

Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 181

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Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends, Loving Greetings

Romans, the first of Paul's letters is reckoned to be the longest and most influential, written at the height of the apostle's career. It conveys the richness of his personal experience of Jesus and the full maturity of his thinking. Paul sets forth the gospel which he has been preaching and the general theme is the good news about Jesus and the reconciliation He has procured for us. It displays all the glory of the atonement.

The letter was written in the winter months of 57-58 AD from Corinth, during Paul's third journey. It is much less personal than his other letters, since he is not acquainted with those to whom he writes. It is rather more a treatise than a letter. Paul dictated his letters, but often added covering notes and greetings in his own bold handwriting. Evidently the first fifteen chapters of the letter's sixteen chapters are likely to constitute the original letter as sent to Rome, while the last three verses of chapter 16 might well have been Paul's covering note accompanying the letter to Rome. It is also likely that a copy of the original letter would have been retained at Corinth.

William Tyndale wrote a lengthy prologue to his translation of the letter to the Romans and for the most part it is taken from Martin Luther's prologue, and it goes as follows:-

“Forasmuch as this epistle is the principle and most excellent part of the new testament, and most pure evangelion, that is to say glad tidings and that we call gospel, and also a light and a way in unto the whole scripture, I think it meet, that every Christian man not only know it by rote and without the book, but also exercise himself therein evermore continually, as with the daily bread of the soul. No man verily can read it too oft or study it too well: for the more it is studied the easier it is, the more it is chewed the pleasanter it is, and the more groundly it is searched the preciouser things are found in it, so great treasure of spiritual things lieth hid therein.”

“First we must mark diligently the manner of speaking of the apostle, and above all things know what Paul meaneth by these words, the law, sin, grace, faith, righteousness, flesh, spirit and such like, or else read thou it never so oft, thou shalt lose thy labour.”

The failure to discern these terms properly as used in Romans may truly be said to be the cause for Christadelphians to “lose their labour.” Their intransigent determination to misapply Romans 8:3 in order to bolster their false doctrine of original sin is something to be wondered at. As a friend from long ago once remarked, “Christadelphian Bibles must automatically drop open at Romans 8 they relish it so.”

When in Romans 7 Paul says, “What I would, that I do not: but what I hate, that I do,” he is not to be understood as saying that there was in his physical make-up something which compelled him to do evil or conversely prevented him from doing good: this would be in direct contradiction of his own claim: “I can do

all things through Christ.” So when Paul says, “In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” he is speaking from the standpoint of a Jew under the Law or as Dr. Thomas phrases it, “an unenlightened son of the flesh.”

The imputation of sin does not make our flesh physically sinful: it alienates us from God legally. When Paul recognized this state he put on Christ as we can. For Jesus’ one act of obedience, when applied to the individual by faith in the symbol of baptism, can restore us to grace and favour. That is why Paul can commence the 8th chapter with the words “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” This is no mere figure of speech but for the true believer, a present reality to be prized above all else.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” James 4.

Love to all, Helen Brady.

Extracts from a Letter from Eric Cave:-

Dear Russell, Greetings in Jesus Anointed. I recently mentioned to a Christadelphian that in the original mss. of “Elpis Israel” John Thomas had referred to our Lord as our “substitutionary Testator” but that some miscreant at the Christadelphian Office had ‘corrected’ this to read simply “mediator.” He said he thought he had an original copy at home and would check it. Later he rang me to say that in fact his copy was published in 1908/9 and that in the editorial preface C.C.Walker listed the corrections he had made, including the above alteration on the grounds that it was a more accurate description as the context of the doctors arguments proved! *(see note at end of letter).

Some Christadelphian friends of long standing had a copy of Philip Yancey’s book “What’s So Amazing About Grace”. They too agreed with all that John Stevenson said about it, and had all been unable to put it down until they had finished it and pressed their copy onto me with the promise to collect it on their next visit. I too have read it with interest and profit. But how sad that a writer of such ability should believe that the purpose of divine grace is to get more people into churches and chapels, mosques and temples. The enclosed cutting from the Sunday Telegraph (reproduced on the last page of this C.L.) demonstrates the failure of the approach in an increasingly secular world. “Worship God” said the angel when the apostle fell down at his feet to worship him. “Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole (duty) of man” concluded the wisest of the children of men in Ecclesiastes 12:13. “Behold, the fear of YHWH, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding” says Job, the man who spoke of YHWH that which was right (Job 28:28 and 42:7,8.). Paul summarizes the situation in 1 Corinthians 1, “The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.” And Paul concludes that chapter with the observation that “Of him (YHWH) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption: that according as it is written he that glorieth, let him glory in YHWH” (Jeremiah 9:23,24). Like Paul who was indebted both to Greeks and Barbarians, both to wise and unwise we can be grateful to Philip Yancey for his exposition of “Grace” but with Paul the “preaching of the cross” remains our purpose in this life.

The mention of “those who are saved” reminds me of some notes I once made on the parable of the labourers in the vineyard which Yancey cannot understand. Clearly the remuneration of the denarius paid to every labourer represents eternal life. One cannot receive part eternal life, or two eternal lives. The parable, exclusive to Matthew 20 really begins in chapter 19 with the question of the young man in verse 16, “One came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” to which Jesus responds with the statement that there is none good but one, that is God, but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments, and on being further pressed tells the young man that if he would be perfect he should sell all that he had and give to the poor, and he would have treasure in heaven, after which he was exhorted to come and follow Jesus. At which saying he went away sorrowful for he had great possessions.

It was not the first time that Jesus had been asked the question. The lawyer in Luke 10:25 seeking to tempt our Lord had said “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” and having received a similar reply and seeking to justify himself, asked the further question “Who is my neighbour?” and was rewarded with the parable of the good Samaritan. Mark 10:17 records the same incident as in Matthew 20 of the rich young ruler, but does not follow it up with the parable of the labourers in the vineyard; nor does Luke mention the parable in 18:18 when he too records the same incident. But the really significant item for you and I is that the disciples themselves were amazed at the requirement to sell all that the rich young man had and give to the poor. In Matthew, Jesus said “It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom.” In Mark they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves “Who then can be saved?” and in Luke those that heard the same words asked the same question “Who then can be saved?”

But these men were already saved. Their names were written in the book of life. Peter had received the keys of the Kingdom. They were promised the honour of sitting on thrones judging the tribes of Israel. They were cleansed by the Word which their Lord had spoken. God Himself had given them to His Son. The incident appears to have taken place in Perea on the way to Jerusalem and death. Jesus had said in an earlier chapter, Luke 14, “Whosoever he be OF YOU that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.” They knew these things, but they had not sunk in. Yet they followed Him “Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.” They had those words; they had eternal life, as Paul confirms later to all that labour in the vineyard and walk in the Spirit, “There is NOW no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit... For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is LIFE (eternal life) and peace.

That is why Jesus gave the parable of the labourers in the vineyard to His disciples. It was firstly a mild rebuke to those who quarrelled among themselves which should be greatest, those who asked to sit on His right hand and His left. The reward for labouring was eternal life, but that in no way contradicted the parable of the talents that some should have dominion over two cities, or five, or ten. “Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one; and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building... Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ... the day shall declare it... If any man’s work shall abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

We are to be rewarded for our work, but the gift of eternal life cannot be earned. “Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?”

What shall we do to inherit eternal life? Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospels, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come eternal life.”

With love in Jesus to you and yours and all who contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Brother Eric Cave.

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* Footnote: We here reproduce the page from “Elpis Israel” (page 213) in which Dr. Thomas says that Jesus Christ is the “substitutional testator.” C.C.Walker admits liability for altering this to read “mediator.” He claims this was a “correction... on the grounds that it was a more accurate description as the context of the doctor’s arguments proved.” Poppycock! Dr Thomas in this paragraph is quite clear and precise in his choice of his legal terms and is speaking of a will and testament. Early in the paragraph he writes of Jesus Christ as “...having received nothing promised in the will,” later he refers to “covenants,” then “the substitutional testator” and “the executor.” There is nothing in the context about Jesus Christ as mediator and therefore the change made by C.C.Walker replacing “substitutional; testator” by “mediator” on the grounds he claims is nothing short of deceit. Had he not been so dishonest he would have said that his purpose was to make the writings of Dr. Thomas fit in with his own cherished beliefs. - - Russell.

THE THINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

therein for ever,” and, again, “ wait on the Lord, and keep my way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the Land.”*

But, even after his resurrection, when he was made both Lord and Christ, though “heir of all things,” yet were not all things subjected to him. He received neither the land nor the sceptre; but ascended to heaven, having received nothing promised in the will. He left the land, the kingdom, Abraham, and all the prophets, behind him. In after years, the land was reduced to a wilderness, its cities laid waste, and the Hebrew commonwealth dissolved. It became the battle ground of crusaders, Saracens, and Turks; and until this day, has been subjected to the worst of the heathen. Thirty-nine centuries have passed away since God confirmed his promise of the land to Christ; who has been waiting eighteen hundred years at his right hand for its fulfilment. Is Jesus never to possess the land from sea to sea, and from the rivers to its extremities? Are Turks and Arabs, and a motley crew of papists, Greeks, and Fallahs, to perpetuate its reproach for ever? Or is a gentile dominion to be established there to lord it over Asia? Where is there a believer of the gospel of the kingdom to be found who will affirm it? Millions of “professing Christians” imagine something of the kind; but they are infidels, and insulters of God; not believers in the “covenants of promise.” To affirm any other destiny for Palestine and Syria, than that slated in the promise, is in effect to tell God that he has spoken falsely. But, on the ground that “he cannot lie,” what does the nature of the case necessitate in order to fulfil the promise to Abraham and Christ.? This is the answer, and let the reader mark it well:—to meet the demands of the covenant it is indispensable that Jesus return to Canaan, and that he raise Abraham from the dead. Reason and scripture agree in this. Hence, the second advent is as necessary as the first. The appearing in sinful flesh was necessary for the dedication of the covenant by the death of the **substitutional testator**; and the second appearing in the spiritual nature in power and great glory, for the administration of the will by the sole executor. For it is manifest, that the will cannot be administered except by one who is all powerful. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all constitutionally in them, are Legatees: The legacies bequeathed to them are eternal life, the land of Canaan, and “a city,” or state,” whose architect and builder is God.” Hence, the executor must be able to form them out of the dust, and to give them life for ever. He must be mighty in battle; for he will have to expel the Mohammedans, catholics, and other barbarians, from the land; and to restore the kingdom of David “as in the days of old.” The accomplishment of these, and many other things to be hereafter developed, makes the future pre-millennial advent of Christ a necessity. There is no room for opinion upon the subject; for opinion implies doubt. It is a matter of absolute certainty; and the belief of it is as essential to a participation in the kingdom of God, as faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord. For a man to deny the advent of Jesus to Palestine in power and glory before the millennium is to proclaim to men and angels his

*1 Psalm. XXXVII.29,34.

