

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 263

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Editorial

In July last I was able to photograph two volumes of The Christadelphian Lamp which had been very kindly loaned to me by Brother Ian and Sister Averil McHaffie of Edinburgh while they were visiting Birmingham U.K. I am hoping to be able to print these off shortly and then republish the first three volumes in due course.

I already had a copy of volume one but one leaf had dropped out before it was passed on to me so I was not able to complete the entire book. However, once again I am indebted to another Christadelphian - Brother Peter Hemingray of Michigan, U.S.A. for sending me photographs of those two pages. And more than that, he has offered me four more volumes which I look forward to receiving in due course.

In reading these early volumes the one thing that has impressed me above all else is the depth of study these Christadelphian writers went to in order to show Bible truths, and this in turn, has left me to wonder why so many should follow Robert Roberts who, though trying, was never able to show the depth necessary to put across a convincing argument but instead emphasized his own point of view by the use of his undoubted profound eloquence to sway his audience with well chosen words – which he did to great effect.

A comment I remember hearing as a child was that Robert Roberts was “a very capable orator and sounded well from the platform.” I, of course could not know what this meant at the time as I had never seen or heard him, he having died 30 years before I was born, but I was listening to a

discussion between those who had; and why this comment should have left such a lasting impression on me is because one in the discussion commented “He should be kept in a glass cage from one Sunday to the next.”! Now that sort of comment is bound to leave a lasting impression in a child’s mind! I didn’t know what an orator was but I did know what a glass cage was and couldn’t imagine it would be very nice to be shut in one for a week!

In this issue of the C.L. there are a few articles taken from the Christadelphian Lamp, and one from The Aeon written in the 1880’s by Brother Joseph Bland. The Aeon was a Christadelphian publication edited by Brother Joseph Chamberlain. It cannot be but noticed that in this volume of nearly eight hundred pages, covering a period from 1884 to 1886, that while Brother Robert Roberts is mentioned on several occasions, it never once has anything good to say about him – but rather to complain of his unfair, authoritarian and overbearing attitude to others.

The purpose of enclosing our booklet by Brother Ernest Brady entitled “A Letter to the Christadelphian Ecclesia at Sydney N.S.W.” is to bring to our attention the one and only occasion (I believe) when a change to the B.A.S.F. was ever even tenuously considered, and it links in well with other articles in this Circular Letter. Brother Ernest Brady shows how it was opposed, not by any scriptural argument in support of the Statement of Faith but by pretence of change; listening to the opposition then craftily drafting an article supposedly allowing the opposition’s point of view by using ambiguity. Hindsight shows that nothing changed and indeed, nor was it ever meant to.

I wonder how long it will be before Christadelphia makes changes for the better? I believe it can be seen that there was one editor of The Christadelphian who tried to bring in a change but he died unexpectedly. Perhaps because the time was not yet ready. Is now the time? I truly hope so.

Why ever keep on insisting people be baptised into a Christ who supposedly had to die for Himself because He supposedly had sin in His flesh? Why not preach the truth? It would surely be the right thing to do.

With Love in Jesus to all those who love His appearing. Brother Russell Gregory.

Sister Audrey Bundy

Born 12th March 1923. Died 16th September 2013

It is with great sadness we report the falling asleep of Sister Audrey Bundy on the 16th September at the age of ninety years. Audrey was born in Scunthorpe to Minnie and Tom Allen but shortly after the family moved to Lincoln where she spent her childhood. At school Audrey excelled at sports, winning championships and trophies. She was a keen follower of the Olympics and Commonwealth Games, and later in life she said she would love to have made a career in sport but she never really had the opportunity.

After leaving school at fourteen she had a few jobs in local offices and shops and at eighteen joined the Women’s Royal Air Force becoming a barrage balloon operator during the Second World War, based in Sheffield and Blackpool. In nineteen forty-four she met an RAF Flight Sergeant, Jack Bundy, who “swept her off her feet” and in less than three weeks they were married on April 1st. Her mother had been saving up wartime rations to make a twenty-first birthday cake for Audrey but this became the wedding cake for the couple. Their firstborn, Michael, was born in May 1945 by which time she had come out of the RAF and went to live with her parents until Jack also left the RAF and soon after they moved to Bournemouth. Audrey and Jack eventually moved back to Lincoln and settled there. They had two more children, Philip and Linda.

Audrey and Jack joined the Christadelphians in 1956 but some time later changed their beliefs and became Nazarenes along with Tom and Minnie Allen. They held meetings in their home. From time to time we have published articles by both Tom Allen and Jack Bundy while on occasions Audrey would join in correspondence.

Sadly Jack died in 1974 while their youngest, Linda, was only sixteen years of age. Audrey felt the loss very deeply as did their children. She lived on the same Council Estate for forty-seven years where she had a few very close friends.

At the age of 83 Audrey developed Macular Degeneration and, understandably, no longer wanted to live alone so went to live in rural Wales with her son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Lin, where she had spent many holidays with them from time to time. She had read her Bible all her life and now Michael and Lin bought her a large print Bible so she was still able to read for herself. Finally, just seven weeks before she fell asleep, she wanted to come back to Lincoln where she stayed with Linda and Charles. Now, at ninety years of age, she was tired and weary and said she wanted to go in her sleep, and her prayer was answered on the 16th September. A “Celebration of her Life” will be held on Thursday, 3rd October.

Audrey leaves three children, nine grandchildren and lots of great grandchildren. A close and loving family all of whom will treasure many fond memories of her.

Brother Russell Gregory

Extracts from “The Christadelphian Lamp, October 1875

Editorial for October 1875. Brother Edward Turney

Dear Friends, - How time flies! It seems but yesterday that we were sitting in an upper room on the French coast balancing in our mind whether to embark in the doubtful enterprise of publishing the “Lamp”; after considerable hesitation our resolve turned the scale in favour of a trial. Since then our eyes have been opened to many things of which we had previously no experience, and the months have come and gone with startling rapidity.

