is a quotation from the late Andrew Wilson: “When God commands His angels to ‘Gather my saints together unto me’ there instantly follows an adjectival clause to “Saints” which restricts the applicability to those alone who have made “a covenant with God by sacrifice”. The angels who obey God’s will, assuredly will gather those that have made a covenant with God by sacrifice but not another human soul dare they gather.

Please observe how the Master clinches and restricts this resurrectional responsibility question, viz. “I am the resurrection, and the life. All those (then instantly follows an adjectival clause of restriction to the antecedent ‘those’) whom the Father hath given me” shall I loose nothing but raise it up again at the consummation of the age.” Thus that adjectival clause of restriction debars even Jesus from raising one human soul whom God hath not given Him.

These are words of Divine authority bearing witness to the truth of predestination as taught by the apostle Paul providing we are followers of him, even as he also was of Christ after his conversion from the zeal for the works of the Law to the faith which cometh by love. There was no diminishing of Paul’s zeal for God but after conversion to Christ his zeal was according to knowledge and understanding through the Spirit of Christ and he came to a greater realization of the great love and mercy of God toward man in the provision of His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life and share in those things which eye hath not seen or ear heard neither hath entered into the heart of man, but which Paul said, God had revealed to the Apostles by His Spirit.

Here in the letter to the Ephesians we find a very different Paul to the one described in the Acts of the Apostles breathing out threatenings against the Christians. He can now see that justification by the works of the Law was an impossibility and that if righteousness could ever be achieved by the Law alone then Christ was dead in vain. He realizes now that salvation and eternal life is the gift of God through His Son and not of works and his deep gratitude for such a revelation is shown in his epistles. He says, “For this cause I Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery...which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel; whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by (or on account of) Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in

heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Ephesians 3:1-11)

It may appear surprising to certain people that the emphasis of Paul’s teaching in all his epistles is on being presented to Christ as a glorious church even as the Bride of Christ taken out of His side that was pierced on Calvary in the like figure that Eve was taken from the side of Adam – bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Not even in the 1 Corinthians chapter 15, known as the resurrection chapter does Paul make any reference of a judgement seat, all he does is contend for a resurrection of those who are Christ’s at His coming. This is the very doctrine of selection of which my friend in Scotland spoke. Paul confirms it in verses 23,24, “But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming” - the fruits which will resemble Christ obviously (verse 20). There is no mention of an assize in verse 24, but the fact that Jesus has begun His reign on earth and when that reign is ended the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death, and He will then give up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all. This is not Saul of Tarsus; this is Paul who witnessed that Christ was risen in Glory and become the first-fruits of them that sleep in Christ and predestinated to be conformed to His image. This is Paul, a servant now of Jesus Christ through the will of God, a phrase with which he commences nearly all his epistles and shows his concern for the church of Christ that it might be established soundly on the foundation of the Holy Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone. No pointing to a fearful looking for of Judgment but to the coming of the glorified Jesus he saw on his way to Damascus with written authority from the Jewish High Priest to persecute Christ’s servants.

The reason for this coming, says Paul, “to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.” Paul sought to establish a state of serenity among the believers concerning the coming of the Lord and their gathering together unto Him, “that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.” (2 Thessalonians 2:2). What better note to end on this subject of predestination than the words of Paul to the Thessalonians? “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work. (2 Thessalonians 2:13-17).

Many have erred on the teaching of the resurrection, some that it is past already, some that it is incomplete without a process; “nevertheless, says Paul, by the Spirit of Christ vested in him, The foundation of God standeth sure (and other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ) having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.” 2 Timothy 2:18,19). “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air: wherefore comfort one another with these words. And so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

Phil Parry - 7<sup>th</sup> February 1984.

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## TREES OF THE BIBLE

It was on the third day of creation when God said “Let the earth put forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth; and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.” All of these things were made for the glory of God, as we read in Psalm 148 “Praise the Lord ...mountains and hills; fruitful trees and all cedars.”

When we consider the importance of trees and their place in the environment we come to a fuller understanding of the wisdom of God. For without trees and shrubs with their ability, through photosynthesis to take up carbon dioxide and give off oxygen, the place of animal life in creation would soon be in dire straits. For this one reason alone trees are essential to life on earth, but their benefit does not end there for their multitudinous fruits provide sustenance for humans and animals alike. The Lord said, "Behold I have given you every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." Trees also provide shelter, fuel, building materials, and also affects climatic conditions. The earth, without their benefit of cover and shade, becomes parched and arid, a state of affairs that has become evident as the years go by, with man becoming profligate in his felling of the great forests for gain, ignoring exhortations to replant and replenish.

In the scriptures thirty or so varieties of trees are mentioned, all familiar to us except two, and these we only know through God's purpose with mankind. These trees were planted in the Garden of Eden, "God planted a garden eastward in Eden and there he put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and is good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Genesis 2:8.)

These two trees were specifically designed to give instruction. To the Tree of Life Adam had free access "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying. Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." This tree was available but denied by command, and man's future well-being was dependant upon his obedience to this ordinance. The scriptures give us no indication that during his sojourn in the garden whether Adam partook of the Tree of Life, or not, nor whether it was necessary for his physical day-to-day well-being. That it bestowed life is indicated in Genesis 3:22 "And the Lord God said. Behold, the man has become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden." It would appear that the early access was necessary to this tree to stop the ageing process which all nature suffers, and Adam's removal from the garden and access to the tree obviously allowed natural decay to set in, finally leading to death. As the Psalmist wrote "As for man his days are as grass, as the flower of the field so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it and it is gone." Through his disobedience man could no longer sustain his life, but, through the mercy of the Almighty, was given another opportunity to enter the Kingdom of Glory, this through sacrifice and the shedding of blood.

All parts of the tree are used in scripture, from the roots, through the trunk, branches, leaves and finally the fruit. Its roots are likened to a man who trusts in the Lord. From Jeremiah we read "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord and whose the Lord is. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out his roots by the river, and shall not fear when the heat cometh, but his leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from bearing fruit." (Jeremiah 17:8). And again in the Psalms "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord. And in His law doth he meditate day and night. He shall be like a tree, planted by the streams of water that bringeth forth its fruit in his season." (Psalm 1:3). Here, clearly demonstrated, is the importance of founding one's trust in the ordinances of God, for in them is the very essence, the food and nourishment necessary for the development of the man able to walk uprightly in the sight of God.

"The original seed of righteousness may be only very small as witnessed by Christ in the parable of the mustard seed "which is less than all seeds," but it has the potential in a fertile situation, to develop into a mature tree. In like manner, the spiritual seed may enter the heart of man and if sufficiently nurtured, develop into the righteous understanding of salvation in Christ Jesus, leading to eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

Whether it be the development and maturing of a tree, or the spiritual growth in ourselves time cannot be rushed. With the tree many years may pass before the first indications appear of flowering and even then it may not be able to produce fruits of any great value, and only by good husbandry will it finally bear a rich harvest.

In Leviticus we read -that the Israelites were admonished not to pick the fruit from the trees they planted for several years. Chapter 19 and verse 23, “And when ye come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as their circumcision, three years shall they be uncircumcised unto you, and it shall not be eaten. But in the fourth year all the fruit thereof shall be holy, for giving praise unto the Lord, and in the fifth year shall ye eat of the fruit thereof, that it may yield unto you the increase.”