Important Facts to Face at This Time – Year 2000 A.D.

I have just been reading parts of the “Small Voice” magazine for October 1992 where every subject fails to be dealt with satisfactorily on account of the false view handed down by Robert Roberts in 1873 where, in contradiction of the truth he and Dr. Thomas held in 1869 that there was no physical change in Adam’s nature, he, Robert Roberts, changed his view to that of a condemnation of the physical flesh involving a proneness and bias to disobedience which was not there before and ending in death-by-creation instead of judicial death-by-sin (from which Adam was redeemed).

The truth that Dr. Thomas stated in Eureka contained nothing about the redemption of human nature but a purchasing from ‘Sin’ personified as a Master unto whom Adam, by disobedience to God had sold himself and all in his loins, thus needing release or ransom from the dominion of this Bondmaster. Thus Dr. Thomas perceived that it was a legal position not a physical condition which Adam and his posterity required to be released from.

Jesus was not in the loins of Adam though of the same physical flesh, neither was He a servant of Sin nor under that dominion. He was a servant of His Father from the age of responsibility, though under the authority of His earthly parents until then.

To talk then of Jesus needing redemption from His nature is to reject what Dr. Thomas stated in Eureka (Volume 1 page 20), also what is stated in Hebrews 2:5-10.

“Redemption is release for a ransom, all who become God’s servants are released from a former lord by purchase, the purchaser is God and the ransom paid, the precious blood of Christ (life) as of a lamb without spot and without blemish” (Dr. Thomas).

No change of nature required here.

Now concerning Adam first; “Thou madest Him a little lower than the angels; thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet for in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

To be made a little lower than the angels in nature is not to be made sin. No, as affirmed by David through the Spirit, Adam was made a little lower than the angels at his creation but he does not say it was for the suffering of death. No, this was to give Adam the prospect of everlasting life in the future if he remained obedient and to take effect when God chose to bestow it. Adam failed to retain his right to continue his natural life so that the prospect of life everlasting and natural life in the Garden without the love and mercy of God to redeem, were both a failure.

But we are assured in the Scriptures that redemption was available through the love and mercy of God, for God so loved the world of His creation that He intended it to be a success. This He could see in His foreknowledge which extended beyond Israel under Moses and the Law and was even foreshadowed in the coverings of animal skins through the inflicted shedding of the blood causing death. That this foreshadowed the inflicted death of Christ there can be no doubt, as the Apostle confirmed “It was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin” (Hebrews 10:3-10). Hence the exhortation of God through Isaiah, chapter 42, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles... He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he hath set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law... I the Lord have called thee in righteousness (not in sinful flesh), and will hold thine hand (touch not the unclean), and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant (unclean flesh?) of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.”

This is the reason for the writer to the Hebrews testifying to the Truth revealed to him and his fellow disciples that Jesus was made a little lower than the angels, specifically to be able to suffer death in the place of Adam and all whom Adam sold into bondage of Sin's prison.

Why then all this continual quibbling for the past 130 years or so concerning the nature of Adam and the nature of Jesus? Cannot people who profess to preach the truth perceive the truth that Adam was created a little lower than the angels and also Jesus? Both of flesh and blood and very good?

It is obvious then that the flesh and blood nature of Jesus was exactly the same as that of Adam at creation when God placed him in the Garden of Eden. Here we have two Sons of God, one by creation from the dust of the earth and the other by begetting of a woman of the nature of the first Son - both Sons therefore in nature a little lower than the angels, that is, capable of dying according to the physical law of their being.

Why then have Christadelphians allowed such confusion of doctrine to dull their perception of scriptural truth all these years when it is plain from Hebrews and Genesis that the condemnation of Adam's sin was addressed to his character not to his physical flesh?

The whole root of the trouble goes back, as I have stated earlier, to the year 1873 when Robert Roberts changed the truth of the statements he and Dr. Thomas had made in 1869, to the false statements made in Clause V of the B.A.S.F. but not only is this to be deplored, even what Dr. Thomas stated to be the meaning of redemption in Christ has been corrupted to mean redemption from condemned nature instead of redemption from the power of the Law of Sin and Death; a legal not a physical position.

What Paul speaks in Romans 5 of being made sinners has nothing to do with our physical nature. If it were so then Adam was a sinner at his creation, seeing that we all have that same nature he had at creation.

Being made or constituted sinners does not mean we are personal sinners. When we were in the loins of Adam we were under no law by which we could transgress personally, yet Paul shows how God imputed Adam's sin to all in his loins for one important reason and this was that the one sacrifice for sin, made by Jesus Christ, could operate upon all who accepted it by faith; thereby avoiding the necessity for every individual having to offer a sacrificial substitute for redemption from the power of the Law of Sin and Death under which they were legally concluded (see Romans 5:11-21. Also Galatians 3:20-25 which confirms Romans 5:19,20 which speaks of the offence of Adam).

We do not require redemption from our nature but a deliverance or change to that which is like the angels to die no more. Redemption is possible now and is necessary now. To say it is at the second coming of Jesus Christ is false and hopeless for it is our estrangement from God under the service of sin which requires purchase from it and this is possible without any change of our nature.

We are redeemed and reconciled to God through the purchase price, the blood of the Lamb of God. The dead cannot be raised incorruptible if they have not first been redeemed, or bought with a price, from their former position of slavery under the law of Sin and Death. This is where Dr. Thomas found a difficulty in not believing in a present judgment of the responsible in Christ, in that only the accepted would be raised at Christ's coming, having passed the daily scrutiny of His age-lasting judgment (Hebrews 5:6; 2 Peter 3:14; 1 Peter 4:17,18).

Because of his belief of faithful and unfaithful being raised together corruptible to appear before a judgement seat to determine a worthiness of change to incorruptibility or not. Dr. Thomas had to find a way out of the dilemma Paul had placed him in, so he invented the theory of a process resurrection which is foreign to the teaching of the Lord, the Prophets and Apostles. The above references give it no support, neither 1 Corinthians 15:51,52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Psalm 17:15; Isaiah 26:19. They all speak of the dead which die in the Lord. How can it be harmonized more than in Paul's letter to the Colossians 1:8-28? For indeed Paul speaks in verse 28 of presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus, which is before Christ's coming. In this case we have to be morally ready for presentation to the Lord at His coming whenever that occurs, so we take to ourselves the hope and utterance of faith by David in Psalm 17, "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

Some say and think all will be clear at the resurrection, but does it not depend whether a person is involved in the resurrection of the just? To be involved in the resurrection of the unjust will be clear enough but will be of little profit to any who are not clear now on the teaching of the Apostles of Jesus and must refer to the teaching and uninspired theories of men.

How can people who profess to have the truth deny the Colossian believers had been delivered with Paul and others of like faith from the power of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son, in whom they had redemption through His blood and the forgiveness of sins?

There is no mention of their nature being changed physically to achieve such a position, which is assumed by those who believe redemption to mean a change in the physical nature of the body at or after passing the judgment seat of Christ. This is not redemption, but deliverance, as Paul states in 2 Corinthians 5:1-9. It is deliverance of the house from Heaven to those who have obtained redemption through Christ's blood and the forgiveness of sins - not the forgiveness of having condemned nature. I have never asked God to forgive my parents for producing me in condemned nature, for if human nature is Sin as taught by Christadelphian pioneers and their successors how could my parents have avoided it? And if God changed Adam's nature to increase the tendency to commit further sin and also transmit it to his posterity, how is the prayer for forgiveness of sin justified or feasible when God would be aware that obedience would be impossible in such a nature as presented in the beliefs of the pioneers so-called?

Are we to believe that God sent His Son to cancel out the nature He had changed from very good to very bad, by suffering that terrible death on Calvary as a demonstration of what was due to the nature He had been responsible for changing to flesh full of sin? How can people professing to love justice, mercy and truth fall so low in believing this of the Creator whose attributes were related to Moses in the Mount?

Some years back, having left the Christadelphians for holding to these views, I received a short answer from one whom I had hoped to convert to a realization of these false theories; it was worded, "Sorry you have fallen so low." So to believe the above theories of the pioneers and their false theories (they had some truths) is to be in an exalted position? Not likely. I see no Grace of God in the way the voluntary sacrifice is presented of Christ on Calvary in the books and literature of Christadelphianism of which I also was in some respects blind, hence I do not implore you to read our literature but to examine your own and the Scriptures to find out whether the statements I have been making are true or false. After all, you have often commended the Bereans for doing just that regarding Apostolic preaching.