Matter has been pressed in upon us; some we have had to reject, some to publish though we could not approve it; but we believe in liberty of speech. Two years have passed away: we are preparing for the issue of Volume III, and shall soon know how far it will be welcomed. Many communications have spoken of the improvement of the “Lamp”; the list of names in our book is more numerous every month, and we see no cause why further advances should not be made in both respects. Our object is the same – the pursuit of truth for its own sake; to confirm that which has been acquired, and to dig out new ideas, test them by Scripture and reason – “prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” Those who are disposed to co-operate in this work, “to endure as seeing Him who is invisible; having respect unto the recompense of the reward,” will inform us without delay, so that we may be able to proceed with our arrangements with as little loss as possible. To those who have stood by us we express our gratification and thankfulness, hoping they may be endowed with perseverance to continue to the end, being assured that they shall reap if they faint not.

Editor – Edward Turney

Dr Thomas’s daughter, Mrs E.J.Lasius wrote the following article for publication in The Ambassador magazine for April 1867:-

On The Nature of Christ

There are, at this time, some interesting points of doctrine in process of discussion among some in different places, and we do earnestly hope that all parties engaged therein will be enlightened in the end, and that no cause of strife may arise therefrom. I wish, in this letter, to mention and enlarge a little upon

one of these points. It is about the nature and constitution of Jesus Christ. Some parties affirm that He did not possess the Divine nature in any respect; that He was constitutionally a sinner like any other son of Adam; that when a child He was no more than any other child, and when arrived at years of maturity the Deity saw that His character was good and suitable for His purpose, therefore He made use of Him, and filled Him with the Holy Spirit at His baptism. Others affirm that He was constitutionally righteous and incapable of sinning, and devoid of the propensities inherent in our nature.

Now, evidently the truth of the matter is not wholly on either position according to the Scriptures. That Jesus was constitutionally good there can be no doubt, but, that He was incapable of sinning we do not believe. If this were so, there would have been no virtue or merit in withstanding temptation; consequently, the temptation, as recorded in the New Testament, would have been a useless performance.

We learn from the testimony that Jesus was created by the Father out of the substance of His mother Mary, at the time appointed by Jehovah – according as it is written – “When the fulness of time was come, He was made of a woman,” and the angel Gabriel appeared unto the Virgin Mary and told her the manner of its fulfilment – that the Holy Spirit should come upon her, and the power of the Highest should overshadow her,” and, “that Holy Thing that should be born of her should be called the Son of God.”

Now we know that, as a general thing, all children partake of the nature, constitution, and character of both their parents. No child is ever wholly, and entirely, and in all respects like one parent only, and we are not warranted in making an exception to this law in the case of the Son of God. From His mother, He derived all the faculties, propensities, and instincts which belong to the nature of the first Adam – as it is written – “He took upon Himself of the seed of Abraham,” that sin might be condemned in the nature which had sinned; and also, that He might be able to sympathise with our infirmities, and to “succour those who are tempted,” “forasmuch as he also was compassed with infirmity.” This was the “body prepared” for a habitation of the Spirit in all fulness – as it is written – “A body hast Thou prepared for me,” “Lo ! I come to do Thy will, O God.” Now we understand what was the nature of the medium of manifestation, but what was that which was manifested? Was it merely the natural manifestations of a natural man? By no means. It is written, “He shall be called Immanuel,” that is, being interpreted, “God with us.” This was God manifested in the flesh, although the Spirit of God was operated through other media, both in word and sign. He is called the “only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” Some might ask, how was the Deity manifested? We answer, in the character of the Son and His mental attributes.

The Apostle John says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” and “the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.” The Word of God is the wisdom of God; the thoughts or intelligence of Deity. This word of wisdom is personified in the proverbs of Solomon, thus, - “I, wisdom, dwell with prudence and find out knowledge of witty inventions,” with many other similar passages. Jesus Christ was the wisdom of God embodied in the flesh – “the express image of His person” or character, because it was ordained that in Him should dwell the fulness of the Godhead bodily, so that it became essential that He should not only receive the Spirit without measure at His baptism, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel and working miracles, but, that He should also have power within Himself to become perfect in all virtue that He might be found without transgression and without fault from His infancy and childhood; that He might be the Lamb without spot or blemish. So, from the Deity, His Father, He inherited wisdom, thought, intelligence, elevation, and purity of character. Being aware of His divine origin and mission at twelve years of age, and perhaps before, He was able to discuss matters pertaining to the law with men of years and education – professed doctors of divinity. Thus we see that He displayed, even in the years of childhood, wisdom and knowledge inherited from His heavenly Father. “Being the Son of God He thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” as all children are, in a certain sense, equal with their parents. The natural illustrates the spiritual.

In studying human character we find that the inward thoughts, judgments, or intelligence is something different and distinct from desires, affections, and propensities; all these are right and good in their proper sphere, when directed and circumscribed within certain limits prescribed by the law of God. If the judgment is clear and well regulated and controlled by the word of God, it will entirely subjugate the desires and affections, and only allow them a certain limited scope. This, however, is a state of mind never completely attained to by us who are born after the flesh by the will of man. Jesus being the word, thought, or intelligence of His Father, consequently the will of the flesh was far more subjugated and subdued, and

He was not liable to be led away by excited impulses and perverted desires. The desires of His nature were in a natural state, such as those with which the first Adam was endowed as his creation. Some of the first Adam's descendants, however, have so nourished and cultivated those propensities (which in their simplicity are good enough), that they have become perverted and altogether unnatural.

In the consideration of this or any other subject of Bible doctrine, we should seek to harmonise all the passages bearing upon any particular point; and not accept some and reject others, which (to our limited comprehension) seems to convey opposition of meaning; when in reality there is no contradiction, but a beautiful harmony when rightly put together.