We know from modern husbandry that when a tree first shows its fruits that it is advisable to remove them for a year or two, thereby preventing the tree from dissipating its strength, endorsing the words of Leviticus. By this patient tending a tree will bring forth a bigger re-ward in quality and quantity.

In a similar manner we cannot expect great results early in our spiritual life. Careful nurturing over the years allow us to grow and reach maturity and be of benefit to our brethren and sisters. Even our Lord was referred to in Isaiah as a tender plant, and thirty years were to elapse before He made known to His disciples that He was the chosen of the Lord God. During these years of development we know from Luke’s gospel that He advanced in wisdom and stature, in favour with God and man.

It is not until a tree has reached maturity and born fruit that it can be judged, as shown in a parable that our Lord used in His Sermon on the Mount “By their fruits shall ye know them, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruits. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.” (Matthew 7:17).

The Psalmist wrote, “The righteous shall flower like the palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. They that are planted in the courts of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God, they shall bring forth fruit in old age, and shall be full of sap and green.” (Psalm 92:12).

To those who walk in the way of the Lord He promises rain in season and an increase in the yield of the land and trees in their fruits. But there is also a warning to the ungodly, and we should take to heart the warning given to the Israelites, mentioned in Deuteronomy if they strayed from the way of the Lord. “Thou shalt plant vineyards and dress them, but thou shalt neither drink of the wine or gather the grapes, for worms shall eat them. Thou shall have olive trees throughout all thy borders but thou shalt not anoint thyself with oil, for the olives will cast their fruits, all thy trees and the fruit of the ground shall the locust possess.”

Despite trees beautifying the countryside and providing fruits and shelter, the Israelites were forbidden from planting groves on consecrated ground, Deut 16:21 “Thou shalt not plant thee an asherah of any kind of tree beside the altar of the Lord thy God, which thou shalt make, neither set thee up a pillar, which the Lord hateth.” A timely warning, for they were soon to enter the land of promise and make contact with the idolatrous worship practised by the inhabitants of the land. Asherahs were worshipped by the Canaanites along with Baal; they were groves of sacred poles, substitute for sacred trees, revered by early Samaritans, these wooden poles were overlaid with precious metals and adorned with woven hangings. It would appear from the earlier admonition that these groves of poles were also surrounded by fairly quick growing trees such as the chestnut, now recognised as the plane tree. A tree of beautiful form bearing thick verdant foliage, no doubt affording grateful shade to the weary traveller coming to worship. It was strakes from this tree that Jacob laid in the water troughs when he tended the flocks of Laban, that they might conceive and bare mottled sheep to his own gain. (Genesis 30:37).

These groves were established time and again as the Israelites departed from the worship of their God and turned to worship idols, ignoring the earlier instruction in Deuteronomy. How little they realised that provided that they did not turn away from the living God, He would always be with them and there was little need for worship in particular places.

There appears to be only one occasion when a tree was planted and an altar erected, and that was done by Abraham. Genesis 21:33 ‘we read that he planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God.

Conservation was also commanded by the Lord for as the Israelites approached the land of promise they were forbidden to cut down the fruit bearing trees when laying siege to cities. “For thou mayest eat from them, and thou shall not cut them down, only the trees thou knowest that they be not trees for meat,

thou shall destroy and cut them down, and thou shall build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it fall.”

Unfortunately, this piece of wisdom was not practised by other nations who, over the centuries, subjugated the Israelites, in particular, the Romans who in their final purge denuded the surrounding countryside of trees, turning a green and fruitful land into a semi-arid desert. The land remained in this condition, populated mainly by nomadic tribes, until the Jews returned, setting up their kibbutzim, establishing settled communities that reorganised agriculture, using age-old methods. This has regenerated the arboreal cover necessary to re-establish the ecological climate. They found that by surrounding each tree with a circular platform of rocks that as the rocks cooled each evening, dew condensed on them and helped irrigate the tree.

The earliest reference we get to a particular type of tree used by man was in the Lord’s instruction to Noah “make thee an Ark of Gopher wood.” Gopher wood in all probability was the cupressus or cedar, both slightly resinous and easily worked. A most suitable timber as it is extremely durable and not susceptible to attack by insects or fungus. It is rather surprising when we consider the size of the Ark that Noah had the tools to construct such a vessel, let alone fell the trees, for they can grow to well over a hundred feet high and thirty feet in circumference, and with the Ark being approximately 550 feet long, 91 feet wide and 54 feet high. Little wonder he took 120 years to construct it, and in all this time his tenacity of purpose did not waver and there is little doubt that during this time he had to withstand a vast amount of mockery and ribald comment from the local populace.

Another tree specifically mentioned is the shittim, or acacia tree, used in the construction of the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant and its sacred utensils. It grew in profusion in the desert from northern Arabia down to Ethiopia. In colour it resembles bos wood, very hard and suitable for intricate carving. Being of a very fine grain it was an ideal timber for overlaying with gold. Some reference books only refer to it as a small tree similar to a mulberry, but reading the details of the Tabernacle given in Exodus where boards of 18 feet in length and two feet in breadth were required indicate that it was a much larger tree, possibly similar to the sycamore, a type of wild fig and not to be confused with our own sycamore which is of the maple family. This tree grew to over 50 feet high and had a very large trunk.

Although the Israelites had been forbidden to have graven images the construction of the Ark and the Tabernacle were necessary to provide a focal point in their worship of Jehovah. It was a continual reminder of the presence of their God, especially as they were preparing to enter Canaan, a country riddled with idolatrous worship, and abounded in shrines. Precisely what became of the Ark we do not know. It was certainly placed in the sanctuary of Solomon’s temple and from there was probably taken when Shishak removed the treasures from the temple in the reign of Rehoboam, as recorded in 1 Kings 14:25, “and it came to pass in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak, King of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord...”

During the time of the building of the Tabernacle we find the first reference to the pomegranate a tree much prized for its apple sized fruit. The Israelites esteemed it as one of the great luxuries they had enjoyed in the land of Egypt, sadly missed in the wilderness of Zinn and they complained “Wherefore have ye made us to come up out of Egypt, to bring us into this evil place? It is no place of seed, or figs, or vines, or of pomegranates.” No doubt they missed the succulent fresh fruit and also the cooling drink of sherbet made from the juice. In the Song of Solomon we find he extols the pomegranate, “I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of the pomegranate.” (Song 8:2). The rind of the fruit was also used extensively for the tanning of leather.

From the details of the tabernacle and of Solomon’s temple it obviously had sacred significance. On the High Priests robe we find woven pomegranates and around the hem, golden pomegranates were alternated with golden bells. “A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate upon the skirt of the robe round about. And it shall be on Aaron to minister, and the sound thereof shall be heard when he goeth into the Holy Place before the Lord.” (Exodus 28:34). Its flowers and fruit were used as models for decorating the pillars of Solomon’s Temple. The record tells us that 400 pomegranates for the two net-works, even two rows of pomegranates for one net-work to cover the two bowls of the chapters that were on top of the pillars.

Brother Jeff Hadley. To be continued...



## 2 Corinthians 12:9

O that I might be occupied, with Thee alone,  
And that this heart of mine might be Thy royal throne.  
There is no place so sweet on earth, as at Thy feet  
To look enraptured on Thy face, Thy smile to meet.