A good start could be made with the book "The Visible Hand of God" whose author, Robert Roberts, commenced by contradicting the Genesis account and the teaching of Paul, for example in I Corinthians 15:45-49 regarding the creation and nature of the first man Adam. He makes a great stand on page 32 of declaring the impossibility of finding the truth about Adam anywhere but in the Bible and Genesis, yet he goes on to destroy the very truth recorded in Genesis by stating "that at first Adam was free from the action of death in his organization... that death did not await him in the natural path but had to be introduced as a law of his being before he could become mortal. He was an animal nature that would not die left to itself - a natural body free from death."

Further on he speaks of Adam needing a change into the likeness of the divine nature, then he follows with another contradictory statement, "Left to himself as God had made him, he would not have returned to the ground." A complete contradiction also of his fellow pioneer, Dr. Thomas, for neither of these men were writing about the Death-by-Sin of which Paul wrote in Romans 5:12 for Paul certainly knew the difference between Adam's capability of decay and death by creation from the ground and its discontinuance abruptly by infliction of death by sin. A sin which involved no change of nature but a change of Master and under the dominion of the Law of Sin and Death, which Dr. Thomas mistakenly described in Eureka as a physical law, which could not possibly be, in that Paul had been made free from it while still alive when he wrote Romans 8:1,2. Adam would have ceased to exist if the penalty of the Divine Law had been carried out when he became disobedient, therefore without redemption for Adam there would have been no hope for us, we would have perished in him.

His living for 930 years was the result of both Adam's redemption and his created nature being limited to that period of time when he would rest in the dust of the earth, the real Price of redemption (the life of Christ) not having been given on Calvary's Tree, the just for the unjust.

God's declaration to the serpent, to Eve and to Adam in that order, was not a description of the mode of death for sin but the result of losing their place in the Paradise of God and also their posterity being born outside it and by faith in the Seed of the woman yet to come, have hope of life eternal in the future Paradise of God.

Please accept what the Scriptures teach and not what people mistakenly think they do. Genesis 2:17 describes a death sentence, immediately operative upon the violator of the Law and can only be abrogated by the Law-giver.

No one therefore has the right to alter the word of God in Genesis 2:17 to a life sentence. In Genesis 3:17 God imposed no limit on the life of Adam apart from eating bread in the sweat of his face till he returned to the ground. This was 930 years, being the limit of his created nature, not as a result of any miraculous change as falsely stated by Robert Roberts. If it required a miracle to depress to the level of the beasts that perish, which beast did God have in mind that could live as long as Adam did? Mark you even Methuselah is recorded to have lived 39 years longer than Adam. When God performed miracles they were completed as He willed it but Robert Roberts seems to view them as being a little various in regard to Adam's life and Methuselah's. Not equal.

Let us realize that God's sentence for Adam's sin was equal, that is, death by the taking away of life, not a gradual process which ever since Adam has resulted in the experiencing of death in so many diverse ways which cannot be described as equal. God says "Are not my ways equal?" (Ezekiel 18). Was not His Son therefore made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of a death which was equal to that death Adam incurred by sin, an inflicted death by the shedding of blood? Can you not agree that all other modes of death experienced since Adam are unequal, whereby some suffer nothing and others suffer terrible pain, not because they are sinners above those who do not, but for reasons we are not always aware. How can any be so void of understanding in believing that the true martyrs of Jesus Christ died on account of Adam's sin when it was on account of their faith in Him? (Revelation 2:10). Were not their names in the Book of Life and by their faith, not blotted out? (Revelation 3:5). Is it possible to be under Adamic sentence of death and condemnation of physical nature falsely taught as the penalty and be written in the Book of Life? Impossible. Turn from such error and live saith the Lord.

If then we are permitted the opportunity before our Lord's return to assess the position in which we think we stand it would be no doubt profitable in the view of the Nazarenes, to take more into account what they have believed and taught from 1873 than what they have been misrepresented as teaching. The results of this misrepresentation and also suppression of that teaching is now becoming plain for what it is and is gradually having an effect on those people who have been led away by error.

As we approach the Gentile year 2000 let us take seriously to heart that Jesus, by the Grace of God, not the commandment in the sense of no free will, tasted death for every man.

The power to lay down His life and take it again was involved in the statement Jesus made concerning His Father "His commandment is life everlasting," how therefore could a compulsory command to lay down His life be life everlasting and by the Grace of God toward those for whom the willing sacrifice was made?

Put such false doctrine behind you as Paul put away his concept of the law of the letter for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ and take to yourselves mind and decision Paul did "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13,14).

To this end may the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Brother Phil Parry.

A REVIEW OF “THE SLAIN LAMB”

INTRODUCTION

In about 1953 F.J.Pearce first published his review of “The Slain Lamb” by Robert Roberts. The time would seem ripe for a reprint of this review, comprehensive as it is in exposing in detail the logically unsound and unscriptural doctrines on which Christadelphianism is so perilously based. The adoption of this false basis appears to have been due in great measure to an unfortunate character defect in Robert Roberts, one of arrogance and resolute stubbornness in the face of scriptural truths, some of which he had himself once understood, acknowledged and preached.

At this distance we can only speculate upon the reasons for this amazing about face by Robert Roberts, who was clearly an intelligent and gifted man. All we can do now is ponder how different and creditable the Christadelphian past and present might have been and above all how secure their future would be, if Robert Roberts’ unscriptural views had not prevailed following those two evenings in the 1870’s, and if instead, Edward Turney’s noble spirit and stout defence of the true Gospel had appealed to that assembled company. Had that been the case these words would not need to have been written, but on such moments and events the history of religious groups and the fate of individuals depend. A wrong turn was taken by the Christadelphians at that time and the wrong road was chosen, and it can certainly be said that on that occasion, as on many others down the succeeding years, men seem to prefer darkness to light.

Thankfully the light is still in the world for those whose eyes are open to it and whose hearts and minds are receptive and hungry for truth. So once more it is with great joy that we put before you the eternal scriptural truths about human nature and salvation and we hope that these truths will be similarly received with equal joy by the reader, at present in darkness but on the look out for the glorious light.

In order to assist the reader Bold Type has been used in the text of the review to highlight the words of Robert Roberts, as well as the particular page and paragraph number indicating the section of “THE SLAIN LAMB” under scrutiny.

Helen Brady. (January 2000)

THE REVIEW

By

F.J.PEARCE

“Slain Lamb” was written by Robert Roberts in reply to a lecture delivered the previous evening by Edward Turney. Robert Roberts was present at the lecture and frequently interrupted the speaker, much to the inconvenience of the brethren assembled. E. Turney ignored his interruptions for a long time, but at length told R.Roberts from the Platform that he would meet him at any time to debate the matter out before the brethren and sisters (not publicly). Had R.Roberts accepted the invitation extended to him he would have had the opportunity of saying all he had to say without interrupting the speaker at a meeting that he used all his power to prevent taking place. The writer thinks that there are very few of the Christadelphian body who are aware of the circumstances that brought about the deliverance of the lecture by Edward Turney and he has often been told by members of that body that personal hate took the place of brotherly love and that the personal hate was not on their (the Christadelphian) side. All who have made this statement are probably ignorant of the circumstances.

Most Christadelphians have read “Slain Lamb,” but how many have read the lecture to which it was a reply? In that lecture is a statement of the circumstances which led up to its being delivered and the writer would suggest that both “The Slain Lamb” and E.Turney’s lecture be read as it is necessary before one can conscientiously say that R.Roberts has shown the fallacy of Edward Turney’s theory (which foundation R.Roberts believed before him). See E. Turney’s lecture, page 2 of cover. Let the reader be fully persuaded that R.Roberts is fairly answering that which E.Turney contended. Let the reader be fully persuaded that

R.Roberts is opposing what E.Turney is contending for and not what E.Turney is not contending for. Why did R.Roberts write "Slain Lamb" instead of meeting E.Turney? To any unbiased mind reading both, the reason is obvious. R.Roberts could do in writing "Slain Lamb" what he could not do if he met E.Turney in debate, and that is, misrepresent what E.Turney contended for.

I think that R.Roberts was well aware of this. **At the foot of page 3 he says that the Renunciationists renounce that Jesus was the Son of Man, that Jesus Christ came in the flesh.** This is a glaring untruth and R.Roberts knew it. This is one of the statements that he could write, whereas he could not make it in debate because he well knew that E.Turney maintained all through his lecture that there is one flesh of man, as Paul says and that Jesus was the same kind of flesh - bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.

Look at the following example of the contradictory nature of his statement: on page 6, end of first paragraph, **he says "The Renunciationist heresy makes him a mere man."** First he says that the Renunciationists deny that Jesus came in the flesh, then he says that their theory makes Him a mere man' Well can he say to Christadelphian brethren who accept "Slain Lamb" as the answer to the Renunciationist theory without examination in an unbiased manner, "How readest thou?" Further comment of mine just here is unnecessary to invite the reader to read honestly.

R.Roberts had no excuse for misrepresenting what E.Turney contended for, but there is excuse for Christadelphian brethren to-day because they have been accustomed to accept what their leaders have said upon the matter to be the truth and have not troubled themselves to ascertain what these supposed heretics contended for:

The following is an example from Islip Collyer's book "The Meaning of Sacrifice," page 4, "If we ask (our brethren) what it is (the so-called clean flesh heresy) we are given a definition which is promptly repudiated by those who hold it." This is worthy of consideration because it is the truth, though not in the sense that Islip Collyer wished to convey it. The truth of the statement lies in the fact that the clean flesh heresy means and teaches certain things which are not believed nor taught by them at all, In other words the Christadelphians beat the air in attacking a theory the objects of their attacks do not hold.

