

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 132

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Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is with sadness we report the falling asleep, on the 10th of September, of our Sister Edith Price. On hearing the news from Brother Phil Parry I asked if he would kindly write a few words for readers of the Circular Letter, and I wish to express my thanks to him for the following letter:-

A Tribute of Respect and Affection to our late Sister Edith Price.

It is not without some feeling of sorrow that we have to report the falling asleep of our beloved Sister in the Faith Edith Price of Abercarn, Gwent, aged 79 years, after a severe ailment borne with much patience and faith with the continued support of a considerate and loving husband Hayden. Yet we sorrow not as others who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). Her work is done and her race is run in looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, and she now rests in the Lord from her labours, but ours is to continue with the help our Heavenly Father has promised to give us if we put our whole trust in Him and His Word. We are mindful therefore of our aged Brother in Christ in his isolation and loneliness which separation from his loved one has caused, and we pray that strength to endure will continue for him in the days ahead.

The funeral service and burial took place on the 16th of September at Abercarn cemetery under instructions from Brother Hayden to a well known friend in regard to what he should say in accordance with our belief and faith and shared by Sister Edith and himself since their Baptism by our late Brother Fred Pearce of Newbridge.

It was in our continued search for Truth that Rene and I arranged to meet Brother Fred Pearce in Newbridge and in meeting were also introduced to Brother Hayden, who was a great help in many ways to Brother Pearce as was also Sister Edith. After some discussion and some continued correspondence and trying of the spirits (also with crying and tears), we knew where we stood and were re-immersed at the home of Brother and Sister Price on November 1st 1952, and were given a bed for the night before returning home by service bus the next day. On several like occasions as this the facilities of Brother and Sister Price's home were used, and we are grateful for these things and for the happy atmosphere of their company, which also pervaded the home of our late Brother Brady, his wife Jessie and daughter Helen when they were all co-operating in spreading the light of the glorious Gospel of Salvation at that time and onwards. We have learned much since then and are grateful to God and His Son. May our prayer be for our Brother in his sorrow and loss, but realising that joy cometh in the morning when our Lord descends from Heaven with a shout and with the voice of the Arch-angel and with the trump of God (1

Thessalonians 4:16,17), and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Comfort ye one another with these words. “Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.” (Ephesians 6:24). Amen.

Brother Phil and Sister Rene Parry.

I am sure we all send our sympathy to Brother Hayden in his sad loss and pray God’s blessing of peace may rest with him.

With sincere Love to all in the Name of Jesus Christ. Russell Gregory

THE TWO SAULS

We read in the Scriptures of two important personalities by the name of Saul; Saul the son of Kish, who became King Saul, and Saul of Tarsus who became the apostle Paul. They were two very different personalities, and we want, in this exhortation, to see what we can learn from these very differences. First, the little they have in common: both were of the tribe of Benjamin, both experienced a sudden change in their lives, and not much is known about either before that change. The change in the life of the first Saul occurred when Samuel, as it seemed right out of the blue, anointed him King. Absolutely nothing is known about him before then. Just as sudden was the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. A little more is known about his pre-conversion life. He was a zealous Pharisee, a pupil of Gamaliel, a prominent teacher. At that time all teachers had practiced some trade, and Saul’s, as his name was then, was that of a tentmaker. It was, as it turned out later, that very zeal of Saul that caused God to make use of it after turning it in the right direction.

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

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

Now to the other Saul, the one from Tarsus. We shall from here onwards refer to him as Paul. His personality was the very opposite to that of the son of Kish. Paul certainly had no time for personality worship; he was extremely humble, but he was also a great teacher. There was something unique in Paul’s personality: a sound balance between humility and zest, the ability to speak and to teach. He had a knack of putting things simply to the unlearned; he did not speak above people’s heads - a mistake of some teachers. A good example of his ability to put things over simply was his speech to the Athenians when he took hold of a monument “to the unknown god,” and started from there. This is good teaching technique; always to start from something the student knows to teach him something he doesn’t know. This speech is very interesting in another way. Paul’s epistles are usually regarded as hard to be understood, and many of them are, as we must all admit at times, and in this respect we are in the good company of the apostle Peter. But let us not forget his simple epistles. There is in Paul’s epistles much practical advice, put very simply, as in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 13, and indeed, much in 1 Corinthians. And concerning his speech to the Athenians we do well to read it again (Acts 17:22 to 31) to

see a model of good teaching that anybody can understand. And then there is Paul's ability, to be all things to all men (But not, of course, in any way transgressing God's I commandments) in order to gain some. A characteristic well to take note of. None of his 'holier than thou' attitude, or 'I am the teacher, you are the pupil; I command, you obey.' And, incidentally, we often find that people of the true aristocracy are quite accessible. Paul certainly was, and he was of the upper class; a prominent Pharisee, teacher's class, born a Roman citizen. But none of this went to his head, as happened with the son of Kish.

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

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

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

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

Brother Leo Driefuss.

Jesus said...

No. 18.

Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the Kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17:20,21.