No other place can give me joy, or gratify;  
None other but Thyself, my Lord, can satisfy,  
To hear Thy voice, to do Thy will, is my desire;  
O let this heart be all aglow with heavenly fire.

To give all this I gladly let the world go by,  
To leave all else I would not fret, or heave a sigh.  
“My grace is sufficient for thee for My  
Power is made perfect in weakness.”

By an Ayrshire miner.

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**The following is from the Christadelphian Worldwide Forum, and we wish to thank Brother Cliff York (Australia) for letting us reproduce this piece which he wrote in response to a questioner who asked “how can you prove that any one other than Jesus’ disciples were at this (Passover) meal?”**

**Question:** Hi. You wrote, “but for now I want Biblical evidence of this concept”

**Cliff’s reply:** Given that the Bible has been described as one of the most “eatingest” books ever written, it would hardly be surprising that Church in the 1st Century revolved around an inclusive “fellowship meal.”

The Bible starts with references to eating... and ends with a Marriage Supper... and in between there are hundreds of references to food, meals, fellowship, feasts, parties, banquets etc., etc.

Much of what Jesus appears to have “instituted” for the new family of believers in the 1st Century, were practices they were already familiar with... He just “reframed” them... and gave them new significance.

Baptism is an obvious example. The Jews had practiced ritual washings for centuries... John, then Jesus... took the ritual washing and gave it a fuller deeper meaning.

The same with meals. The Jews had faithfully kept Passover for around 1,500 years before Jesus came along (and you think some of our traditions are set in concrete?).

Jesus desired to eat this “last” Passover with His Disciples (more than just the 12 Apostles) and their families (including children? it was Passover after all)... and He reframed the whole meal... giving it a whole new meaning. The references to “and as they were eating” etc., in the Gospel accounts are the writers way of telling us that Jesus (as host that night) followed recognised and recognisable Passover customs... in giving thanks for the Bread (rep. the whole meal) and the Wine (there were four ritual cups of wine consumed at Passover... and Luke records Jesus’ prayer over 2 of those cups... yet we only have one. Why?

When we come to Corinthians, a common Christadelphian Myth that needs “busting” is the myth that Paul is saying it was wrong for the 1st Century believers to be eating at Church. I.e. that they should only consume their food at home.

Church in the first Century was a meal in various peoples homes (“they did break bread from house to house” - is a euphemism for having inclusive fellowship commensality meals as a very effective preaching

and outreach mechanism. Remember, in those days, common custom had men and women dining in separate rooms, and the slaves ate separately from them all, and Jews and Gentiles NEVER ate together - and along comes Jesus, who said “Do THIS in remembrance of me”... and now men and women, slaves and free, Jew and Gentile all ate from the one table at Church... now THAT was radical and counter cultural!!! And highly effective!)

Paul’s issue with the Corinthian meeting was that they were NOT following Jesus’ example of having their fellowship using Jesus’ Table Manners. They were “eating and drinking unworthily” of Jesus’ noble inclusive commensality example. Hence Paul’s ‘little dig’ that they could not be THAT hungry (surely) that they needed to ‘pig out’ at Church... “When YOU (Corinthians) come together into one place, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper [i.e. you are not following what Jesus asked you to do “in remembrance of Him”]. - What? have you not houses to eat and to drink in?”

Do you despise the Church of God and shame those who meet among you that are poor?... He that eats and drinks [the commensality meal at church] in a way that Jesus would not have done, eats and drinks condemnation to himself, not having discerned that all present at church [rich, poor, male, female, slave, free, Jew, Gentile] are the Body of Christ.

Wherefore my brothers, when you come together [to share a commensality meal for church]... wait for each other. If you are so hungry when you get to church that you cannot wait for the latecomers/slaves/poor etc. , why not have a bite to eat at home before coming to church so that everybody gets to share and “do THIS in remembrance of Jesus.”

Perhaps what might be more of a challenge, is to demonstrate from the Bible that Church in the 1st Century was held in purpose built halls, that a speaker, a reader, the chairman and the stewards all sat up the front of the hall, some of them on a raised platform... that the speaker (never a woman) spoke for 30 minutes to a captive audience who sat on rows of chairs or pews facing the platform, that there were 4 hymns, a meditation, 4 prayers... and always in exactly the same order... that a small plate with some crisp bread and some little thimble cups of wine were passed out to those deemed worthy to “partake of the emblems” and that when all that was over, everybody went back to their own homes to consume a Sunday Roast left cooking automatically whilst the family was at Church.

4 books I recommend reading are:- “Rethinking the Wineskin” - Frank Viola; “Life and Times of Jesus Messiah” – Edershiem; “The Disciples and the Early Church” - Duncan Heaster; “Re-Imagining Church” - Frank Viola.

Cliff York.

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## Life’s Hardships

A story is told of an old man who lived long ago. Forcible was the way in which he spoke of the struggles he had to carry on. A friend asked him the cause of his complaints, since in the evening he so often complained of great weariness and pain. “Alas,” answered he, “I have every day so much to do. I have two falcons to tame, two hares to keep from running away, two hawks to manage, a serpent to confine, a lion to chain, and a sick man to tend and wait upon.”

“Why, this is only folly,” said the friend; “no man has all these things to do at once.”

“Yes, indeed,” he answered, “it is with me as I have said. The two falcons are ay two eyes, which I must diligently guard, lest something should please them which may be hurtful to my salvation; the two hares are my feet, which I must hold back, lest they should run after evil-objects, and walk in the ways of sin; the two hawks are my two hands, which I must train and keep to work, in order that I may be able to provide for myself and for my brethren who are in need; the serpent is my tongue, which I must always keep in with a bridle, lest it should speak anything unseemly; the lion is my heart, which I have to maintain a continual fight, in order that vanity and pride may not fill it, but that’ the grace of God may dwell and work

there; the sick man is my own body, which is ever needing my watchfulness and care. All this daily wears out my strength.”

The friend listened in wonder, and then said: “Dear brother, if all men laboured and struggled after this manner, the times would be better, and more according to the will of God.”

‘Nehemiah the Tirshatha’

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## Baptism

### John’s Baptism for the remission of sins

“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light” (John 1:6).

This introduces John the Baptist to us who was baptising in Jordan because there was much water there. Now John’s baptism was the “baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” and was for the Jews only; those who were already in covenant relationship with God through the Law of Moses, and many Jews came to John confessing their sins and were baptised by him.

At that same time John made a public proclamation to the people, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand”, or, as we read in the Emphatic Diaglott, “Reform! because the Royal Majesty of the Heavens has approached” (Matthew 3:2).

When John saw Jesus coming to him he said, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, after me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water” (John 1:29-31).

But John was hesitant to baptise Jesus “and forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness” (Matthew 3:14,15).

When Jesus submitted to the Baptism of John He had no sins to confess, nor defilement from which to be cleansed, but by it He typified His own death, burial and resurrection and His baptism was an act of consecration and dedication prior to His work of preaching the gospel and then taking away the sin of the world by the free-will sacrifice of His own life. Perhaps we could draw a parallel or a similarity between the Passover lamb being set aside three days before the Passover with Jesus’ baptism three years before His sacrifice for the sin of the world. (Matthew 26:2). “For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7).