Many letters have been received by the writer from them showing the fallacy of believing that Jesus did not come in the flesh, (I agree that to believe otherwise would be unscriptural). This only shows that they are, unfortunately, ignorant of that we contend for. **R.Roberts' opening remarks on page 3 regarding "untoward appearance" are answered in brackets at the end of the paragraph: "It is best omitted."** Why? Because it would supply the proof as to which side held the personal hate. It was not the first time that R.Roberts raised his voice when opposed to someone who knew what he was talking about (as E.Turney told him, "I like to be very near my opponent for my own edification"). E.Turney reminded him that he R.Roberts was "always ready to invite the clergy into the Athenaeum Hall to slay them in debate - poor deluded persons - which was an easy matter, but just as ready to shut the door against **"the wolf," as he styled E.Turney when he said "the wolf shall not come in here."**

Study R.Roberts' several debates and you will read often of him losing his temper and raising his voice. He always excused himself afterwards on the score of it being a weakness of the flesh, but it is more a sign of spiritual weakness, and this spiritual weakness was manifested in his refusal to debate with E.Turney after trying to cause confusion in a meeting which he did his utmost to prevent taking place. R.Roberts, unfortunately, always opposed any advancement not his own and I would give you this one as an example: - Nesbit of Glasgow wanted to start a weekly journal called "The Investigator." **R.Roberts replied, "We are past the investigation stage." Are we? Why, we are merely on the fringe.**

Page 3. paragraph 2. "The question as a whole is a difficult question," etc. We would refer you to "Christendom Astray," page 111, on the Sacrifice of Christ. **R.Roberts says "nothing is simpler."** (Read Luke 10:21, 1 Corinthians 2:2). There is no need, as R.Roberts says in this paragraph, of a prolonged spiritual education to understand what is the most vital of the first principles of the oracles of God. Redemption was instituted in type in Eden and God kept this important factor before their eyes continually in the shadows of the law given to Moses. If redemption is not understood as the basic foundation upon which to build, then it will not stand. Redemption is the first requisite and the necessity of it being so will be dealt with when considering other statements in "Slain Lamb." With regard to the Scripture quoted in the book, the writer delights in it as much as those who think that he opposes it.

Page 4, paragraph 1. “Now, one thing that distinguishes this disturbing heresy more than another is that it cannot express itself in the words that the Holy Spirit teacheth but is obliged continually to employ invented phrases.”

In reply to this I ask, are invented phrases employed by the teachers of this disturbing heresy only? The following are a few of the phrases used by Christadelphians that are not found in the Bible (not that I wish to bring any charge against them for using unscriptural phrases if those phrases explain Scripture in harmony with Scripture, but to show that they are unwilling to allow others the privilege that they desire themselves): “Federal principle,” “Condemned nature,” “Unclean flesh,” “Representative,” “Eternal death,” etc. Now why cannot we try to understand the spirit of the teaching by phrases without getting into a rage? If the language is artificial and carnal are not also the characteristics of getting into a rage? A prolonged spiritual education is of no value if we cannot control ourselves. (Proverbs 14:29, 17:27, Ecclesiastes 7:9).

Page 5, paragraph 2. Sufficient here to say that we endorse the Scripture quoted, but we point out that it is we that receive the adoption into the family of God. Jesus never needed adoption. The only begotten Son does not need adoption into His Father’s family. C.C.Walker witness: “Jesus was the subject of a change of nature from the human to the divine... but He was never the subject of a change of status... As to adoption... still less does this term apply to our Lord.” (C.C.Walker, “Answers to Correspondents” The Christadelphian, February 1930). He was, by God’s love, the means of reconciliation. It was man’s need of reconciliation that was the cause of God producing Jesus as the ransom price for the sin of the world. What was the Sin, singular, of the world? The sin of the world was the sin that “all are concluded under,” namely, the sin of Adam which changed Adam’s relationship and all in Adam, not changed flesh.

R.Roberts agreed that Adam’s change was a change of relationship and not of flesh - see “Ambassador,” March 1869, page 85. But an examination of his writings shows that he was ever ready to change his view when it suited his purpose. It was the sin of Adam that Jesus paid the price for, because the violent death that Adam incurred was inflicted prior to Calvary only in type. It was the recognition of the type that opened up the way of Adam’s return to his former relationship to God. If the sin of the world that Jesus died for was the release from changed flesh, why does this not take place in the case of the believers at baptism in accordance with Romans 8:1? The condemnation placed upon all men is entirely legal as Romans 8:1 proves. Again, if it was physical, then Jesus was under it, in which case He would be in the same helpless position (without strength) as ourselves, being flesh. How then, could He redeem us? Paul says, when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. (Romans 5:6). Paul did not say that Christ was without strength but that we were. If, then, our weakness lay in the assumption that we die because of Adam’s sin, then Christ was without strength. It is the legal aspect that shows the true understanding of Scripture, as we will show as we proceed. As to Christ being crucified through weakness we will explain when we come to the paragraph where R.Roberts makes mention of it.

Page 5, paragraph 5. “Let us go back to the beginning. We find God creating Adam, etc.” Yes, God created Adam (Genesis 2). He is the fountain of life (Psalm 36:9). Adam received his life direct from God. He was then free from sin though “of the earth, earthy,” a natural man. (Dr.Thomas, Eureka, Volume 1, page 248). But sin had not as yet entered.

Sin is scripturally defined as an act and not a physically fixed thing. The committing of that one act of sin did not cause Adam’s flesh to be changed. The fact that Adam had the desires and impulses before transgression as much as he did after transgression rules out the suggestion that impulses are sin apart from those desires and impulses becoming an act of disobedience. There we have the physical constitution of Adam who received his life direct from God.

Jesus also received His life direct from God. Who will deny this? To deny this would be admitting that He was born of the will of the flesh. The subtlety of R.Roberts’ reasoning that He was under physical condemnation though not born of the will of the flesh lies in the fact that He was born of a woman, but the fact that He was born of a woman does not make Him “the seed of the man.” He was the seed of the Lord, born of Mary through the operation of the Holy Spirit, direct from God (Luke 1:35). Adam and Jesus are the only two in Scripture record who received their lives direct from God. Two separate federal heads. The seed of the woman will come in for further consideration later. John records the words of Jesus: “As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given the Son to have life in Himself.” (5:26). Is not this proof of

God giving life to Jesus direct? What life did God give Jesus that is under consideration as a sacrifice for us? Why, “the life of His flesh which was in the blood.” That life Jesus laid down and did not take it up again, or otherwise “sacrifice” could have no meaning: it would merely be a loan. The life that He afterwards received was not the life that He had laid down. He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened in spirit (1 Peter 3:18). He rose with the same body, so that if flesh is under condemnation then Jesus rose under it. In both cases the life that Jesus received came direct from God as did Adam’s. **R.Roberts says in this paragraph, “The second was different from the first. (Paul defines them in contrast).”** But how far does he show the difference? We agree that there was a difference between them, but not in the way that he does. He agrees that Adam and Jesus were the same physically and makes the difference between them in the fact that Jesus was the Lord from Heaven. Was not Jesus the Lord from heaven in the fact that He received His life from God? Did not Adam receive his life direct from God and was in accord with God prior to transgression? Could God in His wisdom have produced Jesus in any other way except by blotting out mankind and making a new creation of man? Think on this latter question and endeavour to see the weakness of applying Paul’s words “the Lord from heaven” to show a difference and at the same time contend that the Lord from heaven was as physically condemned as those whom He came to save. The difference between them lay in the fact that the sin of one necessitated the divine begetting of the other and also in the fact that Jesus retained His right to live whereas Adam did not. Jesus retained His right to the tree of life (Proverbs 3:18), Adam did not and was driven out of Eden because he could not be allowed to put forth his hand to eat of the tree of life and live for ever in accordance with God’s justice until the debt to sin had been paid. That is, he could not be allowed to work out his salvation in Eden after sin had entered. That would give us a type of his offspring being born in the kingdom instead of being all concluded under sin. Adam, through God’s mercy, was spared from paying it. Had Adam paid it we would not have existed, Adam could not redeem himself and if Jesus was under any condemnation He would have been in the same position. The difference therefore between them was necessitated by Adam’s transgression and is of a purely legal character. Had Jesus been born of the will of the flesh He would have been in Adam’s loins and therefore born in Adamic relationship; hence the manner of His “legally free” production. No difference physically, because the life of the flesh which was in the blood was the equivalent ransom price of the wages of sin which Adam was spared by God’s mercy toward him and us, as in “Adam’s loins.” Besides, if Jesus did not come in the flesh (there would be no necessity of Him coming otherwise) He could not have paid that price. Again, if Jesus was not made in all points and tempted like His brethren, His retaining His Sonship, His retaining His hold upon the tree of life, His overcoming and His right to life and obedience unto death, would be all a farce, which would have prevented Him succeeding where the first Adam failed and would have nullified His being the equivalent ransom price to pay to sin what another owed.

Page 6, paragraph 1. “The first Adam was merely a mechanism of natural life, produced as a beginning or basis of a plan God had in mind from the beginning, etc.”

Yes, that is so but if this was strictly kept in mind half of the controversial trouble would be over, but to change the nature is absolutely in opposition to Scripture and to a just God in His attitude towards individuals who had no participation in the committing of Adam’s sin. R.Roberts says that he was a natural body. Why tamper with the meaning of natural? Was Adam any more or less earthy or natural after transgression than he was before? Paul definitely states that there is “one flesh of men” (1 Corinthians 15:37) and speaks of Adam being of the earth, earthy at his creation and not after transgression, and too says that it became a physical law of his being after transgression is to add to the word of God. This is the beginning of the darkening of the counsel of God. R.Roberts said that it needed a miracle to change Adam’s nature so that he would become a dying creature. Dr. Thomas contradicts him by saying it needed no such thing, as he would die in accordance with the peculiar laws to his organization, which were natural. **Then R.Roberts turns round and says, or rather contradicts what he previously said, that the change was a moral one and not a physical one. He turned down the application for baptism of a candidate who believed at his examination that Adam’s nature was changed. That candidate was a Mr David Handley and Roberts’ remarks concerning his rejection of the application are found in “The Ambassador,” March 1869, page 85.**

Look, the very same as what Mr Handly was rejected for is expected to be believed by a candidate today before he can become a Christadelphian. Think on these things and be convinced in your own mind as to who is using the “dazzle” that R.Roberts mentions on page 9.