Mrs E.J.Lasius

* * *

Comment on the above by Brother Edward Turney

We reprint the foregoing for several reasons, all of which it is not necessary to state. It is clear that Dr Thomas's daughter wrote this article with her father's consent or approval and those who are familiar with her father's writings will recognise in it both his ideas and his language. It is also equally clear that the editor of *The Christadelphian* (Robert Roberts) approved of this article from what precedes it, as well as from the prominence it holds in that paper, being the leading article for the month. It was in the month of April 1867, that this article was published. We are now in the month of August 1875, making some comment upon it. During the last two years of this interval *The Christadelphian* and its editor have in many ways denounced us and anathematised us in language of unmeasured bitterness because we are not now able to believe that flesh is full of sin, and that Jesus was a constitutional sinner. We do not now intend to make more than an allusion to our answers to these charges. We wish at this time to call special notice to this article from the pen of Dr Thomas's daughter, which affords the strongest possible proof of one of two things, either that the editor of *The Christadelphian* did not understand its teaching, or that he believed it was true. What then does it teach? Let us set the matter in order,

- 1). Some parties affirm that Jesus was a constitutional sinner, like any other son of Adam.
- 2). That the truth of the matter is that Jesus was constitutionally good and righteous.
- 3). That the desires, affections are right and good in their proper sphere, when directed and circumscribed within certain limits prescribed by the law of God.
- 4). That the desires of Jesus' nature were in a natural state, such as those with which the first Adam was endowed at his creation.

According to the first item Dr Thomas, and his daughter, and perhaps the editor of *The Christadelphian*, believed it, in 1867, unscriptural to teach that Jesus was a constitutional sinner.

From the second item it is undeniable that Dr Thomas and his daughter, and perhaps the editor of *The Christadelphian*, believed that Jesus was constitutionally good and righteous.

In the third item, they (the Dr and his daughter) affirm that the propensities are good when properly guided;

In the fourth that Jesus was in the same state as Adam at his creation.

Now every reader of the controversy between ourselves and the editor of *The Christadelphian* must be aware that we endorse the four items above set forth, and that the editor of *The Christadelphian* denies each and all of them. He has iterated and reiterated (1) that Jesus was a constitutional sinner. (2) That the desires of the flesh are sinful and corrupt. (3) That because Jesus was born of Mary He was involved in the same state as all Adam's children. And these things he obstinately avers without a shred of proof, giving it out all the while that he stands and will stand or fall on Dr Thomas's platform !!!

Is it possible for a sane person in face of the foregoing testimony, to say nothing of much more already adduced in the *Lamp* and *the Lecture on the Sacrifice of Christ*; is it possible we say for a sane person not to see that the editor of *The Christadelphian* has long since committed logical suicide. We cannot be persuaded that had any other man fallen into such flagrant contradiction that the editor of *The Christadelphian* would have been slow to perceive it, and we are the more confirmed from this fresh evidence of his error, that it is not argument but something else that gives him so much resemblance to the proverbial obstinacy of a very useful animal. But in the very nature of things this is but a preparation for eating the dish of “humble pie.” This dish is before him, and the longer he refuses to eat it up the more unsavoury it will become. We shall continue to remind him as opportunity affords that the “pie” is not consumed. -

Brother Edward Turney.

* * *

Our comment: -

Now, after one hundred and thirty-eight years the Christadelphian Statement of Faith still holds fast to this same false teaching. It is such a sad ongoing situation for them. In 1957 a few of the several Christadelphian fellowships decided they ought to re-unite as they saw the return of Jesus drawing near. They felt it would show agreement between them before He came for them. However, the B.A.S.F. has always been the cause of division and some insisted at that time it be modified before they would accept it. The Cooper-Carter addendum was drawn up in such an attempt, but it did not really change anything and it turned out to be a mere pretence of change. It was too feeble and ineffective.

Any real change will have to admit they have not been, nor are they now, preaching the truth while they hold steadfast to their sinful flesh doctrine - and their belief that Jesus in some way had to die for His own salvation is utterly without foundation.

We know that some Christadelphians refuse to acknowledge the B.A.S.F. and they know they are taking a risk so in most cases they do not openly reject it – but the unsavoury “humble pie” presented to Robert Roberts remains untouched by his devoted followers. One thing is absolutely certain from the writing of his daughter, and that is, the BASF could never have been presented to the brotherhood while Dr Thomas was alive or he would have been disfellowshipped along with Edward Turney.

Brother Russell Gregory

While considering the sinful flesh doctrine we republish a letter from Brother Phil Parry to Brother Leo Dreifuss: -

“Christ, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity...”
Ephesians 2 vs 15.

Letter to Brother Leo: -

Dear Bro. Leo, Loving greetings in Jesus Name and trusting you are well.

With reference to our conversation on the phone concerning the literature entitled “Christ our Passover” passed on to you and in which you say much is quoted from “Elpis Israel” and “Slain Lamb” to bolster up the false doctrine of “condemned nature” and “sinful-flesh” and human nature being synonymous with sin etc. This is the whole weakness of Christadelphians; they seem not to read and think for themselves on what the Scriptures teach in harmony with respective subjects, but as our late Bro. Brady stated in his reply to Reg Carr of “The Testimony,” they turn to the pioneers Thomas and Roberts whose writings are in many cases contradictory, false and suspect, and ask, What do they say on the subject? And a few quotations from “Elpis Israel” or “Slain Lamb” and perhaps “Ministry of the Prophets,” by C.C.Walker is to them an explanation and “an end of all strife.”

This, of course, is far from being the case and it has been proved over and over again, yet still these same people carry on with veils over their eyes obscuring the light of the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ revealed by his apostles through the Holy Spirit.

Regarding the subject in Ephesians 2:15 of Christ "Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace..." This is obvious to you Leo, but apparently not to your Christadelphian visitors, that the "enmity" was that which stood in the way of both Jews and Gentiles being antitypically reconciled to God, and this entailed ratification of the Covenants by the shed blood of Christ - and that, it is absolutely foolish to even think that the law of commandments contained in ordinances were actually in the physical flesh of Christ.

Paul was showing that at one time the Gentiles were outside the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no Hope and without God, due to the barrier or middle wall of partition remaining as long as the Mosaic Law was in operation, this partition having been broken down through Christ's Sacrificial death.