### Ye must be born again

However that may be, we find that early on in Jesus’ preaching, a ruler of the Jews, named Nicodemus, came to Him one night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:1-6).

Here we see Jesus also preaching baptism, and His disciples baptised more people than John, as John had said, “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30 and John 4:1,2).

But let us go on ahead to the time when Jesus had finished preaching to the nation of Israel and in His prayer to His Father the night before He was crucified said, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4). The work which God had given Him was now complete but Jesus saw the need for one supreme work which He alone could achieve and this He chose to do – the greatest act that any man has ever done and only Jesus was in the position to do it, to give His life a ransom for many. “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” (John 15:13,14).

At the end of the forty days after His resurrection and before His ascension into heaven Jesus told His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and that “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). And so it was that the eleven apostles, having all things brought to their remembrance, whatsoever Jesus had said, and having their understanding opened, were renewed and strengthened and responded according to their faith.

### **Baptism into Jesus Christ**

We now find that the Baptism the Apostles preached and practised was into the death of Jesus (Romans 6:3), which was very different to the baptism preached by John in two outstanding and very important aspects. First, we saw how John’s baptism was for those who were already in covenant relationship with God through being under the Law of Moses, but this covenant relationship ended with Jesus crucifixion when the veil in the Temple was miraculously torn in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51). Jesus had fulfilled the Law of Moses and, being ended, there was no longer a covenant under that Law nor were any of its rituals and ordinances of any value to those who continued to observe them. From the time of the resurrection of Jesus there was a new covenant established and all those who would come to God had to come into the new covenant relationship with Him through Jesus Christ by baptism into His death and this new covenant was extended beyond Israel to all the world, to as many as were and are called.

Second, when Jesus said, “Ye must be born again” He was speaking of a new life – a spirit life – in the new relationship with Him. “Born of water and of the Spirit.” We all received our natural life from our parents or more exactly, from our fathers, for life is passed down from father to offspring. This life has been passed down throughout all generations from Adam to all the human race (Malachi 2:10) with the exception of Jesus who was born of a virgin but received His life from His Father and not from Adam.

There are two distinct words used in the Greek language for ‘life’ and they are ‘psuche’ for our natural life passed down from Adam, and ‘zoe’ for the spirit life which leads to eternal life which we receive from God when we are ‘born again’. Whenever we read of eternal life throughout the New Testament we find that the Greek word ‘psuche’ is never used but ‘zoe’ is used exclusively. It is unfortunate that this important distinction is lost in the English translation.

And so at baptism we receive a new life – our ‘zoe’, or spirit life. When Jesus said, “I am come that they may have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10), he used the term ‘zoe’ thus showing that we have been given spirit life now, along with our psuche or natural life, and that we might have zoe life more abundantly at His return and the resurrection, when the faithful receive immortality and their natural life is no longer required.

### **Sacrifices for sin – from Eden to Gethsemane.**

Let us now turn, very briefly, to the subject of sacrifices for sin in the Old Testament. In the Garden of Eden Adam was told that he should not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil “for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17). When Adam and Eve broke this commandment they were liable to the consequence of breaking the law but God in His mercy spared their lives and the first animal sacrifice was slain in their stead to provide them a covering, not only for their bodies but of their sin also.

We believe Cain and Abel were also instructed in sacrifices for Abel’s sacrifice was acceptable but Cain’s was not (Genesis 4:5). Later the ordinances and commandments under the Law of Moses gave

further instruction explaining the need for sacrifices for forgiveness for those in covenant relationship with their Creator.

The fundamental idea of sacrifice in the Old Testament is that of substitution, the life of the sacrifice, which is in the blood, for the life of the sacrificer. It was sanctioned by God Himself and is expressed in terms of covering over, with the substitutional life being accepted by God in the place of, as it were, the person of the offerer. Hence the Scriptural practice: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity" (Psalm 32:1,2).

Such sacrifices, however, necessarily pointed to a priesthood to mediate for the people. Such a priesthood needed cleansing before they could offer cleansing for the worshippers to bring them near to God and keep in fellowship with Him. Also these priests under the Law of Moses continually changed and the priests and services needed purification and their sacrifices required constant renewal.

There was one sacrifice which instituted the Law of Moses which needed no renewal as we read in Exodus 24:3-8, "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words."

Likewise there is one sacrifice which instituted the law of love of the New Covenant. This time a perfect sacrifice to complete the work of salvation for the blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin (Hebrews 10:4) because their life was not a true substitute for the life that was lost by Adam but the blood in which was the life (psuche) of Jesus was the exact equivalent to the life Adam forfeited in Eden.

All this showed man's need and God's merciful kindness. Hence Jesus, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world, and who on a perfect altar brought a perfect sacrifice, once for all - a perfect Substitute and a perfect Mediator. (Hebrews 10:1-24). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1 Peter 3:19).

Our baptism then, is the answer of a good conscience towards God, a complete immersion in water representing our death with Jesus, then arising out of the water to newness of life in Him. And to those baptised into Jesus, Paul exhorts, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. (Colossians 3:1-4).

Brother Russell Gregory

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## The Destroyer of The Devil

"For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Hebrews 2:14).

Death is an effect of which sin or the transgression of God's law is the cause. The removal of the effect from any transgressor does not of necessity remove the cause.

The children of God referred to in the first clause of the above verse, in addition to being of flesh and blood, were related to the cause of death. Him or that having the power of death is the devil or accuser. To vanquish an accuser, slanderer, or devil, it is necessary to illustrate and prove that the accusation or slander uttered by him, was without any proper foundation.

The slander uttered at the foundation of the world by the serpent, "Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and, evil."

Genesis 3:4 believed by Eve, and afterwards by Adam, was the cause of death in him and all his descendants.

The children of God were those who believed that God would show by a seed of the woman that the slander was a wicked insinuation against His character.

So the apostle states that as they were flesh and blood descendants of him who believed the slander, God Himself likewise took part of the same, i.e., flesh and blood, that through subjecting His Son to death. He might vanquish the slander which had existed from the foundation of the world.

Some have supposed that flesh and blood is another name for sins but this cannot be the truth, as flesh and blood, or mankind, existed, before sin; neither is it correct to say that sin is another name for the devil, for the devil "sinneth from the beginning," and it would be absurd to say that sin sinneth from the beginning.

Sin is an effect of which lust is the cause, and although lust exists in flesh and blood, it is not sin until it lusts after what God has forbidden.

It is therefore sinful to say that either lust or desire is sin, or that flesh and blood is sin, or that any law made by the Almighty is sin, because all these were created by Him.

What, then, it may be asked, is that which required to be vanquished? Paul answers, it is the devil, accuser, or slanderer. John says the accuser sinneth from the beginning.

The first accuser was the serpent which said. Ye shall not surely die although you disobey God. This one died without redemption and therefore left no literal progeny, so that neither the serpent nor the serpent's seed in the literal sense have sinned from the beginning.

The next accuser was the woman who was beguiled by the expectation of being like the gods or angels, which visited her and her husband and who in all probability had partaken of the tree forbidden to Adam and herself.

Adam was not deceived, says Paul, and therefore he must have disobeyed with more deliberation than his wife. When charged with his crime he coolly accused the Almighty of giving him a wife which gave him and he did eat.