Continuing on page 6, paragraph 1, R.Roberts says, “Nothing is of chance. All things are foreknown of the Father, for all things are the work of His hands and made to work out His ultimate designs. The rule of the working out of His plan on earth is, first that which is natural, after that which is spiritual (1 Corinthians 15:46).”

We most certainly agree with him. But why doesn't he leave the natural alone? God's work was a finished work (creative - natural) from the beginning. The spiritual will arise out of the natural without, the necessity of the flesh of Adam being changed. We agree that nothing is of chance as far as God's foreknowledge of His plan and purpose is concerned, hence the birth of Jesus taking place in accordance with the promise to the woman that her seed should bruise the serpent's (sin) head (Genesis 3:15). This was an absolute necessity for the redemption of man; which necessity was brought about through the first man selling himself to sin and all in his loins. But with regard to God's natural creation (the laws of which were set in motion from the beginning) it cannot be said that nothing is of chance with regard to humans or animals. “Time and chance happeneth to them all” (Ecclesiastes 9:11, 1 Kings 40:42, 1 Kings 22:34, Luke 10:31).

This is in accordance with the natural order. Christ's production was not of chance, as R.Roberts says, but was of God, and also was His putting to death by wicked hands in accordance with God's determinate foreknowledge and counsel, (Acts 2:23). Time and chance happened to Adam. He was himself to blame, because he did what he did with his eyes open. If he were not to blame, God, who is the habitation of justice, would not have said so.

Page 6, paragraph 2. “An attempt was made last night to draw a parallel between this period of Adam's career and the probation of the Lord Jesus Christ. But look at the great difference. Adam suffered no evil, no pain, no weakness, no grief. His state was a very good state. He was no man of sorrows, had no acquaintance with grief, inherited no evil of any kind. But look at the Lord Jesus: from the beginning He experienced in himself those results that came by Adam's transgression.”

The first thing to remember here is that sin made it necessary for Christ's birth. The necessity of Christ's birth demands a parallel to be drawn with Adam's sinless period, because Christ had to remain in that sinless position before He could be an equivalent ransom price for that which was forfeited, viz. Adam's life. Adam had lost nothing during this period of sinlessness. Therefore there was nothing to be redeemed. Adam was on probation for eternal life. If this were not so, why put him under law, being a natural man? During that period he was in no need of redemption. What he was in need of was deliverance from the natural order. He was under no condemnation, but when he sinned he brought upon himself the incurring of the sentence that had been banging over him in accordance with God's just law - “Thou shalt not.” That sentence was death by slaying, as the wages of sin.

As we have previously shown, God did not allow Adam to pay for his sin, or we would have had no existence. **Let us examine R.Roberts' view of Adam's state:- “He suffered no evil.”** He could not suffer the effects of evil while he kept evil impulses in check. He had these impulses (as R.Roberts agrees) but those impulses were not sin until they culminated in an act of disobedience (James 1.14-17). Besides, who was in Eden to cause this evil? There is no comparison to be made between Adam and Jesus in the sense of evil being caused by others. Adam and Eve brought evil upon themselves by their own desires being uncontrolled. “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, etc” (Genesis 3:6). Can you put your finger upon one passage in God's book which more clearly demonstrates the lust of the eye, the desires, pride and ambition of life?

“No pain.” On what authority does R.Roberts say this? Does he mean mental pain or physical pain? In either case he seems to infer that Adam was an impeccable wax doll. If Adam suffered no pain physically does that prove that he was incapable of suffering physical pain? The very Scriptures themselves prove that he was capable of physical suffering before transgression. We ask, why was it necessary for Elohim to put Adam into a deep sleep in order to take the “woman” from his side? What a pity the Elohim did not know that Adam could suffer no pain on his first probationary period. Adam was a natural man and subject to natural laws from his creation and no theorising can alter Paul's definition. Why apply the term “very good” to Adam alone? Where is the evidence of Scripture restricting this to Adam? This term was applied to all - everything that He made (Genesis 1:31).

The animals were very good of themselves, like man. There is nothing unclean of itself (Romans 14:14). "Call no man common or unclean" (Acts 10:15,28), and this after the fall. God's creating was very good of itself and it is the ways of man that has corrupted God's way upon the earth.

"No weakness." What does R.Roberts really mean here? Natural man is related to natural decay via the natural channels. If that be weakness then Adam had that weakness and would have returned to the ground in the natural order apart from divine intervention. This is hypothetical reasoning because it did not actually occur before transgression but hypothesis is not out of place when in harmony with the attributes of a just God. If Adam had no weakness then what was the make-up of his physical constitution? R.Roberts is not willing to apply weakness to Adam as a natural man of flesh but he is quite ready to apply the weakness to Christ's flesh at the end of the paragraph - "crucified through weakness." But this of course on the assumption that Adam's flesh was changed and that Christ inherited that nature condemned by change. We do not for a moment deny that Jesus was in all points made like unto His brethren. It was necessary that He should be so as we have previously pointed out. To say that Jesus, or any one else, experienced the physical results of Adam's sin is to make God a liar. Everyone experiences the physical results of abused natural law. God placed His natural law in operation and that law must not be trifled with any more than His spiritual law. The natural law must be kept apart from the sentence upon Adam, being in operation before the sentence.

The sentence passed upon all men is entirely restricted to the legal sphere and only affects the physical in that one dies the natural death without having had the sentence removed by baptism in harmony with Romans 8:1 and we either perish or sleep in Christ. The "physical results of Adam's sin" only comes upon man in that he will not rise, having died in Adamic relationship, which is entirely a legal affair in harmony with a just God, not physically shackling anyone.

The physical results of sin will be experienced physically by anyone who says they are in Christ and walk unworthily, in the second death, but not the effects of Adam's sin, but their own sins imputed to them. The result will be felt - "bring them before me that I may slay them" (Luke 19:27). The natural laws operate to the third and fourth generation (Exodus 20:5) (What did Jesus say in answer to the question, "Who sinned; this man or his parents?" "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents..." (John 9:2). Scripture says, every man shall suffer for his own sins, not the son for the father or vice versa (Deuteronomy 24:16, Ezekiel 18). This is applicable to individual violation of the natural law, as well as the letter of the law of Moses, and the violation of the spirit of that law in treading under foot the blood of the covenant, and making it an unholy thing. Hebrews 10:29.

Adam brought the incurring of the sentence upon himself by his own sin, and that sentence was a violent death, not a natural one. (See "Echoes of Past Controversies," page 99). We have already pointed out that he was spared from paying it. Adam's natural death was not the result of his sin in the sense that his nature was changed to a dying nature (The Scriptures, Dr.Thomas and R.Roberts are witnesses). Genesis 3:16-19 are brought up to support the idea that his natural death was the result of his sin. Those Scriptures tell us that he was to return to what he was taken from and what he already was - dust. "Dust thou art."

Let us consider Adam being forbidden to put forth his hand to partake of the tree of life and live for ever and its connection with the 16th to 19th verses. We believe that it was a literal tree like the others, or there would have been no figure of a higher significance. First natural, then spiritual. This tree was not debarred from Adam. Here are a few scriptural examples of the higher significance of the tree of life; "She (wisdom, God) is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her, and happy is everyone that retaineth her" (Proverbs 3:18). Read verses 13 to 26; Ezekiel 47:7 and 12, Eden restored, Revelation 22:2 and 14. We believe Adam partook of this tree all the while he was obedient and if he had remained obedient God would have made him incorruptible in harmony with His just attributes. As a natural man Adam had to retain his hold and that he must have had a period of being retained. That period was his natural life. If there was no period his putting under law as a natural man would have had no force. There had been an end of probation in order to reap the fruits of probation. The words "Lest he put forth his hand... and live for ever" proves the possibility of living for ever. What would be the principle by which he would be allowed to live for ever if allowed to remain in Eden? He could again have partaken of the tree of life, literal and spiritual, and had he remained obedient God would have rewarded him finally with incorruptibility on the same principles as his first probation, which would only be in accordance with a just God. But God would not have Adam attain to life eternal upon the same principle in Eden. That is, God would not allow him to work out his salvation in

Eden after having sinned in Eden. After he was driven out the way of the tree of life was kept with flaming swords.

It is kept today in the higher significance. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me," John 14:6. Imagine Adam living in Eden after sin had entered by him. Eden was the paradise of God and is to be restored, but none can enter the antitypical Eden who have not fulfilled God's conditions. Adam and his posterity could not live in the paradise of God (literal Eden) after sin entered because the debt had to be paid. Why, it would be like walking into the Holy of Holies without even wiping our boots- Had Adam been allowed to remain in Eden after transgression there would be no type of God's plan of entering the antitypical Eden by faith and obedience. For Adam to return to the dust was not the sentence, because he had previously incurred the execution of the sentence, which was "in the day (*B'Yom* - literal day) that thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die (*Muth Temuth* - violent death).

Though he incurred it he was spared from paying it. He was to return to the earth (via the natural channels) because he could not possibly, in God's wisdom, work out his salvation in Eden after having sold himself to sin. This is the principle in accordance with God's righteousness and justice, that the conditions of entering the Eden that is to come must be complied with by Adam's posterity during their natural existence outside Eden (no children were born in Eden, though Adam had been told previous to transgression to multiply. (Genesis 1:28). Genesis 3:16 and 19 brought in this just principle of God without necessitating any change of flesh to a dying nature to bring it about as a sentence, because Adam was a natural man before transgression. Paul says so, so why contradict him?