Because it seems impossible that the Kingdom of God should be within those Pharisees whom Jesus was addressing, some have endeavoured to find alternative explanations for His words. One suggestion is that Jesus meant "the Kingdom of God is among, or in the midst of you" as though He and His disciples were a "nucleus" of the Kingdom present among them. Another explanation states "God's royal Majesty

is among you.” In each case the word “within” has been changed to mean “among” or “in the midst,” but is this correct?

The Greek word translated “within” is “*entos*” and while the words “among” and “in the midst” occur hundreds of times in the New Testament, not once is the Greek word “*entos*” used and reference to Young’s Concordance shows the word “*entos*” to occur in only one other place - in Matthew 23:26, where Jesus says, again talking to the Pharisees, “Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside may be clean also.” It is at once obvious that here the word “within” means “inside” as distinct from the outside, and it cannot mean “among” or “in the midst.” So when Jesus said to the Pharisees “The Kingdom of God is within you” He was saying that “The Kingdom of God is inside you.”

How, then, was the Kingdom of God inside or within those Pharisees? I believe the parable of the Sower gives the answer, for, in preaching the Gospel Jesus was sowing the seed of the Good News of the Kingdom of God in people’s hearts. The seed was sown into all kinds of ground, or hearts, but only in good hearts would it develop and prosper. Nevertheless, wherever it was sown and did not develop and prosper, the seed of the Kingdom was there for a short time, for, “When anyone heareth the word of the Kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside.” Matthew 13:19.

Jesus had sown the seed of the Kingdom in the hearts of the Pharisees and for a short time the Kingdom was within, or inside them, though it had no chance of growing in such hostile hearts as theirs and it was only a short time before the birds would swoop down upon the wayside of their hearts and take away the seed.

But what of the good ground? By the grace of God, the faithful have the Kingdom of God growing in their hearts to bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, some an hundredfold.

“CHAT SECTION”

Compiled by Bro. Harold, Dawson.

Continuing the subject of the immortality of God, Sister Evelyn Linggood writes:

“I should like to comment on what has been written re the statement in 1 Timothy 6:16 “God only hath immortality” it seems strange that nobody has thought to read the whole verse which is self-explanatory - that God is the only immortal being who “dwells in light unapproachable whom no one has seen nor can see,” for as we know, both Christ and the angels are also immortal but both have been seen and approached in their immortal state, also the words immortal and incorruptible, according to Young’s Concordance, are both derived from the same Greek word “*aphthartos*” meaning “undying,” so they are interchangeable terms and it follows that mortal simply means “dying.” I believe it was Dr Thomas who wrote that mortal meant “subject to death by law” and later Andrew Wilson enlarged upon that theory, but where is the scriptural evidence for this?

Sister Evelyn Linggood.

* * *

I was very pleased to receive the above letter regarding the earlier question raised about the possession of immortality. Our thanks are extended to Sister Evelyn Linggood for writing in, and it is hoped that by examining and study together we can help each other on the pathway to the Kingdom, and may we each find a place therein. I wonder if Sister Evelyn grasped the sense in which the question about the possession of immortality was raised, however. The question was “If God only has immortality - what about the angels, do they have it?” The statement in 1 Timothy 6:16 calls for a common sense approach and not so much an arbitrary attitude to what is stated. Firstly, of course the angels have immortality and

it goes without saying that Jesus Christ has, located as He is at the right-hand of God - from whence He will come as Judge of all things. Under inspiration Timothy states a certain fact about God, the Creator of all things. But more than that, much more, for it is only God who has immortality to bestow on not only the angels and Jesus Christ but on all who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, through faith and baptism and a life based on a yearning to be strong even though weakness may beset us.

Great comfort is in the assurance "Fear not, little flock; it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32). We cannot earn salvation; it is the gift of God through Grace, and that not of ourselves. We can therefore rest in hope that God will remember us in that day and bestow upon us a crown of righteousness that will never fade away.

Below is part of a letter sent to Brother Russell a few weeks ago:

"Many thanks for continuing to send me the N. F. Circular Letters which I continue to read with interest. A slight criticism I have of it though, is that a large percentage of the letter is devoted to reproducing the contents of Nazarene Fellowship books and booklets. As most of the members probably have these standard "text-book" literature, I can't help thinking that the reproduction of these works is so much "wasted space."

The idea of a letters section, though, is a very good one. There are a couple of points I would like to see mooted:-

1. The concept of Satan or the devil: The N.F. seems to accept uncritically the Christadelphian concept of Satan. However, surely there is enough historical evidence now to confidently say that Palestinian Judaism during the time of Christ did believe in Satan and demons as real (ontological) spirit personalities (variously conceived), e.g. The Encyclopaedia Judaica, The Jewish scholar Hyam Maccoby states that the Pharisees believed Satan to be a non-apostate testing angel of God, and this idea is reiterated by the Christadelphian author Harry Whittaker in his "Studies in the Gospels," i.e., that "Satan" and "demons" are non-apostate angels of God, commissioned to mediate God's wrath and disciplinary treatment out into the world of men. The "accommodationist" theory is dismissed by Whittaker as "threadbare and inadequate."

When the apostle Paul states that Christ confronted him on the way to Damascus, and commissioned him to turn people from the power of Satan to God, doesn't this support Whittaker's view that the Biblical Satan is a real spirit being?