Thus the first man sinned and blamed God for giving him a wife that caused him to do it, and all Adam's descendants that have yielded to their own lust have invariably accused the Almighty in one form or another.

Jesus Christ, who was in the flesh and blood of the accuser though not lineally descended from him, never obeyed his own lusts or desires in preference to the will of God, and therefore vanquished by His obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, that which was the cause of death in the first.

The cause of death being thus proved to belong exclusively to the lawless indulgence of the first man, and as Jesus Christ had never in the slightest degree yielded to such indulgence, even when subjected to temptation more severe, He magnified God's law and proved that transgression was crime, and by His submission unto death, the Just for the unjust, He also proved His approval of the sentence of the death against the unjust as well as His gracious disposition to open up a way of deliverance. The cause being

removed there can be no consequence or rather where there is no cause there is no consequence. Thus it is those who are in Jesus Christ, there is no condemnation.

William Ellis. 1874.

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## On The Substitution of The Innocent for The Guilty

It is obvious that such a procedure as we are now contemplating in order to give it validity and effect, must be sanctioned by the supreme authority. It is a high exertion of the dispensing power, which can issue from no inferior source to that from which the laws themselves emanate.

For a private person, whatever might be his station in society, to pretend to introduce such a commutation of punishment as is implied in such a transaction, would be a presumptuous invasion of legislative rights which no well regulated society would tolerate. To attach the penalty to the person of the offender is as much the provision of the law as to denounce it - they are equally component parts of one and the same regulation, and the power of dispensing with the laws is equivalent to the power of legislation.

Besides, so many circumstances rarely if ever combined must concur to render such a procedure conducive to the ends of justice, that it would be the height of temerity to commit the determination of them to the exercise of private discretion instead of legislative wisdom.

This condition was most unequivocally satisfied in the mystery of Christ's Substitution. When He undertook to bear our sins in His own body on the tree. He contracted no private engagement without the consent and approbation of His Heavenly Father. If He gave Himself for our sins to redeem us from the present evil world, it was according to the will of God, even our Father.

On every occasion, He reminds that He did nothing from Himself, but that only which the Father had commanded Him to do, "I have power," said He "to lay down my life, and power to take it up again; this commandment have I received of my Father. Hereafter I will not talk much with you, for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me, but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment so I do; arise let us go hence... In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and we have seen, and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." (John 10:18 to 14:31; 1 John 4:9,10-14.)

Those inspired statements place it beyond all doubt that Christianity originated with the Supreme Governor of the universe, that its gracious provisions are the accomplishment of His counsel, and that its principles, however much they surpass the discoveries of reason, are in perfect harmony with the genuine dictates of the Redeemer, in the room of sinners, was the contrivance of the same wisdom. Another indispensable circumstance in such a proceeding is that it be perfectly voluntary on the part of the sufferer. Otherwise it would be an act of the highest injustice; it would be the addition of one offence to another, and give it a greater shock to all rightly disposed persons than the acquittal of the guilty without any atonement.

Whenever such an offering has been spoken of as taking place it is represented as originating with the innocent person himself. Here there appears at first sight an insuperable difficulty in the way of human salvation. How could that be rendered, which was at once due to sin and mankind at large? Where could one be found that would endure the penalty, freely, which was incurred by a sinful world? This our Saviour did. He came, not only by authority, but such was His infinite love, that He came voluntarily. He expressed the deepest interest in His suffering, how He must be delivered, spit upon, and put to death; and in His hour of suffering nothing is plainer than that He gave Himself up to it voluntarily, according to the settled purpose of His own mind.

No sacrifice should go unwillingly to the altar. It was indeed, reckoned a bad omen when anyone did so. None ever went so willingly as He. He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and evinced a readiness to be

offered up. He endured the cross despising the shame, all for the joy that was set before Him; that glorious reward, the eternal happiness of an innumerable multitude of intelligent creatures who must have perished if He had not been stricken to death for them. It is farther necessary that the substitute not only undertake voluntarily, but that He be perfectly free from the offence which renders punishment necessary. If He were tainted with that for which the punishment was assigned, nay, if he were only implicated in any other crime, He had already incurred some penalty; and there must be a proportionate deduction for what was due on his part.

Accordingly, in the case of man, divine justice cannot be willing to acquiesce in a substitute who is a sharer in guilt, for the law has a previous hold upon him. There is a debt due - due on his own account. But Jesus Christ though a man, was by reason of His miraculous conception, free from the taint of original sin. That Holy Thing, which was born of the Virgin, grew up in a course of perfect purity and rectitude. He could say to His enemies, Which of you convinceth me of sin? He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He and He alone of all who are of our nature, appeared in this character. By this means He became an immaculate sacrifice. He was shadowed forth by a pure lamb. He was a lamb without spot. It was not this that rendered the sacrifice sufficient, but in this respect it accomplished all that could be expected of a human sacrifice.

His Father rested in Him, not only because He was His beloved Son, but because He was holy and such an one as became us, not that we had a claim to such a priest, but no other could answer for us. The Levitical high priests could never with those sacrifices which they offered continually year by year make the comers thereunto perfect; for each ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins and therefore he could only be an imperfect figure of the true High Priest who offered not for Himself but offered Himself for us.

There would be great propriety in this also, that the innocent person substituted for the guilty should stand in some relation to him. Now, our Lord Jesus Christ was related to mankind, one like them whom He came to redeem. It was indispensable that He should stand in close connection with them to whom His righteousness was to be transferred. This was shadowed forth in the law of a redeemer of a lost estate†

The person who was to redeem must be related, hence, a redeemer and relation were expressed in the one term, and the nearest relation was to redeem. This was not merely a law suited to that state of society, but was intended to foreshow the congruity of the substitution of Christ. Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took the same. Thus He became like unto His brethren, He took not on him the nature of angels, but took on Him the seed of Abraham, the seed he came to redeem as he came to sinful men he took on him the likeness of sin's flesh, He was made like unto us in all points, yet without sin.

R. Hall. (From The Christadelphian Lamp, August 1874)

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## BAPTISM IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

**This article deals with a well-known Difficulty and its Solution)**

**1. The grand secret of Christianity is contained in this synopsis:** “Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is unto... as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Acts 2:38,39).

Here is the Promise, preceded by two conditions.

**2 God always keeps his promises whenever the conditions are fulfilled.** He fulfils the above Promise whenever the conditions are met, just as He did in the house of Cornelius and in the Ecclesia at Ephesus. (Acts 10:44-48, 19:6). How important therefore that the conditions be fulfilled! So few receive the Spirit because so few fulfil the conditions.



**3 The object of baptism.** Before proceeding further let it be acknowledged that there is only one Baptism (Ephesians 4:5) and it comprises baptism in water and spirit. Thus is a believer baptised “INTO the Lord Jesus Christ” (See Appendix F).

An interesting comparison between the “house” of Moses and that of Christ is made in Hebrews 3:5-6. Let us extend this comparison to 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, “Our fathers... were all baptized unto Moses in the Cloud and in the Sea” and we shall see in baptism of water and spirit the entrance into Christ.

Read - Romans 6:3-4; baptized into Jesus Christ

Galatians 3:26: baptized into Christ

Corinthians 2:12: Buried with him in baptism... risen with him.

Baptism in water is a baptism unto death (even as in the case of the pursuing Egyptians, in type) while baptism in spirit is a baptism into life (as in a figure the liberated Israelites ascended from the Red Sea).