"Crucified through weakness"! In concluding this paragraph R.Roberts says that "Jesus was made in all things like unto His brethren, of Adam's fallen stock, and finally crucified through weakness" (2 Corinthians 13:4).

This of course, on the assumption that the fall was a physical one, though he had previously contended in his own writings that the change was a moral one - relationship.

Jesus did not bring any sorrow, etc. upon Himself - it was wicked men. His crying was not for Himself, but for others.

What was the weakness through which he was crucified? He was crucified through OUR weakness. It was all for us as Isaiah 53 proves and not for Himself. He was made strong for us (Psalm 80:15-17). He was the arm of the Lord extended through love (John 3:16) He (Jesus) in love to God and us willingly laid down His life for Adam and all in him as the price paid for our redemption, so that our release from sin may be accomplished.

To be continued.

Some Observations Arising from our Circular Letter No. 180, for November/December 1999

Brother Phil Parry writes concerning his statements on page 9 under the heading "Further Comment," taken from Hebrews 7:1-10 on the subject of paying tithes in personal action and by imputation, as ordained of God:-

In advance of my further comments I would draw attention to the words of Dr Thomas on pages 3 & 4 where he states correctly that

"mankind being born of the flesh and the will of man, are born into the world under the constitution of Sin. That is, they are the natural born citizens of Satan's kingdom. There

are two states of kingdoms in God's arrangements, which are distinguished by constitution. These are the kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God."

Thus far I am in agreement, but in his following statement he fails to discriminate and rightly divide the Word of Truth. He accepts that men are constituted sinners, and can become sinners even as by actual transgression, but he has also said that "the citizens of Satan's kingdom are all sinners, and the heirs of God's Kingdom are Saints." He does not show that there is a difference in being constituted a sinner without law, and being a sinner by transgression of the known law of God by enlightenment to it.

We are told by the Apostle that death (by sin) reigned from Adam to Moses even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, that is, they had not sinned as a result of knowing the Divine Law. Therefore they could not be said to have died by sin in their own behalf but by reason of their nature derived from the first man who at creation was subject to dying, but not by transgression of Divine Law, they died in their ignorance yet owing their natural existence to God having spared the judicial execution of Adam through the shed blood of His Son and foreshadowed in the lamb slain in Eden's garden, otherwise all would have perished in the loins of Adam. But God so loved that He did not take but gave, at the price of a life given and a death not incurred by sin or nature - a willing sacrifice for all. Even for them who had not sinned from Adam to Moses, after the similitude of Adam's transgression but by imputation concluded under it.

I hope it will be appreciated that God was the prime-mover in bringing good to Adam's descendants out of the position of their being alienated from Him at birth. It should be noted that though in the loins of Adam and members of his body, they could not be held personally guilty of Adam's sin when as yet unborn and unenlightened to the position of estrangement from God and without hope of eternal life which was God's purpose with man. Adam was redeemed as a living person under sentence of "the death by sin" which was judicial. His sin was provisionally covered and his judicial death avoided by the Grace and foreknowledge of God, thus providing the means for existence of his posterity upon whom had passed the legal sentence of death in that God had imputed it to them as members of Adam's body but not as personal sinners. This being a legal, not a moral position these constituted sinners by imputation of God were in a position whereby they could by faith, extricate themselves from under the law of sin and death which held them in the bondage, not of corruption but of service to Sin personified as a Master under whom as slaves they were held, "having no hope and without God in the world."

If physical nature alienates from God then Adam was alienated from God at his creation. These are the stubborn facts which cantankerous followers of the teaching of Thomas and Roberts must accept or remain in darkness. "Seeing they see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (Matthew 13:13-5).

But contrariwise Abel and Cain understood, but Cain abode not in the truth of the situation, his own works were evil and his brother's righteous, therefore he slew his brother; yet the work and faith of Abel testified in his shed blood that "he liveth unto God." And what was the faith and works of Abel? Was it not in the acknowledgement that the firstling of the flock he had slain by the shedding of its blood was a type of the One who was to come as its Antitype and by whom in the same way his father and mother, Adam and Eve had been spared the judicial death by sin?

Can anyone be blind to the fact that all animal sacrifices offered by men of faith from Adam to Moses and under the law, were by the shedding of blood? These animals did not represent human beings, they were substitutes whose life-blood God said He had given upon the altar to make atonement for those who offered them. Can anyone be so blind and obstinate not to see that Jesus fulfilled the role of the substitute by bloodshedding and not by natural decay and death? Yes, I am afraid this has been the case for many years - blind leaders of the blind," but light and sight has dawned for some even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Animal sacrifice divinely understood was therefore the appointed means and provisional way of approach to God in order to obtain atonement until the substance of the types and shadows of the sacrifices by bloodshedding appeared on the scene, even the promised Seed of the woman, the Messiah, and Lamb of God. Abel understood this but probably Cain would not accept Abel's explanation when they talked together and therefore slew his brother through lack of love and humility. Jesus was treated in the same way and

slain; Nazarene's are also treated in this way and shunned for their attempts to enlighten those who prefer the uninspired teaching of men under strong delusion. But we of the original Apostolic faith are encouraged by the words of Paul to the Thessalonians (2nd book, 2nd chapter verses 13-17), "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto He called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren stand fast, and hold the traditions ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle. Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even Our Father, which hath loved us, and given us consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." Amen.

Redemption by the shedding of the blood of Christ would be impossible for the time present if the physical flesh be under condemnation and if as Dr Thomas rightly said, it means "release for a ransom" to change the ownership from one power or master to another, seeing it is achieved in a legal and moral transaction, not a change of the flesh. For as long as people are under physical sentence of death as sinners, there is no present way of release from it. This is where I disagree with the quoted statement of Dr Thomas in top paragraph of page 4 which is underlined by Brother Eric Cave.

I begin by quoting Dr. Thomas at third line from top of page,

"But men are not only made or constituted sinners, but they become sinners even as by actual transgression. Having attained the majority (should this be "maturity"?) of their nature they become accountable and responsible creatures. At this crisis, they may be placed by the divine arranging in a relation to His Word. It becomes to them a tree of life, inviting them to take and eat and live for ever. If however, they prefer to eat of the world's forbidden fruit, they come under sentence of death in their own behalf. They are thus doubly condemned. They are condemned already to the dust of the earth as natural born sinners, and secondarily condemned to a resurrection of judgment for rejecting the Gospel of the Kingdom of God; by which they become obnoxious or liable to the "second death."

If at the crisis of their responsibility God calls people by drawing them unto Him and this means a putting them in a relation to His Word by their being enlightened to their alienated position through Adam's sin, and therefore their need for Redemption and Salvation, I can agree with Dr Thomas if this is what he means, but he does not speak of the importance of being in the position first of all of having the Right to eat of the Tree of life and live for ever; he merely says "they are invited to take and eat and live for ever." But should he not have considered first Revelation 22:14-17? "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life..." Can people who are the servants of Sin do God's commandments?

So long as they are under the constitution of sin are not their services accounted as to Sin as a Master and not to God? See Romans chapter 6 to confirm this.

The first priority then, is to die unto the dominion of Master Sin through the way appointed of God to Adam and also to his posterity, that is, by association and faith in the substitutionary death of One not under that dominion, thus dying unto Sin and living unto God.

This has been made possible symbolically for those who were legally constituted sinners, therefore they are not condemned to the dust as natural born sinners when they could not have committed sin under law; they are divinely imputed to have sinned while in the loins of Adam when he sinned, but they are not natural-born sinners as presumed through the false conception of "condemned nature" resulting from Adamic sin of which I have a suspicion is in the mind of Dr Thomas in the use here of his misleading phraseology. I could be mistaken, but after all he did write to the effect that "human nature is sin," also that "sin invaded every particle of the flesh after Adam's disobedience." He also wrote in "Eureka" that "The law of sin and death" was a physical state of corruptibility as a result of sin, thus contradicting Genesis 2:7 and also Paul's teaching of the possibility of release and freedom from it and still remain in the same corruptible nature (Romans 8:1,2; 1 Corinthians 15:45,46; 2 Corinthians 3:17,18) but under the constitution of righteousness in Christ.

Dr Thomas opposes Paul's teaching by stating we cannot be freed from what he mistakenly terms this physical law of sin and death, until our bodies are changed to incorruptibility after the judgment-seat of

Christ has qualified that change. Thus we have throughout the history of Christadelphianism, the confusing of the legal with the physical.

Adam's posterity were never condemned for being born with a supposed condemned nature resulting from transmission or inheritance from him, yet certain North American Christadelphians have stated the nature is condemned but its recipients are not to blame for being born with it. Strange that this is the only reason and excuse they can give for God being justified in allowing (some say, commanding) His sinless Son to die on the tree of Calvary, i.e. His condemned nature, of which God was responsible. Think again and think soberly and sensibly while there is time.

If we are not to blame for the nature we are born with, why teach that it is doomed to the dust because of a penalty imposed for a sin committed by the first, man, and further to this nonsense, that Jesus, a sinless man, by dying, abrogated the law of condemnation for himself and all who should believe and obey him? If a law of condemnation is a just law, how can it be abrogated or set aside by suffering its due and just penalty? See Clause VIII of the B.A.S.F. If Jesus obtained a title to resurrection by His perfect obedience, why is He still under the law of condemnation for Himself when His perfect obedience should have prevented condemnation of any sort? Would not therefore His death be for the very purpose for which he was born?