Surely on a Christadelphian understanding, Christ should more appropriately have talked about turning men away from the power of the devil; construed as the power of their own sinful inclinations, rather than the power of the Adversary? Surely the most pressing need for Man is deliverance from internal sin (the "devil"), rather than freedom from external persecution ("Satan" as popularly conceived by Christadelphians). For example, Paul kept the devil at bay through a life of obedience, but Satan, as manifested by the Political Sin-power (on a classical Christadelphian understanding) triumphed over him, just as surely as it did Peter, and the Lord Jesus Himself, i.e. all three ended up as executed state criminals. Don't you think, therefore, that Acts 26:18 provides some indirect evidence for Whittaker's thesis, which is a Christadelphian view that seems to harmonise much better with a Jewish understanding of "Satan"?

2. Don't you think the Nazarene Fellowship seems to over-denigrate the idea of natural death as somehow being involved in the Fall of Adam? I can quite understand the notion that Adam was reprieved from execution on the literal day of transgression via the introduction of the sacrificial system, but surely natural death was a corollary of the Fall, in so much as Adam was denied free access to the Tree of Life, which in all probability had perpetuated his existence hitherto?

Surely, if insufficient care is taken, the Nazarene Fellowship can end up being unjustifiably dogmatic in its own directions as is Christadelphianism?

Also, in order to prevent unnecessary insularity, don't you think that the Nazarene Fellowship should pursue an understanding of the Strickler and Bell variants of the "Clean Flesh heresies"? (USA and Australia).

Yours cordially, Anthony Cox.

Although the above letter was addressed to Brother Russell, all who wish are invited to comment upon any of the points raised and we look forward to a good response from our readers, and we thank Mr Anthony Cox for his letter and the interest he has shown in our understanding of the Scriptures.

Brother Harold Dawson.

A reply to

“Studies in the Statement of Faith and the Saving Work of Christ”

Please Note: Extracts from the article are in bold capitol type.

1. JESUS UNIQUELY FITTED TO BE THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND BECAUSE HE TOOK ON HIM THE NATURE AND SEED OF ABRAHAM. HIS VICTORY OVER SIN WAS COMPLETE FOR HIMSELF AND FOR ALL WHOM HE CAME TO SAVE.

The fact that Jesus was of the seed of Abraham and David according to the flesh is also true of all Abraham's descendants. In what way therefore was He unique and fitted to be the Saviour of mankind? Why have you omitted explaining the significance of His birth or the Virgin Mary? Surely this unique position preceded any victory He achieved during His life and mission. You are incorrect in stating that Jesus was victorious over sin for Himself.* ^{see footnote.} The Scripture through Paul says that Jesus achieved the victory for us not for Himself, and Paul thanks God for this, 1 Corinthians 15:55 - 57. Where can you find in Scripture that Jesus was stung by sin? Did He not ask "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Why then are you making the effort to do so by handling the word of God by craft and deceit? 2 Corinthians 4:2. If, in your words, the victory over sin was both for Himself and for all He came to save what is the wages of sin Paul speaks of to those Roman believers who had been made free from sin and are not eligible for sin's wages? Romans 6:20 - 23. This is where my disagreement with you becomes so obvious in that you believe the wages of sin is the death common to all whether responsible to law or not. Paul destroys this theory completely in Romans 5 and Romans 6; but your theory is that baptised believers still suffer sin's penalty despite its having been removed. Romans 7: 4 - 6 is very plain on this matter.

2. JESUS OVERCAME THE POWER OF SIN IN HIMSELF.

In his "very good" nature Adam had the ability to sin but there was no power of sin in him. Sin is transgression of Divine law, and Adam's transgression was the sin that entered the world and death by sin, not the death which was common to his nature at his creation. How then was Jesus any different from Adam? How could Jesus be sinless if the power of sin was in Him? Please give me a direct answer, "Was Adam a sinless bearer of our nature when God created him?" Again, "Could you at 12 years of age address God as your Father as Jesus did?" Where then is the reconciliation and redemption you say was necessary for this Holy and direct Son of God? What caused Him to be alienated from God?

3. HE WAS SINLESS WHILE HIS BRETHREN WERE SINNERS. HOW THEN CAN THEIR SINS BE CLEANSED AND SINFULNESS REMOVED?

To me this is presumptive phraseology of pre-conceived theories. Firstly you say Jesus had the power of sin in Himself and secondly you say He was sinless, a contradiction in itself. Then you speak of sin being cleansed. How can sin be cleansed? Surely it is the sinner who has to be cleansed, not sin. When we read in Scripture of so many righteous living people like Abel, Seth, Enoch, Job and Abraham, and many besides who pleased God, including the parents of John the Baptist of whom the Scripture in Luke 1:6 declares, "They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" I am at a loss to know what explanation from Scripture you can give on how sinfulness can be removed from people who are not considered to be sinners in the sight of God. Perhaps you will explain, as this is another point where I disagree with you. But I know exactly the source of your weakness on this subject. It is in the fact that you believe sin to be synonymous with human nature, a doctrine you have derived mainly from R. Roberts and his successors and not from the Word of God. Your next statement is proof of this, or rather, should I say your repetition of the Roberts statement? You say of Jesus, and I assume you mean in respect of actual conduct as a man, that

4). "THOUGH TEMPTED LIKE US, HE NEVER FAILED TO FOLLOW GOD'S WILL IN EVERY ASPECT OF HIS LIFE. ALL THE REST OF MAN-KIND, HOWEVER GOOD ANY ONE INDIVIDUAL MAY BE, FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD."