In other words, as long as Christ remained in flesh and blood nature having in Himself the "Life" or equivalent Ransom Price for all, the wall of separation between God and man, between Jew and Gentile, would continue to exist.

Thus Jesus could say with all authority by His direct Sonship, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Thus signifying that the way into the Holiest was only possible through the veil, or partition, being removed. We recall that at His crucifixion the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. See also Hebrews chapter 10:19 and 20, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"

It was on the cross that He abolished death and brought life and immortality to light; He did not abolish death in Himself as Christadelphians falsely declare; He suffered death in the place of Adam, and those in Him by enlightenment if they choose to avail themselves of the opportunity of passing from death to life by faith and the symbolism of baptism into His death (i.e. not natural death but judicial).

Why do Christadelphians persist in dissecting Christ as a man (a personality of character), from His flesh? Surely it was the man Christ Jesus - everything that made up a man - with whom God was well pleased at the waters of Jordan, also before and after His statement to John the Baptist to that effect, for Jesus said "My Father loves me because I do always those things that please Him." It was not a part of Jesus that God loved to the exclusion of His flesh as Christadelphians maintain, so it is time they forsook these false and indoctrinated theories of their pastors and teachers and get to the stage where Paul and his fellow apostles taught that without the shedding of blood was no remission of sins and that Jesus made peace between God and man through the shedding of His blood on His cross that men were reconciled in the body of His flesh, through death. He needed no reconciliation Himself for He was never estranged from God even from birth and needed therefore no redemption Himself.

There is not a Scripture which states Jesus had to die for Himself or on account of having human nature; He was capable of natural death even as we are but His death on the cross was inflicted, by blood-shedding, for the specific reason of taking away the Sin (singular) of the world.

The great theme of that object and purpose can be traced through the scriptures from Eden to Gethsemane the one thing causing blindness to its conception and understanding, being the false and unscriptural premise that natural death was the penalty passed upon Adam for his sin when in fact this was a capability of his nature at creation.

The difficulty with Christadelphians is in their belief of the mistranslation of the term "Sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3) which expression Paul never wrote and which is an impossibility in any case; sinful is a state of the carnal mind which is enmity against God and applies to the legal position of alienation from God and

belonging to sin as a master; there is no doubt that the term should have been correctly translated “Sin’s Flesh”, being a matter of possession not quality.

Sinful applies to character, not to man’s flesh.

Despite all that is taught in the Law of Moses concerning what constituted acceptable animal sacrifices as an atonement and a conscience cleansing of the offerer, Christadelphians persist in their pernicious doctrine that Christ was a type of these, yet, condemn themselves and Christ Himself by contending that He was a polluted and corrupt offering of unclean, condemned flesh. Paul in Colossians 1:21,22 is setting forth the fact that the faithful Colossian converts had “been reconciled in the body of the flesh of Christ through His death, that they might be holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight - continuing in the faith grounded and settled etc., as members of his Body of flesh and Spirit - The Church - Christ in them the Hope of Glory.

This is the very opposite of what Christadelphians are prepared to accept, so if rejection of the Lamb of God’s provision means their rejection by Him, so be it; they have only themselves to blame and are identifying themselves unwittingly perhaps, with the seed of the serpent.

Remember, there was nothing wrong with the flesh or the blood of Christ, the life of His flesh was in the blood - but when He rose - the life of His flesh was not the blood, nor in the blood; His flesh was energised by Spirit.

Natural life in the blood having been sacrificed and was not given back. There is no change of the physical flesh as is seen in Paul’s reference to Ishmael and Isaac. See Galatians 4:20-31.

He that was born after the flesh persecuted Him that was born after the spirit, even so it is now. How can Christadelphians explain the clause in their statement of faith in view of this distinction made by Paul? A clause which states Jesus was raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David; the former “A Friend of God,” the latter, “A man after God’s own heart,” and finally Jesus by a voice from the excellent glory, “This is my beloved Son (flesh and blood nature) in whom I am well pleased”?

This describes God’s approval of those who were justified in His sight by faith – the quality of their flesh had nothing to do with it. Relationship to Him was what really mattered, “I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me.”

“No man speaking by the spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed,” (either before or at his crucifixion). Can Christadelphians read Malachi 1:11 and 14, without a searing of conscience in their view of a polluted Christ?

11. “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen saith the Lord of Hosts.”

12. “But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the Lord is polluted” - This is my body given for you – “even his meat is contemptible” - My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.

13. “Should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord.” - The bread and the wine symbols of an unclean Christ - a polluted offering? 14. “But cursed be the deceiver that hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing.”

Consider the lesson in the following chapter.

Christadelphians should not bow to creeds of men who wrest the scriptures to their own destruction and that of others.

The way into the Holiest has been made possible through God's Gift of His Son; He who came not to be ministered unto (unnecessary in His case) but to minister, and to give His life (in the blood) a ransom for many.

And to them who look for him shall he appear the second time without a sin-offering (only once offered) unto salvation.

But not to those who consider He was unclean, alienated, and needing redemption Himself. This on the authority of scripture rightly divided - not my own.

Phil Parry,
(1987)

The Bible and The Pope

The reality of Jesus of Nazareth and all we learn about Him from the Bible is a colossal embarrassment to the Catholic Church. As Jesus appears in the Gospels His whole life, His whole attitude is a permanent reproach to everything the Roman Catholic Church has spun around itself, and invented for itself over 2,000 years. Can anyone aware of the works and words of Jesus, believe the Vatican and all its manifestations were what Jesus saw Himself as coming to Earth to achieve?

The Jesus we know from the New Testament is sharply different from the Christ it would have suited the Catholic Church to invent. So this real man has been cunningly, persistently and quietly nudged away from the centre of the picture to the margins of the frame; and at the centre is placed the real Virgin Mary now called the mythical Mother of God, and the Church has commanded the laity to approach the Almighty through the mediation of its own constructed figure. It would be difficult to think of an idea more alien to Bible teaching. Nothing, absolutely nothing in the Gospels so much as suggests, let alone authorizes such a repugnant idea.