The Ethiopian Eunuch went down into the Water and came up in the Spirit. (See Appendix E.)

**4. The subject of this article is one phrase in the second of the conditions, viz: “Be baptised... in the name of Jesus Christ”**

**5 The customary manner is to baptise “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”** This is on account of the Authorised Version of Matthew 28:29-30, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”

**6. The difficulty.** If this passage of Matthew 28:29-30 were the only direct or indirect reference to the matter in Scripture the difficulty would have been seen by very few. But as there are several passages which teach contrary to the Authorised Version of Matthew 28:29-30 the difficulty has been recognized by many, and every year in innumerable periodicals the same difficulty is set forth for elucidation.

**7. The approach to the problem.** This is important. Why is there so wide a divergence of teachings on Biblical themes? Because Bible study alone is insufficient to lead one to the truths of God. A willingness to obey the teaching is pre-requisite, as it is written: “If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God” (John 7:17). Hence, it is necessary, in examining this or any other point of scriptural teaching to be fully persuaded that what ever is found to be the will of God the student of scripture is willing to be obedient no matter what the cost may be.

**8. What is the difficulty?** Although according to Matthew 28 (Authorised Version) the disciples were commanded to baptize “in the name of the Father and of the Son and or the Holy Ghost” they in practice always baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

**9. The practice of the apostles**

“Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” Acts 2:38.

“Be baptized in the name of the Lord” Acts 10:48

“Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” Acts 19:5

“Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” Acts 16:8

**10. Does it matter?** The matter does appear to be important in the sight of God, and that is what really matters. (a) It is written of Apollos that he knew “only the baptism of John and that he was shown the way of God more perfectly.” Acts 18:25.

(b) It is written of the disciples at Ephesus that although they had been baptised unto John’s Baptism they were baptized in the presence of Paul in name of the Lord Jesus” Acts 19:35.

Now the baptism of John, like the baptism of Jesus (then and now) was a baptism of repentance and remission of sins. (Mark 1:4, Acts 2:38,39). And John preached also the coming of the Christ who should baptize with spirit. The difference between the Baptism of John and baptism after Pentecost is that the latter was in the name of the Lord. No other difference is shown in scripture. We may at first think that a second immersion in order to be baptized in the name of the Lord is unnecessary, but Paul, who was an apostle, thought it to be necessary, and it is here submitted that his teaching and practice on the matter was correct.

On this point see Appendix G.

### **11. Evidence that baptism should be in the name of the Lord.**

(a) The practice of the Apostles. This has been shown in 9.

(b) The practice of the early ecclesias.

It is “almost generally admitted that the practice of the Churches in the first two centuries was to baptise persons in the name of Jesus” (Haase Eccles. History, 8th edition, p 44) This is an admission by those who do not follow the practice.

(c) The other ordinance of the Christian. The weekly memorial is the Lord’s Supper, not that of a trinity. (“My body, my blood”).

(d) Prayer in the Name of Jesus. The apostles were desired of the Lord to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus - “because I go unto the Father” (John 14:12-14; 16-23). We have at present no authority to do anything in the name of the Father or of the spirit nor to ask anything in that manner. When Revelation 3:12 and Revelations 22:4 is fulfilled upon us, then we shall have the authority to act in the name of the Father, having His name in our forehead. But not until then.

(e) All things, to be done in the name of the Lord. It is written: “ whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus “ (Colossians 3:17). Baptism is a matter of both word and deed, and hence, baptism should be done in the name of the Lord.

(Of actions done in the name of another see Matthew 10:40-42; Luke 9 : 48. Of actions in the name of the Lord by those not having the authority, see e.g. Acts 19:13 and Matthew 7:22).

(f) Baptism in spirit in the name of Jesus. We should baptize in water in the name of Jesus. It should be noticed that the Father baptizes the believer in spirit in the name of Jesus. (John 14: 26). There is a reason for this. The Holy Spirit was the promise which the Church received on ascending to the Father – one of the promises made to Abraham and then fulfilled - and only those who are in the corporate body of Christ, the ecclesia which is His body - only those may receive the Gift, and only because they are IN that One Body.

(g) Baptism should be in the name of Jesus Christ because it was He Who was crucified for us. This is the argument in 1 Corinthians 1, 13.

“Is Christ divided?”

“Was Paul crucified for you?”

“Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?”

From this it is to be understood that believers ought to be baptized in the name of that One who was crucified for them. The Father in His amazing love gave to us His Beloved Son, who by the Spirit was raised to incorruptibility, but it is the LORD HIMSELF who was crucified, and in His name, therefore, must believers be baptized in water.

**8. The solution of the difficulty.** The solution now submitted is of a drastic nature and is based on the suggestion that the end verses of Matthew were tampered with by an early copyist. Here are the reasons for the suggestion: (a) The Lord Jesus never used a formula such as “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”, either in His preaching or in His other commands.

The phrase is quite in agreement with the liturgical custom of men in their forms of religion but altogether foreign to the elevated teaching of the Master.

(b) The sense of the passage in the A.V. is not clear, but interrupted. If, however, we read as under, the whole context hangs together and the tenor of the instruction is complete :

“All power is given unto ME... Go therefore... baptizing in MY name, teaching them... whatsoever I have commanded and lo I am with you alway.”

(c) The phrase “in the name of the Holy Spirit” is found nowhere else in scripture. A prophet of old time spoke “in the name of God” and not of His spirit. Now we must do all things in the name of Jesus. The spirit is not a person but is the spirit of a Person and is never to be addressed in prayer or worshipped.

(d) The textual evidence (dealt with in Appendix B), shows that the original writing of Matthew was as stated in (b) above, viz., baptizing... in My name”. (See also Appendix D.)

**9. Brief statement of the position.** Reducing the argument to a brief statement we must either receive the text approved by the Forty-seven scholars in 1611, or that accepted by Eusebius who lived in the third century, and had before him many ancient manuscripts, probably including some direct copies from the original manuscript of Matthew.

If we follow the former there will remain always the difficulties set forth in this treatise. If we accept the testimony of Eusebius all difficulties on the matter are cleared away and the scripture on this theme is in perfect harmony in its several parts.

**10. Action to be taken.** Doctrine should result in action. The teaching of scripture is intended to be worked out in the life. To those not baptized in water we quote the words of scripture: “Repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2 : 38).

This was the Gospel according to Peter and according to Paul, and we cannot, dare not, preach any other (Galatians 1 : 8-9). “And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22: 16). Need we - could we - make it plainer?

To those who have been baptized according to the customary formula, we have only one word to give - Pray about it! Pray for guidance. But first of all settle it in your mind that you will be obedient to whatever you find to be the will of God. Only in this mind can you be taught of God.

(The writer was baptized in the name of the Lord on 5th June, 1932, with three others, each of whom had in earlier years been baptized according to the trinitarian formula. By this last baptism we rendered obedience to the Lord to the best of our understanding.)

Of the case of those who, being baptized according to the trinitarian formula have not been made aware of the position here outlined, we make no judgment, but point out the possible analogy with those who “did eat the Passover otherwise than it was written” and the prayer of Hezekiah for their forgiveness. (2 Chronicles 30:18-20.