If you are quoting Romans 3:23 to mean in the active voice and in reference to our day, then you are wresting Paul's words out of context, for all had not personally sinned when Paul made his statement, neither did he consider at the time of writing that all the Patriarchs and Prophets had come short of the glory of God. To what then was this referring? The answer is given by Paul in Galatians 3:22 and refers to all men being constituted sinners when Adam sinned, but not actual sinners, being in the loins of Adam God concluded all under that one sin, so that by the righteousness of one (not in Adam's loins by germinated life), the free gift by grace might abound unto many. Romans 5:8-18. You do not accept this by reason of being obsessed with the doctrine that sin is a physical element of the flesh, hence your unscriptural and conflicting statements in answer to your own question -

5). "HOW THEN CAN THEIR SINS BE CLEANSED AND SINFULNESS REMOVED?"

In effect you are saying that mortality is sin, and death is the only answer to its removal, the flesh or human nature being the equivalent of condemnation which passed upon all men. Thus you say of Jesus,

6). "HIS DESCENT FROM MARY ENABLED HIM TO BEAR OUR NATURE AND ITS CONDEMNATION, BUT GOD'S FATHERHOOD ENABLED HIM TO BE A SINLESS BEARER THEREOF."

Thus you are saying Jesus was an independent person inside a human body of condemnation, and was not accountable for His condemned flesh as other men born of the will of man. You make a nonsense of the true issue by mixing and confusing the legal with the physical. Every baby born is a sinless bearer of human nature in regard to actual responsibility, but in the legal sense of Romans 5 is born under the Federal Constitution of Sin, but until enlightened is not responsible, yet mortality is not the result or penalty for Adam's sin but the result of being born of parents of the same corruptible nature like Adam at creation. You do not accept this, but it is true. You confuse the death Paul speaks of in Romans 5 with the death common to Adam's nature at his creation, and so follows your statement which cannot be fully substantiated by Scripture that

7). "MAN CAN ONLY BE FULLY FREE FROM TEMPTATION IF HE IS ALSO FREED FROM MORTALITY. THE SAME WAS TRUE OF JESUS; HE NEEDED TO BE REDEEMED FROM DEATH TO BE FREED FROM THE TEMPTATION TO SIN. HIS TOTAL OBEDIENCE SHOWED HIM UNDESERVING OF DEATH: IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF IT," (ACTS 2:24), OR AS CLAUSE VIII EXPRESSES IT: 'HE OBTAINED A TITLE TO RESURRECTION BY PERFECT OBEDIENCE.' "

In your article I find so many vague expressions lacking in explanation, especially to your own members, and how they are dressed up in "Roberts dazzle," probably intended to be. But it does not

dazzle any who seek truth on the basis of Scripture teaching. You state incorrectly that Jesus by His obedient sacrifice overcame the power of sin in Himself and showed he was deserving of immortality. The opposite is the case. Jesus overcame all temptation and was without sin, thus proving that He was worthy of God's gift of eternal life and, as you have said, was undeserving of death. Why not then a change to immortality? What was the true reason for his death seeing his nature could be changed to that of Angels'? The answer is, that He would have "abided alone" - no sacrificial death would have taken place - and no fruit would have resulted. Thus his death was not a penalty for Himself, nor due to his nature as you teach but a supreme voluntary sacrifice for all men under sin (Adam's).

Another point arises. How is it that Jesus was not redeemed from death yet you state He needed to be? Again, Why do you say and believe that the common death by natural decay is "the law of sin and death" and to participate is the only way to be redeemed from it as you suggest Jesus was? Paul did not die a physical death when he stated he had been made free from "the law of sin and death," how then was he made free? His answer is plain. The law of the spirit of life which was in Christ before he laid down his natural life for all as a Ransom. If His death was in any way due to Himself then God could not justly use Him as a Ransom for all. Again I disagree with your statement that man can only be fully free from temptation if he is also freed from mortality. Genesis disproves this theory, and so does Paul. Adam in the same nature as ourselves, was placed in the garden of Eden and had free will to desire certain things. He had no temptation or inclination to sin until God gave him certain conditions to observe, his natural continuance of life under these conditions being contingent on his obedience. Immortality, by the way, is not mentioned to Adam. Now if there had been no law given to Adam he would have remained free from sin yet corruptible, or capable of dying, so as Paul says, "Where there is no law, there is no transgression" Romans 4:15. He also states of those under the law previous to conversion to Christ, "The motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members... But now we are delivered from the law... Is the law sin? Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." In obeying from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto them, the Roman converts were made free from sin Romans 6:17,18. Tell me where any of these converts who were freed from sin, were the subjects of physical death? Also tell me what you think now of the position of Adam as I related it.