The Pope has the effrontery to call himself the representative of Jesus on earth. Blasphemy! Would Jesus have several palaces, the man who had nowhere to lay his head? The Pope has a city, his own army and riches beyond counting, in poor countries where the Catholic Church really holds power, there are statues encrusted with precious jewels while the people are poorly fed and have no shoes. Jesus had no time for ritual, hats and robes and finery, palaces and Popemobiles. And Jesus didn't just ignore man-made hierarchies of spiritual authority of His own day, but set His face against career structures in things spiritual... and who would today, not just be bemused by popes and cardinals, bishops and archbishops, forms of address, but would rail against them with the fine anger He shewed the money-changers in the temple.

Jesus tells us to cast off fear and superstition, to turn away from wealth and status and authority, to turn away from rules and rituals, such as those rife in His day as insisted upon by the High Priests and Pharisees. But the Roman Catholic Church is steeped in ritual and superstition and above all it is obsessed with power. Power over its followers. The confessional is an excellent way to learn what everyone is doing, and when it is deemed unacceptable, the other Catholic obsession can be called into play - money. The deeply disagreeable invention of purgatory, the supposed half-way house between either heaven and hell as the final destination, can be avoided if you pay enough to by-pass it. For many years Catholics were forbidden to read the Bible, I do not know if this is still the case in some places. But the services were in Latin for the same reason, that the congregations were too dim to perceive any truths themselves and must rely on the priest to direct them. All these are truly unpleasant concepts to grown up men and women. And women in particular are of little value or account in the R.C. Church.

Perhaps quite the worst legacy that the Roman Church has bequeathed to all its adherents and indeed to believers of most denominations, is the doctrine of Original Sin. This shameful invention by Augustine, one of the Catholic founding fathers, is an illusion which has most pitifully and disgracefully not only lowered the standard of Christianity, but destroyed its influence and disgraced its character. Once the precept that human nature is inescapably tainted and fallen, nothing else that follows can be right.

The Catholic Church is on the defensive now for reasons well documented, and it whimpers for tolerance from its critics: a tolerance it never extended to dissent or question when it had power to crush them. The Pope is an enemy of truth and enemy of Jesus and one day it will be known and the shabby pretence will end.

“Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for the earth is mine.”

Sister Helen Brady.

The Brazen Serpent

A dear friend of mine wrote to me the other day and asked a question concerning the Brazen Serpent. He said it was a new one on him, that he had not had it brought forward to prove Jesus was “sinful flesh”.

Yes, it was a new one to everybody I know, except the Christadelphians, as no one could see in it the blasphemy of sinful flesh theory but themselves. I had never gone into the matter, though I knew that it was brought forth by the learned W.F.Barling in his answer to what is generally supposed the Clean Flesh theory.

For the benefit of the questioner and ourselves I thought that an article on it may be of some value, and to show how other learned persons look upon it, and with a few comments from myself.

First then, here is a statement from W.F.Barling:-

“It is clear that in the divine purpose there was some special significance in violent death by crucifixion, not possessed by those other forms of violent death from which God preserved him. It is in this respect that the Nazarene theory of redemption is inadequate as well as unsound, since it does not recognise the moral principles which were operative in the crucifixion. For if the procedure of ransom were a life for a life, a violent death for a violent death, why had Jesus to be crucified, not merely executed? Our Lord’s own words at once answer this question and stultify the legal theory; “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:14,15).

The parallel is striking: -

(a) As the brazen serpent was impaled and lifted up on a stake (Numbers 21:6-9), so was Jesus. (John 12:33-35).

(b) As those mortally bitten in the wilderness, beholding the serpent on the pole, were saved from death, so those mortally bitten by Sin, beholding the Cross, are saved from perishing.

Does the parallelism end there? Is the character of the life-giving serpent of no significance too? Most assuredly, for where the fiery serpent was actively venomous and destructive, the brazen serpent was impotent and harmless, not destroying men’s lives but saving them. As such, though in form a replica of the very enemy that brought death by its bite, it became a source of recovery to those who beheld it in faith. Thus, (c) As the impaled serpent was a harmless symbol of Sin, so the crucified Jesus was a sinless bearer of our serpent-nature.”

We only comment here on two points: -

First, “the character of the life-giving serpent...” Is there a reference that life is given by the serpent? Was not the serpent a cursed creature?

Second, “the crucified Jesus was a sinless bearer of our serpent nature.” He was for sin, not serpent nature.

Now read Numbers 21:7 to 9. “Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, we have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.”

What do we get from it? The people said “We have sinned.” Moses did as he was commanded, so that “everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall life.” Have we here any indication that this was for “serpent nature”? Or for their sin?

Is there one passage in the scriptures where even a sacrifice for their sin-nature is asked for? John wrote, “And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth (beholdeth – R.V.) the Son and believeth on him may have eternal life” (John 6:40). Isaiah (45:22), wrote, “Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth”. How many times are we asked to “behold”? The most wonderful of them all is “Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world” – “in whom there is no sin.”

Even hymn writers could say there is life for a ‘look’ at the crucified One. Not upon serpent-nature.

The whole incidence was obedience to what was commanded – “look upon it.”

A question here might help. They lived a natural life by looking, is it necessary for eternal life to look upon Jesus’ serpent-nature and believe Jesus was so, before anyone receives it?

Now let us look at Dr A. Clarke on the subject of the cure of the serpent-bitten Israelites by looking at the brazen serpent. There is a good comment in the book of Wisdom, 16:4-12, in which are these remarkable words : -

“They were admonished, having a sign of salvation (i.e. the brazen serpent) to put them in remembrance of the commandments of the law. For he that turned himself toward it was not saved by the thing that he saw, but by Thee, that art the Saviour of all”

To the circumstances of looking at the brazen serpent in order to be healed, our Lord refers (John 3:14,15), “As Moses lifted up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoso believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.”