His own answer to this is found in Matthew 20:28, "Even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister... and to give his life a ransom for many." Is it not clear that Jesus could only do this by His freedom from the law of sin and death at birth and by His perfect obedience obtain a title to the resurrection of life eternal for those who were redeemed by His blood and remained faithful to their calling? The word "obtain" does not apply to Jesus, He "retained" His right to resurrection of life eternal when laying down His natural life as the Ransom price for all (I Timothy 2:6; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15), though all do not avail themselves of God's offer of salvation and life through His Son.

Of His forthcoming voluntary death, Jesus said of His own life in the blood, "There- fore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 30:17,18).

Why in the history of Christadelphian teaching and writing - all this subtle perversion of the truth of Jesus' words by stating He was commanded to die and if He had refused He would have been a sinner? Are people so ignorant and blind to the meaning of these two verses and more important, the two words "this commandment" received of my Father? Was there compulsion anywhere on the part of the Father? Does not Jesus speak of His Father's love? and in John 12:50, "and I know that His commandment is life everlasting." Is not this the commandment or assurance He received of His Father?

For years the Nazarenes have been demonstrating from the teaching of the Scriptures, the Justice, Love, Mercy and Grace of God toward man on account of his alienated and hopeless position without Christ. In contrast of which the very people who falsely accuse us of sowing discord among Brethren are the very people who have the printed discord of their early pioneers and subsequent leaders staring them in the face so much that their eyes are dazzled that they cannot see or realize that they are despising the Spirit of Grace and counting the blood of Christ unholy, which latter, Dr Thomas at his best, stated was more precious than the blood of all other men who had been generated by the will of the flesh ("Eureka" Volume 1, page 278). Then we have Robert Roberts contradicting Dr Thomas by stating that sin ran in the veins of Mary from which Jesus also received His own blood leaving us to conclude that the blood of Jesus could not be more precious than all other men in that sin ran in His blood and could only be cleansed of it by death, this being a declaration from God of what was due to "sinful flesh."

Incidentally, Medical Science has proved that a baby does not receive the blood of its mother, yet according to Robert Roberts all blood groups would be identical.

Yet here again we are faced with Thomas and Roberts in great error by agreeing together that sin is an element in the physical flesh. Read their books and find for yourselves who really are the sowers of discordant doctrine.

How strange, as pointed out again in our Nazarene Circular Letter that both these men were in full agreement in 1869 that there was no evidence in the Scripture that any physical change took place in Adam's nature when he disobeyed the Creator while in the Garden of Eden.

I cannot understand that if later on John Thomas, qualified as a M.D. and to use the prefix Dr., why he should have written so much about the human body being full of sin. I have never heard of sin being discovered by a Pathologist after carrying out a post-mortem! Is it not ridiculous to believe it is there?

Now I hope that in this year 2000 more focus will be on this erroneous teaching before the true Millennium and reign of Christ is here, for if not, it will come as a snare to those who think the pioneers, such as Thomas and Roberts to be more reliable than Jesus, His Apostles and the Prophets whom they by the Holy Spirit interpreted.

In conclusion I would point out that the statement made by Paul that Christ was obedient unto death came not in the compulsive sense but in the way Jesus put it in Revelation 2:10, not as a command but an assured promise to the Angel of the church of Smyrna, to be faithful unto the time of death, whether by natural cause or by defending to inflicted death, the faith that is in him. Jesus therefore was faithful to His own calling and mission. He also said "Follow me."

I conclude with 2 Peter 1:15,16, "Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty."

Brother Phil Parry

Additional comments in view of Brother Eric Cave's final letter to Brother Tony Benson at foot of Page 3, C.L.180, on the subject of Brother Maddocks series:-

I can understand Brother Cave's feelings for the misguided, as he puts it, in their understanding of the nature of man and of Christ who have put on Christ in Baptism. I fail to see how any person with a misguided understanding of the nature of man or that of Christ can put on Christ in Baptism. According to the Apostle we need to understand what we are putting off and what we are putting on in baptism, and if our misguided understanding be that of condemned nature as taught by the Pioneers of Christadelphia as pertaining to our nature and that of Christ, then Baptism changes nothing. The true understanding of the need for the Atonement was never taught. I myself was never taught it when a Christadelphian on account that it was never understood.

Now we have the Editors of "The Remnant" magazine who profess the custodianship of "The Truth" as distinct from all other divisions, criticising the Carter/Cooper effort in Australia for unity and trying to point out the errors of the views of certain editors of Ecclesias in Australia and yet are as confused in their knowledge and understanding, perhaps more so than those they are trying to correct.

"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work- But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" James 3:16-18.

Discordant Doctrine is not our motto,

Brother Phil Parry.

MISCELENAE

On Christmas Eve I received two letters from Christadelphians. The first one read:-

“Dear Sir, Please remove my name from your mailing list. I do not know how you got my name, but kindly do not send any more of your literature to this address. Sincerely, A.B.”

In reply I wrote: -

“Dear A.B. I received your letter on Christmas Eve along with another, also from a Christadelphian and I thought that sending you a copy of it may be appropriate at this time (without the name and address of course).

My forty years in the Christadelphian community has convinced me that there are some good people amongst them and it is for their sakes that we like to send out Nazarene Fellowship literature that they may be enlightened regarding certain truths relating to the Atonement so we may serve God in thankfulness of His Grace. However, at your request your name and address, which were taken from the A.L.S. diary, have been taken off our mailing list. Sincerely, Russell Gregory.

The other letter received Christmas Eve read as follows: “Dear Brother Russell, For two or three years you have been kind enough to send me a copy of the CL. May I thank you most sincerely for the time and trouble you and other B & S have taken. Please keep me on your mailing list. I am enclosing a cheque in order to make some contribution to your funds to cover postage etc. and hope that you will accept this small contribution.

Although it has taken some time, I am now able to agree to a great extent with what must surely be your logical view points and understanding of God’s Word as expressed in the CL and other pamphlets- It’s strange isn’t it how one so readily accepts doctrines written and spoken by one’s brethren, without thinking too hard about what is being said, Just taking it for granted that this MUST be the “truth.”

Your publications have certainly made me think, for, like you, I am only interested in what God’s Word has to say, not in “traditions” and what the B.A.S.F. has to say. In fact I was not baptized into the B.A.S.F., I was not even aware of its existence at the time my wife and I were baptized!

I wonder if you can (perhaps in an article in the CL or otherwise) elaborate on your understanding of the 1st resurrection.

I appreciate that the Scriptures say quite plainly that, at the first resurrection, only those accounted worthy will be raised from death/or living to be with the Lord Jesus for ever, for they will be granted immortality at that time. Please see attached quotes.

Again, I believe that if we sincerely repent of our sins and failings and ask for forgiveness, then our sins ARE forgiven - blotted out. This being so, how have we anything to account for at resurrection?

However, when we are informed that “we must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ”... “the separation of the sheep and the goats”.., “everyone to account for his/her deeds” etc., etc.; how are we to marry this in with what we believe to be an immortal (rather than a mortal) resurrection?

As you are no doubt aware, the normal Christadelphian view is that we are to have a mortal resurrection and to give account of our deeds on judgment day, even though (as I have pointed out) our sins have been removed from God’s viewpoint.

We know that Scripture does not contradict Scripture; if it appears to do so then it is because our interpretation or understanding is faulty.

I would greatly appreciate your, and fellow brethren’s views and help on this subject.

Once again very many thanks to your fellowship for all the help and guidance. Your brother in the Lord, X.”

My reply was as follows:-

Dear Brother X, Thank you for your most welcome letter. Indeed it is such letters as yours which make all our efforts so worthwhile and we thank God for the great encouragement you have given us. The financial contribution has been added to our funds and is also most welcome, as of course, our costs have to be met.

It is always our prayer that many more will consider prayerfully and carefully, as you have done, the arguments we put forward from Scripture for the reason of the hope within us.

As you say in your letter, if we are forgiven here and now then what have we to give account for at the Judgment seat of Christ? The short answer is that at the Judgment seat of Christ rewards are to be allocated. My view of this is taken from the Roman games where only winners went up to the judgment seat to receive their laurels, or again, we have the Olympic games in our day where only the first three winners are given medals, gold, silver and bronze, according to how they have been judged.

So regarding your query about the first and second resurrections and the Judgment seat of Christ, I enclose four booklets - “Progressive Revelations as to The Millennium, The Resurrection and The Judgment” by H.Grattan-Guinness; “Present Forgiveness of Sins and Immortal Resurrection of the Righteous” by Wm. Richmond; “How Are The Dead Raised?” by William Laing; and “Raised to Life” by Phil Parry. I shall send out at least one of these with our next Circular Letter. The first mentioned is part of a larger work. “The Approaching End of The Age” which I feel sure used to be available from the Christadelphian Office.

I will also ask for the views of others through the medium of the CL; we may receive some interesting views from other readers.

Sincerely your brother in Jesus Christ, Russell.”

* * *

In another letter from a Christadelphian couple which we received a few weeks earlier, we were told:-

“In a copy of The Fraternal Visitor for 1880, in a column headed, “Notes to correspondents” we found this note written by J.J.Hadley, and I quote,

“We have no mind for the discussion of theories of the Atonement. God, in His supreme wisdom, has appointed a way for the forgiveness of sins, namely, through faith in the crucified and resurrected Christ. We gratefully accept the offered mercy and hope that our sins may be found blotted out when the Master comes. If so, that is enough for us.”

This couple conclude by saying that, “We feel we can altogether agree with this and wish that everybody could do the same.”

We can understand J.J.Hadley not wanting to enter into discussion of theories of the Atonement due to the fiery darts of Robert Roberts aimed at anyone who disagreed with his dictatorial doctrines. R.Roberts seems to have successfully ruled over those willing followers who understood “Blessed are the peacemakers” to mean “blessed are those who accept Robert Roberts teachings without question for we are keeping the peace.”