What are these misleading phrases you continually use? Firstly you have Jesus by birth of Mary as a "sinless bearer of our condemnation," and God's Father-hood enabling Him to be a "sinless bearer thereof," but you do not say when this took effect. Then further on in your remarks you say of Jesus that "He was a sinless bearer of Man's condemnation" and His death allowed God to righteously abrogate (i.e. cancel) the "law of sin and death" in His case. And you say resurrection was this cancellation, which is absolutely untrue. Jesus suffered inflicted death, in agony. His resurrection did not abrogate or cancel the death He suffered, but it did abrogate "the law of sin and death" for mankind, which was the sole reason for His sacrifice - to suffer willingly the death due to Adam and all in him on the Federal principle described by Paul in Romans 5, so that by dying in symbol with Christ men might have redemption, having died unto sin as a master so fulfilling Paul's words "For he that is dead is freed from sin."

I will touch on a few of the things you express in your concluding remarks, as I think I have shown my disgust for the Norris doctrine you have repeated in regard to the fact that the death of Jesus was to prevent further possible temptation to sin, and would be for "The betterment of his body," the new Norris doctrine.

8). "HIS PERFECT OBEDIENCE (POSSIBLE BECAUSE HE WAS GOD'S ONLY BEGOTTEN SON) ALLOWED GOD TO RAISE HIM FROM THE DEAD. JESUS THUS DECLARED BY HIS LIFE AND IN HIS DEATH THAT GOD'S CONDEMNATION OF SIN WAS WHOLLY JUST."

I cannot wholly agree with you, for was not Adam also God's Son and was he not capable of obedience to God? If not, why put him under obedience while incapable and then condemn him? This is why Jesus was able to confirm your statement "That God's condemnation of sin (not Adam's flesh) was wholly just.

9). “SIN HAD TO BE DESTROYED ON THE TERRITORY IT HAD CLAIMED WHEN ADAM AND EVE DISOBEYED GOD’S COMMAND. ONLY IN JESUS WAS THIS ACCOMPLISHED. IT HAD BEEN PROVED BY DECLARATION OF GOD, AND BY MAN’S EXPERIENCE THAT ‘THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO NOT ONE” [ROMANS 3:10, quoting PSALM 14:3]; WHEN JESUS CAME SHARING OUR NATURE, HE RECOGNISED IT FOR WHAT IT IS. HE STATED WHAT IS FOUND IN MATTHEW 15:19,20, “OUT OF THE HEART PROCEED EVIL THOUGHTS, ETC.”, ONLY BY ENTERING INTO THE EXPERIENCES OF ALL MANKIND COULD HE BE THEIR SAVIOUR, RECONCILING THEM TO GOD.”

I remarked earlier that sin cannot be destroyed once it has been committed. I do not understand therefore this destruction of sin you speak of, nor what territory you say it claimed when Adam and Eve disobeyed God, unless you are again repeating the false theory that Human Nature is synonymous of sin and that Jesus being human nature, had to be destroyed. Yet you know it was not destroyed for He saw no corruption. This fact forced A.D. Norris to accept that Jesus rose incorruptible, in flesh energised by Spirit. You quote Romans 3:10 and refer to Paul quoting Psalm 14:3 and you say it had been proved by declaration of God that “There is none righteous, no, not one.” If you consider the context you will find it refers to the ungodly, the workers of iniquity, yet verse 5 says “God is in the generation of the righteous, and verse 6, “Because the Lord in his refuge.’ Why such words in Psalm 15 if there was none righteous? Here again you blame human nature. Then you say Jesus Christ recognised it for what it is and you quote His words, again out of context, by making them applicable to all men, whereas He speaks also of a good man bringing out good treasures from his heart which do not defile him. Thus Jesus would have recognised that Adam’s disobedience defiled his conscience, but not his flesh as Clause V accuses God of doing by implanting a physical law of Adam’s being transmittable to his posterity. Yes, Jesus did recognise our nature for what it is. He recognised that God created man capable of obedience to His commandments which the Apostle says (1 John 5:3) “Are not grievous” nor impossible to keep. And therefore Jesus by keeping those commandments in pleasing God, and in the very same nature of Adam and all men, justified God in His condemnation of sin. This is how sin was condemned in the flesh, not that sin was present in it as you falsely teach. You speak of Jesus entering into the experiences of mankind and only in this way could He be their Saviour, reconciling them to God. I understand from the Scriptures, these experiences were to fit Him for His heavenly Priesthood (Hebrews 2:17,18 and 4:14-16), that the reconciling to God was by His sacrificial death in cancelling out the debt of life owed by Adam in his being allowed to live out his natural life of 930 years – our debt of existence also being included, and God’s Federal Principal being established (Romans 5:1-12). Please take note here that we were not actual sinners when Adam sinned, neither were we actual sinners when Christ died, in fact we did not exist. Hence God’s marvellous introduction of the Federal Principal in concluding all under the one sin of Adam that the debt paid by Jesus (the righteousness of One) might be available to all, on the principal of enlightenment, belief, and faith in the Saviour of the world.