The brazen serpent was certainly no type of Jesus – but from our Lord’s words we may learn : -

- 1). That as the serpent was lifted up on the pole or ensign, so Jesus Christ was lifted up on the Cross.
- 2). That as the Israelites were to look at the brazen serpent, so the sinner must look to Christ for salvation.
- 3). That as God provided no other remedy than this looking, for the wounded Israelites, so He has provided no other way of salvation than faith in the blood of His Son.
- 4). That as he who looked at the brazen serpent was cured and did live, so he that believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall not perish but have eternal life.

5). That as neither the serpent, nor the looking at it, but the invisible power of God healed the people, so neither the Cross of Christ, nor His being crucified, but the pardon He has brought by His blood, communicated by the powerful energy of His spirit, saves the souls of men.

May not all these things be plainly seen in the circumstances of this transaction, without making the serpent a type of Jesus Christ (the most exceptionable that could possibly be chosen), and running the parallel, as some have done, through ten or a dozen of particulars.

Dr A. Clarke's brief comment upon John 3:14,

"It does not appear to me that the brazen serpent was ever intended to be considered as a type of Christ. It is possible to draw likenesses and resemblances out of anything. But in such matters as these, we should take heed that we go no further than we can say, "Thus it is written..."

"Among the Jews the brazen serpent was considered a type of the resurrection – through it the dying lived; and so by the voice of God they that were dead shall be raised to life."

The serpent was a cursed creature and was to eat dust all the days of its life. This was for sin, and just. Christ was made a curse for us and He who did no sin was made a sin-offering for us. He was made in the likeness of sin's flesh, but was not belonging to sin – He was God's flesh or property. "And I, if I be lifted up... signifying what death He should die." (John 12:32,33).

Listen to another person: -

"You insist that the serpent was His type (Numbers 24 and John 3), yet it is strange why the writer, this lover of parallelisms, stops so abruptly. I wonder why? Did he quickly realise that if he continued... he would then have his Jesus ground to powder and crushed under the weight of his parallelism. For that was the end of his worshipful serpent."

The serpent, from the day of Eden, represented transgression and death, and under no condition could the serpent figure a Saviour full of Grace and Truth.

It was open rebellion that caused Moses to lift up the serpent; it was the same cause of open rebellion that caused the Lamb of God to be lifted up.

Let us see the simplicity of the Truth and not make types to our own destruction when, as we know, "Sinful flesh" does not exist.

Brother F.J.Pearce.

Jesus Both Willing and Able to Forgive

In Luke 5:12-15 we read, "And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy: who seeing Jesus fell on his face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And he put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him. And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities."

There were many sufferers then as there are now and this leprosy seems to have been almost worse than any of the diseases we have. It did not generally prevent people from going about but it was very

painful to the sick man, and very disagreeable to others. In most cases there was no cure for it. No cure, that is, by common means. Jesus Christ could cure all sicknesses and this poor leper came to Him. And happy for him that he did!

It seems to have been a bad case, for this man was said to be full of leprosy. Whether other cases could be cured by medicines or not, certainly this one could not. A man would not continue a leper if medicine could cure him. But this man was “full of leprosy”. Doubtless he had tried all the means in his power, but all in vain. Yet, bad as his case was, he believed that Jesus could make him well. We do not know what led him to believe this; perhaps he had seen some who had been healed by Jesus. Perhaps he had even been present (though keeping his distance as lepers were obliged to do) when Jesus cured some sick person by a word. We do not know what led him to believe, we are only told that he did. He came to Jesus saying “Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.” Now doubt it took courage to show such faith. Feeling as he did with such a dreadful disease upon him, and finding nothing that he did made him any better. It was a great thing that he should come and fall down on his face, or more likely, fall to his knees with his face towards the ground, before Jesus and say, “Lord, if thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.”

But why the “If”? Why did he not believe Jesus was as willing as He was able? Whatever it was that made him believe Jesus could heal him, might just as well taught him that He would.

Still though, he came with an “If”; he must had had faith or he would not have come at all. He fell on his face and besought Him; his words were a prayer. There was hope; there was faith in them. They showed what was the feeling in his heart, ‘I know that He has healed others; I believe He can heal me. Perhaps He will.’

And Jesus did – without a word of rebuke for any weakness in his faith, He put forth His hand and touched him saying I will, be thou clean”. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.”

Blessed hand that touched so many and never without healing in the touch! Blessed lips that spoke often to the afflicted and never without bringing comfort. Blessed those few and simple words of Jesus – “I will, be thou clean”. Here was the answer to the “If” “Lord, if Thou wilt” said the man. “I will” was the Saviour’s reply.

Sometimes it pleases God that we should wait for our blessings. But this man had not to wait any longer. “Immediately the leprosy departed from him.” Probably he had borne it long; he should now bear it no longer. He was cured in a moment; he went away well. The Lord Jesus can do just the same now, as He did then. All diseases are still subject to Him. If He were to put forth His power He could make the sick quite well, in a moment, but He does not always do so. It pleases Him to act differently now from what he used to do when He was here on earth. Then He used to go about healing the sick everywhere; and we do not read of one brought to Him whom He did not heal.

Brother James Hembling.

Exhortation

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As I sit down with the intention of writing a few words of exhortation to you, knowing that it is our only way of making known our thoughts one to another, being so widely scattered and so small a community, I find that our readings from the Bible Companion bring us once again to those wonderful words expressed by Paul to the Galatians - words which I think have been impressed upon our minds as much as any in the Scripture, for they are the simple teachings of the Gospel by Paul, and it would be very hard for any individual to misrepresent or misunderstand them, yet those of us who belonged to the Christadelphian body did, to some extent, unwittingly misrepresent them, and in so doing, as far as our own

salvation was concerned, made the promises of God of non-effect. But thanks be to God that we were not allowed to remain in this plight, but have now realised the folly and the seriousness of the situation and the Monster we were making God to be but we did it in ignorance, and we know that God has not laid this to our charge. We had our minds contaminated with that Sinful Flesh bogey, and it is surprising how far this puts you out of line with the truth.

For instance, fancy having the idea that however hard you tried to do the will of God you must fail because the flesh is so weak that it could not fulfil the law of the Lord anyway; that God has, in fact, as good as said; Do this, I know that it is an impossibility, but you need not worry, I have made the necessary arrangements for you through my Son.