To those who have not been baptized in Holy Spirit we repeat that God always keeps His promise when the conditions are fulfilled. If you will obey Him, and will ask, He will give you His Holy Spirit as in the days of the Apostles. He is no respecter of persons. As it is written : “How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:13). “Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto... as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:38). “In one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body”. (1 Corinthians 12: 13 R.V.).

**11. A word in conclusion.** “Blessed are they that DO His Commandments that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the City”. (Revelations 22: 14.)

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## APPENDIX A

### AN EXPLANATION CONCERNING TEXTUAL CRITICISM

The errors in the Authorised Version are seldom of consequence. The most serious perhaps is the incorporation among genuine scripture of the following spurious passage: “For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.” (1 John 5:7.)

This was placed by Erasmus into his third edition of 1523, and Tyndale used this edition to revise his English version. From thence it found its way into the Authorised Version, but the Revisers rejected it. The passage does not appear in any Greek manuscript prior to the fifteenth century.

Another example is in 1 Corinthians 11:24, where the word “broken” ought to be deleted in favour of the word “given.” This can be seen by comparing the parallel account of Luke 22:19. Certain ancient Greek manuscripts leave a blank space where this word appears in other copies. The structure of the sentence in Greek necessitates some word to be inserted. Evidently some scribe, seeing this space (honestly left blank by other copyists who would not insert a word of their own to fill the gap) made a guess and slipped in “broken”. The Revised Version reads “which is for you”. It would have been more correct to have given - “which is for you”, thus leaving the gap which appears in so many of the Greek MSS.

## APPENDIX B THE EVIDENCE OF EUSEBIUS

This consideration deals with the actual text of Matthew 28:19 apart altogether from its teaching.

1. It must be remembered that the Authorised Version\* is not a direct translation into English from the writings of the inspired apostles and others, but is a revision and correction of the Bishops' Bible.

*[\*The Revised Version is based upon the Authorised but is more correct. At the time of the revision (1885) many more and older MSS. were available for comparison than were known in the time of the former revision (1611). Differences of judgment among the revisers were again settled by majority vote.]*

2. Till the publication of the Authorised Version the English were using three Bibles: the Great, the Bishops' and the Geneva. In its preparation the revisers compared many of the ancient and modern versions, but Tyndale's and Coverdales Bibles were the real ancestors of the Authorised Version.

3. Questions of doubt among the 47 scholars were solved by a majority vote. In such an important work as the selection of words and phrases to be incorporated in the Bible as holy writ, and the rejection of spurious of the competitive readings, the majority vote is certainly a very faulty standard of measurement. But the nominees of King James knew of nothing better.

4. Now each of the four great codices have been discovered since their days, and these have brought to light numerous erroneous readings in the A.V. It must be remembered, however, that only very occasionally is there any serious error in it. In the majority of cases the variant readings are of little consequence. (See Appendix A.)

5. Now let us introduce EUSEBIUS, who rejected the now common reading of Matthew 28:19 as spurious, and said that the phrase in question should read "in my name."

6. Eusebius, then, died A.D. 340 and was the greatest Greek teacher and the most learned theologian of his time. Let it be said emphatically that if the question under consideration were one of theology, his evidence would be of no value whatever, for our doctrine must be obtained from the pure word God alone, and not from any other source. Eusebius, too, lived in the days of theological darkness, and when we have the light of scripture it is folly to search among the dim candle-lit darkness of the theologians.

7. We ask his testimony, then, not upon any point of doctrine, but upon a matter of fact as to what, according to the manuscripts in his possession at the time, and within his access, should be the correct reading of Matthew 28:19. He spent the major part of his life in one of the greatest libraries of the day, and worked untiringly for the acceptance of the pure word of God, as it came from the inspired writers.

8. The famous Codex Vaticanus (one of the ancient four) is probably a copy of his recension (Allzog . Handbook of Patrology, p 224) This Codex, known as B and numbered 1209 in the Vatican Library, is probably the oldest of the MSS. available, made early in the fourth century, and would be preferred even to the Siniaticus if it were completely preserved, less damaged, more easily legible, less corrected, and had not been altered by a later hand in more than 2,000 places.

9. Eusebius, whether or not the original of Codex B be the work of his hand, wrote many commentaries, a synopsis, numerous copies of the Bible and in addition compiled a collection of those corrupt texts which he had seen in those manuscripts which he had had the opportunity of examining. \*\*

*[\*\*Monashefte, Aug., 1923].*

10. It is only this last work of his with which we are now concerned. For he denounced the now common reading of Matthew 28:19 as spurious. (Remember that he was a Trinitarian!)

According to Eusebius Matthew's actual words were: "All power is given unto me in heaven and upon earth. Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in my name."

11. For collateral evidence on this point see Appendix C.

**APPENDIX C  
SPECIMEN OF EUSEBIUS**

“But the rest of the apostles, who had been incessantly plotted against, with a view to their destruction, and had been driven out of the land of Judea, went unto all nations to preach the gospel, relying upon the power of Christ, who had said to them: ‘Go ye and make disciples of all the nations in my name.’” \*\*\*

Eusebious Church History, ch.5, v.2. Birmingham Reference Library 108031).

\*\*\* ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου - Int. Crit. Comm. (Matthew), p. 307.

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**APPENDIX D  
EVIDENCE OF DOCTORS YOUNG AND PEAKE**

1. Dr. Robert Young in his Literal Translation of the Bible inserts in parenthesis (to indicate doubtful origin) the following phrase “baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all, whatsoever I did command you.” But he does not state his reason for showing the phrase to be of doubtful origin.

2. Dr. Peake says “The command to baptize into the threefold name is a late doctrinal expansion. Instead of the words “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost” we should probably read “into My Name”.

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**APPENDIX E  
THE BAPTISM OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH Acts 8:39.**

The Alexandrian MS. Reads: “And when they were come up out of the water the Holy Spirit fell on the Eunuch, and an angel of the Lord caught away Philip that the eunuch saw him no more. And he went on his way rejoicing.”

It is submitted that the above is the correct reading because:-

(a) Copyists fall into the error of missing out phrases through inadvertence. This is a recognized fact in textual criticism. Every typist of this age is well aware of this danger.

(b) If the Holy Spirit fell on the eunuch he would indeed go on his way rejoicing, but if not – in view of all that had happened at Samaria, of which Philip would have spoken, having just left the place – the place where because none had received the Spirit Peter and John had travelled from Jerusalem in order to pray for them to receive the Spirit – then the eunuch would have left in an unhappy state of mind.

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**APPENDIX F**

The Revised Version reads: “baptizing them into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”

(1) As, however, will be seen by the section “The Object of Baptism,” and by the rest of scripture, the utmost limit to which we can at present be conveyed is into the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2) The Lord said: “I am in My Father, and ye in Me,” John 14: 20. Not until the Thousand Years have passed, and the Lord Jesus Christ returns His “Kingdom to God even the Father” (1 Corinthians 15 : 24-28), shall God be “all in all.” Till then we may not aspire to be “in the Father.”

(3) It appears to be quite beyond possibility to be baptized “into the name of the holy spirit.” Spirit is not a person, nor is holy spirit, and has no “proper” name. Holy spirit is given to the believer : he should be filled with it: and from him it should abundantly proceed as rivers of living water.