In conclusion. This is my third effort in writing to you on this subject which should be clear to all of us if we really desire Truth and Salvation. It is the Statement of Faith which has caused the contention and the continual error of teaching, and your problem at present. You may hope the problem will go away. It won’t; there are some questions that have to be answered, like why so many people in high places are so evasive, so confused, so determined to avoid the facts to be known. If this is not the case, you will not be afraid to insert my reply in your Magazine where your readers can be free to make their own judgement, and they can write to you and to me if they please.

I remain Yours Sincerely in the service of God and His Son, P. Parry.

Footnote:- “that Jesus was victorious over sin for Himself” is strictly correct for had He not been successful in this He would have been in the same position as Adam after he failed. We know the Christadelphian position is that Jesus is supposed to have redeemed Himself by laying down His life but this is not true. Jesus never needed redeeming for He was never sold to sin.

THE TWO SONS OF GOD

Chapter Fifteen.

Recapitulation

I.

Our aim has been to write upon The Two Sons of God in a collective as well as in an individual sense; the object being to prove that the first son, whether considered as one person or as many, was made a slave to sin, and became the property of the grave: the other Son was never in this calamity. The second Adam was always free and “undefiled,” and those in Him are without condemnation; this freedom accrues from adoption on the basis of intelligent obedience. It is called being free by truth, and such freedom is complete, the subjects of it being said to be “free indeed.”

The origin of all things and of man was spirit, of the nature of which the wisest are ignorant, as also of the mode of its change to the visible creation.

The headship and responsibility belong to man, for though first in the transgression the consequences to posterity are not charged upon the woman - both are regarded as one.

The nature of the first sin, and the circumstances under which it was committed, is virtually what all sin has been since, forbidden use of natural desire. Evil is the penalty or result of sin, and always to be distinguished from it. The sentence of death took away life and restored nonentity of personal being and consciousness - the end was dust. By disobedience the way to God’s presence and favour was cut off; and man was estranged from spiritual life and from fellowship with the Spirit. His alienation and consequent nakedness being deeply felt and lamented, covering for sin was provided on the condition of repentance or change of mind and conduct. The former innocence of the sinner was seen in the spotlessness of the victims offered, a premonition of the death of the just for the unjust, the strongest motive to pity and gratitude. The spilling of the life in the dust displayed the magnitude of the offence and the impossibility of restoration without the intervention of the life Giver. The twofold character of the world is seen in Cain and Abel; and the first climax of universal sin in the deluge; the ark and its human occupants testifying to the watchfulness and justice of Jehovah in separating the chaff from the wheat.

With Noah the world began afresh, the bow of peace reassured men’s hearts, being a symbol of the guiding hand of the Creator. Faith beyond the grave, through divinely appointed sacrifice, is the grand characteristic of the Abrahamic age. In the patriarch it received a god-like test and confirmation in the offering of his only son. The end of hope was - “the Lord will provide.”

II.

The annual Day of Atonement was a shadow too large and deep for the average Jewish mind to grasp and fathom. The dying victims and the crimson sea constituted too vast and imposing a ceremony to be fulfilled and put away by the valueless blood of a young Galilean peasant and carpenter. In what humility God came forth to reconcile the world unto Himself! and the world slew Him in the person of His only Son! He, says the apostle, is our propitiation, and not for us only but for the sins of the whole world. Jesus also became “the tabernacle of witness for the truth. The true sanctuary was to consist of human hearts, circumcised without hands, wherein the Deity should be enshrined throughout eternity, first, as in the holy, afterwards as in the most holy place. This House being Christ’s was purchased and cleansed with His own blood. He is the light thereof and the perpetual bread of the Divine presence. To see Him and to eat of this bread is to live forever. The rent veil reveals “the end.” In Him the Father dwells with man. He is the newly slain yet living way; and saith, “I am he that liveth, and was dead and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen.” The Holy of Holies, or man’s heaven, is not “beyond the stars;” but is a morally and religiously purified earth whereon God’s will shall be done even as it is in heaven. The Burnt Sacrifice declared the destruction of sin by the perfection of the offering; which was conspicuously strengthened by the prohibition of all unclean beasts as victims for sin. The imperfection of the shadow was seen in the high priest’s offering for himself before he could consecrate his house. Christ offered

once - Himself for the sins of the world. The two goats were needful, the first to show the effect of sin upon the sacrifice on whom it was laid, the second, the justice of escape from death after paying the price of ransom.

III.

The phrase the second Adam carries within it all the essential parallels between Adam and Jesus. It involves a similitude of nature, of situation, and of trial; but not an identity of issue. The relationship of the one to the other was as necessary as the perfect freedom and obedience of the latter were to the deliverance of the former. The starting was the same in each case; the ending was failure in the first, victory in the last. The two trials were human; the miraculous powers and communications which either had from and with heaven were no part of and had no concern in the moral probationary career. Divine Sonship and training were not affected and biased by the supernatural. Absolute perfection is beyond the reach of men and of angels too - it belongs to God alone. But perfect obedience in the sense in which perfection is in the New Testament predicated of men, is possible to the saints though extremely rare. God imposes no law impossible to obey, and requires no obedience impossible to yield. The source of a river may be pure and delightful, while its unchained waters spread devastation far and wide; and those propensities and passions which are chaste and holy operation within divine limitations are mad and ruinous without restraint. We are strengthened and comforted by the example of those persons who have walked righteously before God. Death ruined creation, but love healed the breach. The love of God can only be felt by man in proportion to his ability to look upon God as the Father of Jesus, and Jesus as the Son of God. The scale on which we do this is that fixed by our own feelings, well cultured, towards our own offspring; and the man is more to be pitied than envied who can dwell on this theme without emotion. But no person who does not deplore in all its depth the effect of sin can know in its height the power of love. The only heir of all things is Jesus. This right comes of His being God's Son, a claim denied to the highest angel. While we behold Jesus acting as a servant of men, we must not overlook the fact that He took upon Himself this form, but in reality He was by birthright Lord of all. Herein lies His redemptive power.