God, we are now fully persuaded, is not mocked, and never asks individuals to do impossibilities. This could never come under the heading of a righteous and a just God. But I have yet to meet a Christadelphian who can answer the question on the lines of our beliefs and Doctrines as to why some of the worthies of old, who did comply with God's Law and did offer their sacrifices in faith, could not have made an effectual offering of themselves for the sin of the world.

Of course, it has been said by R. Roberts: 'we well know that had there been a Jew who could have kept the Law in all its details, then it would have been possible for him to have done so.' This, in a few words, expresses what Christadelphians have been teaching ever since, that it is an impossibility to comply with God's Laws in detail, and that even Jesus had special strength from God to carry it through.

What then is the true reason and the only possible explanation as to why if a man obeys the Law in every detail and was well pleasing in God's sight he could not redeem his brother, and let us bear in mind at the same time that Christ is brought down to the impossible level of not being able to redeem his brother by the Christadelphian Doctrine of sinful flesh.

Let us have none of these illusions, Brothers and Sisters. Jesus was never in bondage to sin and never became a curse under the Christadelphian order of things. He only became such or placed Himself as an innocent victim in that position, for us that we might also have life and have it more abundantly, by reconciling us to God by His supreme sacrifice; that the victory could be enjoyed by many through the sacrifice of one. By what means? By an Holy, harmless, and undefiled Son of God; an individual who came not under the condemnation of Adam's transgression; an individual who, as Son of God, was not sold under Sin, through Adam's disobedience, and so was able to become the counterpart and the opposite number in the Plan of Redemption and final Deliverance from death, in the Great Plan of Salvation and Glorification of God's Name in all the Earth.

However pleasing we lived in the sight of God, however obedient we were and however much we delighted in these things, we could never, neither could those worthies of old, say that they were free born, in the sense that Jesus could. Having done all we still remained in the position of having to be purchased unto God, reconciled by the blood of the Lamb (His Son), and now await our final deliverance which, if we are faithful, is only a matter of time.

And so Paul expresses these words to the Galatians, some who were allowing themselves to be entangled with the yoke of bondage, and impresses the fact upon them that neither they nor their fathers could bear it. This, of course, means in the way they understood and complied with it, for the law as obeyed and expressed in its true and full meaning by Jesus, was something far different to the yoke they had made of it through their natural mind and interpretation of it. The Law was Holy, just and good, but they had made something far different of it by their traditions. Paul then gives that wonderful allegory in chapter 4, showing the two covenants and their parallel in the two sons of Abraham. As this is an interesting subject itself and one which I have dealt with many times before, I will not allow myself to get involved in it, except to say to those Brothers and Sisters who think this refers to the Jews and Arabs: think again, for both are still in Bondage, but Jerusalem from above is free. Who does the Scriptures teach will inherit the promises. Read Romans chapter 4 verses 13-17.

Brother Ernest Parry.

Psalm 46

“God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God. The holy dwelling places of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she will not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations made an uproar, the kingdoms tottered; He raised His voice, the earth melted. The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Come, behold the works of the LORD, Who has wrought desolations in the earth. He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariots with fire. “Cease *striving* and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” The LORD of hosts is with us; The God of Jacob is our stronghold.”

Here is a short piece by Alan Hermann which he posted on Christadelphian Worldwide Forum regarding how we see things: -

“We all enjoy a beautiful view. To help us to enjoy the best vista of the landscape in some spots councils have built special viewing platforms to ensure that branches, or other obstructions, don't spoil the panorama. The reason for this is that where we stand makes a huge difference in what we see. I have come to realise that the same is true in relation to our spiritual sight. When discussing life, problems, joys or any matter with people it is vitally important that we make the attempt to see things from where they are standing. People live by what they see, not by what we see. To put it another way, we all live by perceptions not facts. Too often we expend a lot of effort trying to convince people to see the view from where we are standing rather than to understand what they see. Anyway, it is not our right or responsibility to share our point of view. Surely our goal is to move together until we can see the view from God's vantage point. Have you looked at life from that spot recently? Take a peek. The view is life changing. You will never see life the same again.”

Alan Hermann.

I thank Alan for these thoughts. Jesus, we can be sure, saw life and all that it entails as God wished it to be seen, and if we can see God's purpose with mankind as Jesus did we shall also see why He loved to do His Father's will above His own.

The above observation by Alan Herman led my thoughts on to the matter of the Atonement for the whole of the Scriptures guides us to this view-point. And whenever the subject of the Atonement is considered we find sacrifice inevitably comes to the fore. Also such terms as being “sold under sin”, and “bought with a price,” which have occasionally been described as being too commercial, nevertheless they are scriptural, and we have to accept them along with sacrifice, ransom, and redemption. All these have in common the prerequisite of substitution for their fulfilment.

While the substitutionary view of the Atonement frees sinners from the burden of the consequence of their sins and should fill the sinner with love for Jesus who gave Himself so freely for them, it is also an

easy to follow method of preaching. Yet at the same time some see in it disquieting issues of morality, for why should God demand penal satisfaction by punishing His innocent Son before He will forgive us our sins? But this is an appalling view of substitution which depicts our heavenly Father as being malevolent and cold-hearted which contradicts all we know of God's love for His creation.

We should be very thankful that Jesus could see creation from God's point of view and we ought to make every endeavour to do the same.

God did not punish Jesus in order to let the guilty go free.

But first of all we ask, can anyone give a definition of purchase that leaves out the principle of substitution? Can anyone give a definition of redemption that leaves out the principle of substitution? Can anyone give a definition of sacrifice that leaves out the principle of substitution? What is ransom but the price of redemption?