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## APPENDIX G ON DETAILS IN SYMBOLIC ACTION

1. What we think is of no account when the Will of God has been stated. (Obedience to the will of God saved Noah; the use of their common sense destroyed the rest.)
2. It is not to be expected that we should understand everything. For God's thoughts are much higher than ours (Isaiah 55:8, 9).
3. Obedience to the details of any symbolic action is most important.
  - a. Caan's offering lacked blood and was rejected.
  - b. The Sabbath stick-gatherer forfeited his life.
  - c. Uzzah by touching the Ark lost his life.

Maybe God was displeased because they marred the portrait in type of the Son of His Love, as to (a) his atonement by blood (b) his millennial rest and (c) His chosen ones.

Anyhow, all the symbolic actions demanded by God are related to life: thus

- a. There was victory when Joshua pointed his spear (Joshua 8:18, 19).
  - b. Only three victories were given to Joash when he struck the ground but thrice (2 Kings 13:19, 25).
  - c. The Passover Lamb must be without blemish (Exodus 12:5) even as was Christ if the household was to be preserved from the destroying angel.\*
4. Now both the Lord's Supper and water Baptism are symbolic acts, and the principle here stated applies to those two ordinances. That principle is that any deviation from the divinely-appointed symbol arouses the displeasure of God.

\*Ponder the use of unleavened bread at the Last Supper, the symbol of sincerity and truth.

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### **Brother Stephen Cook (Australia) placed this interesting message from Edward Fudge on the Christadelphian Worldwide forum:-**

A gracEmail subscriber writes that he "went forward" as a young man to be saved at an evangelical church. Several years later, he was immersed by a minister of a different Christian fellowship. Now he wonders, "What does it mean to experience conversion anyway?"

\* \* \*

"In reading the Book of Acts, I am impressed that Dr. Luke most frequently reports what we call conversions by saying that people "believed" or "believed on the Lord." Sad to say, I do not know any folks today who regularly talk that way. Most evangelicals say that people "got saved" or "accepted Christ." Others report that people "obeyed the gospel," "were baptized," or "became members of the church." Luke does not use any of those terms by themselves in the book of Acts to report conversions during the first gospel generation.

What must one know in order to "believe on" the Lord Jesus? Primarily, according to reports in the Book of Acts, that God raised Jesus of Nazareth from among the dead. That fact, in turn, gives mind-boggling meaning to his otherwise senseless death. Jesus' resurrection means that God has given him the positions of Lord, Christ (Messiah), Prince of Life and final Judge, and to believe on Jesus is also to embrace those declarations as true. This calls for a change in mindset (repentance) to reflect a new purpose, direction and manner of life (discipleship). And, as part of the conversion process, Luke repeatedly says that new believers were baptized, giving visible expression to their repentance and faith, and openly signaling their commitment to follow Jesus Christ.

All this is rooted in Jesus' charge to his first disciples to be his co-workers in mission ("commission"), as reported by Matthew (28:18-20), Mark (16:14-16) and Luke (24:44-47). According to the three Gospel-

writers, Jesus specified that his followers proclaim internationally the good news (Mark) that the Messiah foretold by the Hebrew prophets has come, and that he has suffered and risen from the dead (Luke). Through him, those who repent are promised forgiveness of sins (Luke). Such believers (Mark) or disciples (Matthew) are to be baptized (Matthew, Mark), then are to be further instructed in everything that Jesus himself had taught (Matthew). This all is part of the conversion process, which, in the larger sense, is really an ongoing transformation that continues as long as we live.”

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## Nahum

Probably native of Galilee or Bethabara beyond Jordan. Opinion divided as regards time of prophecy.

Comments: Its conduct and imagery of the Poem is truly admirable. It sets forth with grandeur the Justice and Power of God, tempered by lenity and goodness. The Burden of Nineveh. Book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite. God is jealous for His own Glory and thy Lord avengeth His Justice. He revengeth and is furious nothing can withstand. Vengeance to His adversaries; and death for His enemies.

Slow to anger, great in Power and will not at all acquit the wicked. Assyria under Pul. Tiglath-piliser and Shalmaneser employed by a Just God for chastisement of His disobedient people. God is about to burn the rod wherewith He corrected Israel. The Whirlwind and Storm as a penitential wind which slew 185,000 Assyrians. The effects of His Power, the clouds the dust of His feet; (represented as chariots and dust enveloping them in their extreme rapidity) Psalm 18:10, “He rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.” ‘Psalm 97:2-5, Nahum 1:3-6. Majestically represented as controlling universal nature. The Sea and Rivers He dried up (Red Sea and Jordan). The Mountains tremble; the hills melt; and the earth is burnt at His. presence. Bashan, Carmel and Lebanon are withered and languish. Streams of fire are poured out, and the Rocks are cast down to make Him a passage. If then the seas, rivers, mountains, hills, rocks and the Earth itself, fall before Jahweh; or flee from His presence, how shall Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire stand before Him?

The Lord is good in the midst of Judgement He remembers mercy; with denunciations of wrath; promises of mercy are mingled; a stronghold in the day of trouble. And He knoweth them that are His. But the over-running flood, the Euphrates overflowed its banks deluged a part of the city, overturned 20 stadia about 20 furlongs of the wall. (The King burnt himself, Palace and Treasures). In one blow will God utterly destroy, make a full end; no second-time whatever their imagination regarding Jahweh. Thorns and stubble fully dry (folden) united council. As drunken men perplexed and unsteady in all their resolutions (by force a devouring fire). There is one come out of thee that imagineth evil against the Lord, 2 Kings 19:22, “Whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted up thine on high even against the Holy One of Israel.” A wicked counsellor Rabshakeh. They are not down. I will afflict no more. Break his yoke; burst his bands. End of Assyria. The feet of him that bringeth good tidings that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows; for the wicked shall no more pass through thee: he is utterly cut off.

Chapter 2. He that dasheth in pieces = Hammer or disperser. (Chaldeans, Medes. They emptied them out and marred their vine branches. In such language Nineveh is called on to prepare for the approach of her enemies the instruments in the hands of Jahweh. (The military array and muster of the Medes and Babylonians, their rapid approach to the city. The process of the siege, the capture of the place, lamentation and flight of inhabitants. Sacking of wealth and city. Consequent desolation and terror. Allegory of lions, etc. Verse 12, dens of ravin.

Chapter 3. Woe! Her perfidy and violence. Recall her number of chariots and cavalry, burnished arms, unrelenting slaughter. Corpses spread around. Mistress of witchcraft; well-favoured. Harlot, prostituting the nations, enticing nations to her. By a figure exposing her shame. A beautiful city, a heap of

rubble and filth, like one in a pillory casting filth at her. Verse 16,17, Her numbers; opulence, multitude of princes as grasshoppers that flee from the hedges when the sun rises. Thy shepherds slumber; thy nobles dwell in dust. (Tributary princes and nobles as good as dead. No healing of thy bruise, all who hear rejoice and clap their hands.

The following by Bishop Newton. Could such befall them? What probability was there that the Capital City of a great kingdom; a city 60 miles in compass which had walls a hundred feet high, so thick that three chariots could go abreast upon them, which had 1500 towers, 500 feet in height, that it would be destroyed. Chapter 1:8,9, “utter end of the place thereof, He will make an utter end.”

J. Hembling.

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“Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another...”

(Job 19: 23-27).