IV.

Jesus is the counterpart and substance of more than one Bible celebrity. Melchisedec and Aaron were types of His priesthood. The perfection of the priest was no less requisite than that of the sacrifice. The Seed of God finds its strongest exemplification in the person of Jesus. The term applies also to the saints who by adoption and covering are held faultless, and to be so presented, how strongly this corroborates the faultlessness of Jesus the Redeemer. A due and proper attention to this title - the Seed - will reveal the root of "the tree of life" on to which the saints are grafted as branches. Bethel, or the house of God, is scarcely less forcible as indicating not only the separation of its elements from the world, but its giving prominence and original purity to the Lord of the household. He is described as the foundation and headstone. The flesh is not sin, nor is it evil, for God pronounced it "very good," and it remains the same in both men and beasts. But it is capable of sin, and therefore of producing or bringing evil on itself by the transgression of law. But it is equally capable of keeping law and evading evil. The necessity for this condition lies in the justice of punishment for crime and reward for obedience; and the man is said to be in the flesh or not in the flesh as he is living in one or other of these states. Those who have become Christians, though they afterwards walk unworthy of their calling, are still described as not in the flesh, because they formally passed from the flesh to the spirit, in the sense in which we are now using these terms.

V.

"In the Spirit" is sometimes literal, at others figurative. Literal, it refers to the immortalisation of the believers of the gospel at the second appearing of Christ; figurative, to that state of the understanding and the heart by which a true believer is known to God as His. Only Christians are in the spirit in this sense. The Spirit in a miraculous manner appears to have been at times in the possession of bad as well as good men, from which it seems that to be in the spirit, or to have the mind and disposition of Christ, is of more

value than that faith which removes mountains. "The natural man" is the mind unenlightened, or if partially illuminated still opposed to the teaching of the Scriptures. This is sin. It is a great evil, but it is no sin, nor indeed a calamity to be in the flesh or natural body, but rather an advantage, for through it we may rise to the spiritual body. "This mortal must put on immortality." He that is spiritual is not of necessity one who has undergone bodily change, but one who has understood and embraced the things of the Spirit comprised in the formula - "the Gospel of the Kingdom of God," and who endeavours to adorn the doctrine in all things. The last thing that would occur to such a person would be to boast of his spiritual mindedness.

VI.

No sooner was death in the world, according to the sentence pronounced on Adam, than the Almighty in His mercy promised life to the man who had brought death upon himself. But He promised it conditionally, and the conditions are seen in the gospel; a system of means for salvation fully developed after the ascension of Christ. His last charge to His disciples by the Spirit was, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be condemned. This promise of immortality excludes the popular belief of its present possession in the mortal body, and rests all men's hopes on the resurrection of the dead. The inheritance - the only inheritance - offered in the Bible to man is the earth which he now inhabits. For many thousands of years the earth has been gradually improving in beauty and fitness as a dwelling place, and will become still more beautiful through the action of those laws by which the Creator controls her, together with the culture she receives from men. The natural beauties of the earth are frequently the theme of the Psalmist and the Prophets. The declared purpose of God is to remove the wicked by death, and to give the earth into the possession of the righteous, at the head of whom is placed His own Son Jesus the Christ. "The meek shall inherit the earth; they shall dwell therein for ever. They shall flourish; they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." This is the Creator's gracious offer to man - immortality and the everlasting inheritance of the earth. The blood of His own Son was shed to secure these blessings.

VII.

The sinless Jesus was made the sin bearer, and all Scripture which speaks of sin, as His means His by imputation. It was "laid on Him," not born in Him. Many hyperboles concerning the sorrows and sufferings of the Christ occur in the Psalms. Sinful flesh is an impossible thing, because it makes the Creator of the flesh the author of sin. All human flesh, except that which has been redeemed by Christ, belongs to sin by right of sale and service, and is therefore Sin's flesh, There is no more mischievous error in translation in the whole Bible than Romans 8:3, which should not read "sinful" but "sin's" flesh. The Holy Spirit is by many supposed to intercede for man because his fleshly nature is full of sin; but this is to make God the perpetrator of a contradiction. Why not have made the flesh so as not to need Holy Spirit? How can a man repent of what he cannot help or feel thankful for intercession about -that which is imposed upon him by nature? This amounts to an abolition of free will and thus destroys responsibility.

VIII.