Many objections have been put forward such as, How can one life be given instead, or in place of thousands or even millions of lives? This is to misunderstand our redemption. Jesus didn't give His life instead of millions of lives; He gave His life in place of Adam's life. A life for a life. Jesus natural life in place of Adam's natural life. An equivalent match. The life of a son of God for the life of another son of God. The life of the human race was and is the life passed down from Adam. Adam was spared the penalty and lived and so we were born. The entire human race of thousands of millions of descendants of Adam received their life from him. We have Adamic life. Jesus life, however, came direct from His Father; not from Adam. Hence the one and only reason for the 'virgin birth.'

Why should there be such a strong objection to the idea of Jesus laying down His life for Adam in order to forgive us? "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever should believe on Him such not perish but have everlasting life" and Jesus, seeing God's plan of salvation from His Father viewpoint chose to lay down His life – "Therefore does my Father love me" – "Greater love hath no man than a man lay down His life for his friends" "for the joy set before him" "in bringing many sons to glory."

Brother Russell Gregory

The following article was written by a Christadelphian contemporary with Robert Roberts and published in a Christadelphian magazine in November 1885:-

“One Is Your Master, Even Christ.”

Matthew 23:8.

This is a truth which appears to have been lost sight of by all but a few in all the ages which have intervened since the Master Himself uttered the words. The aim of "the Church," so-called, has been to maintain its authority over the minds of men, to enforce its decisions against the unwilling consciences of those who dared to question its creeds, and to crush out all human liberty to think and act for itself. And in the enforcement of its decrees no feeling of pity, or compassion, or sympathy, has been allowed a place. Tortures the most inconceivable have been invented and put into practice to maintain the supremacy of individual men, or "the church" in its collective capacity, and from the breasts of the torturers every human sympathy appears to have been eliminated.

The experience of the true followers of the Lord Jesus has ever been one of down-treading. Their names have been cast out as evil, and they have been held up to the scorn and opprobrium of their contemporaries, and otherwise treated as "the filth and off scouring of the world." With them all through the long dark ages it has been a struggle of right against might, a battle against authority. On the side of their oppressors has been power, influence, position, superstition, and ignorance, whilst they had no

comforter except that divine word which has ever cheered their hearts and nerved them to battle for the right and true.

Into this struggle of the ages we have entered. The warfare of the true Christian is against human authority as embodied in the crystallized creeds of the sects; it is one continued protest against what men have formulated in their ignorance, and forced upon their fellows. Their dogmas we challenge. Our weapon is the truth. We acknowledge no other authority than the word of the spirit, which is the word of God. That is our battle-axe and weapon of war. We let no human authority come between us and that. "Hands off the Bible," we exclaim; let us have the truth as near as possible as it came from the ambassadors of Christ and the prophets of old. Give to us the naked truth. Stand aside with your human interpretations, and let us drink of the pure river of the water of life as it freely flows from the throne of God. There is need, even among ourselves, of words like these. We are fond of urging others to act in this independent spirit. The sentiment constantly enters into our lecturing efforts. We appeal to those around us to examine the bible for themselves.

To beware of the one-man system of the sect. To test their creeds and their preachers by the word. To depend on no human authority - however venerable or however influential it may be. Now, do we do the same? There is too little of this independence amongst us. We are too content to drink the water of life from human vessels. Yea, I verily believe that there is as much (or even more) dependence upon men among us as among those by whom we are surrounded. Bro. So-and-so says this, or bro. So-and-so says that, and that is sufficient. It is with many an end of all strife. Verily the writings of one or two ought to be in the canon of Scripture! Their words and their opinions are appealed to as though of divine origin. Inspiration is practically claimed for their writings, and if the very words of apostles clash with their views, so much the worse for the apostles. By all means, we say, treat the writings of these honoured brethren with respect. Not one word of contempt would we utter against their well-thought words.

But with all the energy with which we are capable we protest against the exaltation of human authority in the manner in which some among us are endeavouring to exalt it, and commanding every Christian knee to bow. There are those who would limit the reading of the brethren to a very few works indeed. But the wise will draw wisdom and knowledge from whatever source they can. They will not be above obtaining knowledge from sources which furnished our beloved brother, Dr Thomas, with so much information in the compilation of his most important work. They will go to the purest translations of the original Scriptures, even though, forsooth, it be dubbed "the devil's version!" as we have only in a Birmingham publication recently read! Whose version, by the by, is the authorized version? We may, I presume, appeal to the revised version as the result of enlightenment and increased knowledge when it suits our preconceived ideas; but if it be against us, so much the worse for it, it is the "devil's version," and its accuracy is at once impugned. Ignorance may be satisfied with this, but the truly enlightened will not be frightened with a word; they will analyze what they read, they will assimilate the wheat, and they will know perfectly well what to do with the chaff.

Brother Joseph Bland
Extract from "The Aeon"

Our Opinion of Creeds

Having received of late several printed forms of creeds, we take occasion to express our opinion upon such documents in general, proceed from where they may.

No form of faith was ever printed that was not found fault with, either as containing too much, or not enough, to say nothing about the endless disputes upon the wording of this or that proposition. And nothing is more objectionable than repairing and revising a form of faith. Whatever needs this is imperfect or incomplete. Creeds have been and are still, among the curses

of ecclesiastical experience. History abundantly shews that a form of faith is a bone of contention and generally fares like a political treaty – is torn up and burnt after much disturbance. All printed forms of faith are like water, coloured more or less with the channels through which they pass; some are tinged and impregnated with one element and some with another, the clearness and purity being thereby affected. If men are not content with the Scriptures, nothing else will please them long, and if they are, nothing else is needful. As disputes will arise, let them be upon the original itself, not upon some secondary and man-framed basis. To make a separate form of faith insensibly lowers our esteem for the Bible while it cannot give that reverence to it which we all feel for that great Book. Popish Breviaries, Imitations, Protestant Prayer Books and Catechisms, are all the outgrowth of the creed-concocting propensity, and the prime end of all these is the enforcing of their own diverse notions rather than a search of, and an abiding in, the Inspired Word alone. Business rules are more or less necessary; but give us no form of faith but the Bible. This is sufficient “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Brother Edward Turney

Isaiah 24:16-23

“But I said, My leanness, my leanness, woe unto me! The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth.

And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.

Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”