The seed of the serpent is wholly a figure of speech. It signifies the posterity of Adam only; but it never applied to any who have been adopted into and remain in the family of God. In other words the children of the second Adam are not regarded as the children of the first. When a man is "in-Christ" he is no longer "in Adam." Christ was related to Adam by His mother, but was never in Adam, because God was His father. The woman's seed is distinctive. It affirms a seed not of men. Literally, this was true of Jesus; figuratively, it is true of His brethren.

It is by adoption that we become members of the new creation in Christ Jesus; but this can only result from our receiving Jesus as the Christ, and believing the things testified of Him by the prophets:- that He should be the Son of God - that He should be slain as a sin-offering - that He should rise from the dead - that He should be a high priest, and, finally, that He should reign over the nations of the earth upon the throne of His father, David. Those who cordially receive Jesus in this manner, as the Scripture declares Him, to them He gives power to become the sons of God. The change of mind and heart which

ensues upon the reception of Jesus as above described, attested by baptism into Him for remission of sins that are past, is designated being “born again,” after which we ought to desire the unadulterated milk of the word, then strong meat, that we may attain unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

IX.

Election is conditional. The elect are the believers; and belief arises from acquisition of testimony to facts and promises. God has elected those only who believe and obey the truth, as revealed in the gospel of the Kingdom of God. These He has fore-known and fore-ordained to glorification because they believe.

X.

Temptation arises from within. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts. A man is drawn away of his own lust. This is pictured in various ways, but the root of the matter is in the heart. Things external may be the occasion of sin, but the real cause lies in man’s own desire. Desire is holy, just, and good in itself; but out of bounds it is sin, and followed by all evil. Let us not mistake the shadow for the substance.

XI.

Jesus was the Son of God by birth. He was the Christ by anointing. Christ signifies anointed. When Jesus died, the Christ or the -anointed died; but not the ‘*Chrisma*,’ or anointing spirit. This is God’s spirit. There is one Spirit. Saul was still God’s anointed after his rebellion and casting off. The enmity subsisting between Jew and Gentile, also between God and all mankind, was slain in the cutting off of Messiah; but the full reconciliation is yet to be accomplished. Jesus is the great peace-maker, and will establish this desirable oneness when He reigns in Jerusalem over the nations. All will then agree to serve Him with one consent. It is now our duty and our privilege to exhibit that same spirit which in Him gave His life for the world.

XII.

Two great systems are taught in the Bible; the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity. The Papacy has so far identified itself with the latter as to wear the word “Mystery” on the front of the Pope’s mitre; and, as if to acknowledge the charge, removed the badge at the taunts of Protestants. The high priesthood, sacrifice, forgiveness of sins, and regal authority over all, make up a huge and monstrous counterfeit to which no other institution has any pretension. It is a complete usurpation of Christ’s place. Christ will utterly destroy it at His appearing and His Kingdom. Until then it will flourish in its spiritual, if not its temporal power. The Sun is a title or figure applicable to the glorified believers as well as to Jesus. They are portrayed as shining as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father; and constitute the light of the world.

XIII.

The Kingdom of Israel, of which we have treated under the title of the “Old Millennium,” was not the only Kingdom of God, but it was a type of that Kingdom when it shall be re-established with Jesus Christ upon the throne of David, and His apostles on twelve thrones ruling the twelve tribes of Israel, and the other saints ruling over the nations. No person who fails to comprehend and believe these things can show that he understands “the things concerning the Kingdom of God, and the Name of Jesus Christ,” preached by Philip and Paul; and on account of which belief, men and women were baptised for remission of past sins, and hope of eternal life in the Kingdom of God. While Israel were in obedience to Moses’ law, and dwelling in their own land they formed ‘A Name’ brilliant and powerful, and were a shadow of the ‘New Name.’

XIV.

It would require the pen of a poet and prophet to portray the glories of the Golden Age. Eden was a faint image of it, and the palmiest days of King Solomon another type. All important questions of morals, estate, religion, and politics will find a clear, just, and final solution in that happy era; delivered from the numberless ills now springing out of the human heart, mankind will rest and flourish. Idleness intemperance, covetousness, and their attendant crimes will be crushed out of society; and the labour of the hands will be more than sufficient to supply all natural and well regulated wants. Under the tuition of Christ and the Saints, men's minds will be greatly enlarged and brightened; and, directed heavenward, the leisure for devotion will stamp upon them the impress of their Creator.

The New Name, yet to be "exalted in all the earth," is composed of obedient believers of the Gospel - Jew and Gentile. Unto this Name every knee shall bow; and through the administration of those who constitute it, "the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the depths of the sea." Christ's gospel is designed to take out of the Gentiles a people for His Name; those who testify to their intelligent and hearty acceptance of it by baptism into the Name, become component parts of Christ's Body mystical, and heirs of that inheritance which is undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Conclusion

It was not our design to exhaust the numerous topics spoken of in this Treatise, but rather to present them suggestively, leaving to the interested and studious reader the pleasure of discovering in the Scriptures, much more testimony that will sustain and beautify the various points so briefly and imperfectly sketched out. Let him bring to the subject a calm, earnest, candid mind; let him think of the lesson inculcated by Christ, "Except ye become teachable as a little child, ye can, in no wise enter the Kingdom of God."

Brother Edward Turney