But surely, every professing Christian throughout the world does altogether agree that “God, in His wisdom, has appointed a way for the forgiveness of sins... and gratefully accept the offered mercy...” This quote from the writings of J.J.Hadley only confirms what we have always said - that the Christadelphians are but just another “Christian sect” - one of a thousand or so.

Would it not have been better for J.J.Hadley, and all Christadelphian leaders since, to encourage prayerful study when seeking for the truth and then prove what they claim? All too many leaders have sadly sought their own way and imagined all sorts of things, doing somersaults with their beliefs, contradicting themselves and each other and running round in circles in an effort to uphold traditions and proving nothing.

“If our sins have been blotted out,” says J.J.Hadley. What a big “If”! Did not J.J.Hadley believe that his sins were blotted out when he asked God to forgive him during his lifetime? What did the Lord’s prayer mean to him - “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us”? Or for that matter, how did J.J.Hadley understand the Old Testament writers, such as Hosea 14:2, “Turn to the Lord; and say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so we will render the calves of our lips.”? And where is the thankfulness and praise in J.J.Hadley’s words? “We gratefully accept...” is a bit flat. It may not seem fair of me to criticize J.J.Hadley on one phrase alone but he missed the opportunity here to show some earnest effusion for the Captain of our salvation. “We gratefully accept” is a far cry from “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them as dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him...”

However, Christadelphians are not supposed to believe sins are blotted out at this present time because for them there is the ordeal or the Judgment Seat to go through to see if they qualify for the privilege and if they do, all is well but if not, what then? Death for sin is supposed to be their lot. But on what basis are they judged? On faith or on works? If on works, where is the dividing line? There is the prospect of two individuals whose works are almost identical. One given eternal life while the other is consigned to eternal oblivion, though there be but an hair’s breadth between the two regarding their works. Little wonder Christadelphians quake at the prospect of the Judgment Seat not knowing which side of the dividing line they may be on. But judgment to eternal life is based on faith, not works. Scripture teaches that only the faithful are raised in the first resurrection - that they are blessed for on them the second death has no power - and there is no condemnation for the righteous - the righteous shall not enter into adverse judgment. The Judgment Seat for them is to receive awards as for example, of one, five or ten cities. By the grace of God their eternal life is assured.

* * *

Tuesday, 22nd December 1999 started as any other. We had heard a few days before that my grandson, Daniel, aged 3½ years, was not well. On the previous Tuesday, he and his mother, Heather, had flown to the Canary Isles for a weeks break in the sunshine but on arrival little Daniel, was poorly. After two or three days of not eating she took him to the local hospital but the doctor there didn’t appear to be concerned or even interested in his condition. After another two days Heather phoned home to ask us to make an appointment with her doctor to see Daniel as soon as possible after arriving home. However on the morning of the flight home, Heather phoned again from the airport asking us to make an appointment at the children’s clinic at the Sutton Coldfield Hospital and asked us to meet them at Birmingham airport and take them straight to the hospital. That, was about 11 am. Tuesday. About an hour later we had another phone call to say that our son Michael was being taken home from work because he was ill. On arrival at his home his wife phoned the doctor to come out and see him urgently which he did and an hour later Michael was on his way to hospital. Just after lunch my wife went shopping but came back earlier than planned because her heart had started racing at nearly 200 beats per minute. She had expected me to be home to take her to hospital for an injection but I too had gone out. On arriving home and finding her in bed I said I would take her immediately but she said if we went to the hospital now we would be too late to get to the airport to meet Daniel and Heather.

It seemed incredible that three of the family should require hospital treatment within a matter of a few hours. However it didn’t turn out that way because due to my wife’s reluctance, there was one thing worth trying - the cold water treatment! No sooner had she put her head under the cold shower and her heart returned to a normal pulse.

Next thing was to collect Heather and Daniel from the airport. The doctor complimented Heather on looking after Daniel so well and said that for such a poorly child he was in remarkable good condition (though he seemed all skin and bone not having eaten for a week). As for Michael, well, he was kept in hospital on a drip for twenty-four hours and then sent home. So all’s well that ends well.

I mention the events of this day because I remember feeling so very thankful that we have a loving and gracious Father to turn to to calm our fears and take away our anxieties. All things are known to Him and if we ask then He will take matters into His hands for us. While those around are fraught with concern and worry, with no thought of God in their heads or hearts, putting their trust in their fellow man, hoping they would do their stuff and that all may be well again. I am very thankful my family is well again but, Oh, how I wish they all wanted to know the God of Heaven, share our faith and enjoy that peace which passeth understanding. As Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you."

* * *

In "The Testimony" magazine, No.637, January 1984, there is a footnote on page 8 which reads:-

"Ernest Brady and the Nazarene Fellowship have revived the errors of Renunciationism and have bombarded the Brotherhood for over 30 years with aggressive criticism of the Christadelphian view of the nature of Christ and the meaning of His sacrificial death."

This assertive criticism has been thoroughly deserved by Christadelphian writers and leaders and still they pretend they are right in spite of the well proven facts with which they have been bombarded.

On the same page as the above reference there is a quote from C.C.Walker :-

"It is true that "Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8; I Thessalonians 5:10)... but "for" (Greek, *huper*) here means "on account of," "on behalf of," "just as in the case of mak(ing) intercession for (us)" (Hebrews 7:25). Substitution, would be unjust. Why should the innocent be put to death and the guilty allowed to live?... No, it is not substitution, but representation and association."

This really is a bubble bath of notions! C.C.Walker makes four assumptions in this short quotation, the first being that the Greek "*huper*" translated here by "for" means "on account of" or "on behalf of" means the same as in Hebrews 7:25 and implying that it does not mean "in stead of." However "*huper*" is also translated in other ways such as "above," or "in stead of," etc. and to limit the meaning in Romans 5:8 and 1 Thessalonians 5:10 to the sense required in Hebrews 7:25 is not good practice but only expresses a biased opinion. Why not take for examples, Philemon 16, "Not now a servant, but above (*huper*) a servant, a brother..." Could "above" have been translated "instead of"? Yes, it could, for that is the sense of it. Again, take verse 13, "whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead (*huper*) he might have ministered unto me." Here "*huper*" is translated "in stead." Yet again we can take 2 Corinthians 5:20, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead (*huper*), be ye reconciled to God." Does this mean anything but "in the place of"? No. We would have just as much authority to say that "*huper*" must therefore mean "instead of" in 1 Thessalonians 5:10 and Romans 5:8. as it does in these passages. So much for C.C.Walker's deceptive but useless argument.

But we have no need to resort to biased opinion and deceptive argument because the Greek "anti" proves Jesus died in place of us. Matthew 20:28, "Even so the Son of man came... to give His life a ransom for (anti) many." Ransom involves the paying of a price and cannot therefore be anything but substitution - one in place of another. One cannot make a purchase without substituting one's money in place of that which is purchased. So why then deceive one's brethren and sisters by saying substitution is not taught in Scripture and is wrong when Jesus used it of Himself.

Again, we could show other places where "anti" means in place of, such as "an eye for (anti) eye" or "See that none render evil for (anti) evil." It is not here used in the sense of a purchase but one in place of another, just the same. In the Septuagint Bible "anti" is used many hundreds of times as meaning "substitution" as when one king is replaced by another. So what is wrong with substitution? Putting to death an innocent man is a miscarriage of justice but paying one another's debts is an act of love. Both are acts of substitution. Which applied in the case of Jesus Christ? Why, he paid our debt, of course. Such substitution exhibits the Christian way of life. "Bear ye one another's burdens", etc. Paul gives us his example in Philemon verse 18, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account; I

Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it.” None could say that Paul was wrong to offer such substitution. “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ,”

What was it that Jesus Christ paid. It was His life - life in the blood which He shed on Calvary - His natural life which had been given Him by His Father at conception. (The foetus growing in the womb develops its own blood supply and does not receive any from its mother). This is the price He paid for the sin of the world and this life He did not take up again. “A spirit hath not flesh and bone as ye see me have” He told His disciples after His resurrection, but there was no life blood for this had gone for ever.

What did Jesus Christ purchase with the laying down of His life? He purchased the life of Adam. It is remarkable that the first writings of the apostle Paul should deal with the most important of first principles - “the Atonement” where he explains how he was found “sold unto sin” by the first sinner, Adam. Not made a sinner but owned by Sin in the same way as slaves are the property of slave-owners. Adam’s life has been passed down from generation to generation to all the human race but not to Jesus. God was His Father and gave Him life. It was not passed down from Adam, so when Jesus laid down His life to purchase the life of Adam, He also at the same time purchased all whose lives descended from Adam, i.e. the whole human race.

In my Sunday School days the Atonement was explained to me as a purchase. My teacher was Frank Hadley, the younger son of J.J.Hadley. I have been ever grateful for this introduction to the Atonement and to my parents for keeping me free from Christadelphian indoctrination so that when I was baptized at Suffolk Street Hall I knew nothing of a condemned Christ or of sin-in-the-flesh but only what Scripture taught. I remember wondering why Frank Hadley had said that it was perhaps hard for me to understand the Atonement. To me, as a teenager, it seemed clear and simple but what I didn’t know then was that his explanation contradicted Christadelphian teaching which refuses to acknowledge substitution. Frank Hadley’s problem was trying to reconcile substitution with Christadelphian representation. Purchase demands substitution. The voluntary paying of the life of Jesus on Calvary to purchase the life of Adam, including all his descendants, is purchase and is therefore substitution.

The blood of Christ was precious because it alone was sufficient to meet the purchase price necessary to redeem us from our “your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers,” which I take the liberty of paraphrasing thus: - ‘your vain or hopeless position received through your fathers from Adam,’ though I am open to correction on this last point.

Thirdly, C.C.Walker says “why should the innocent be put to death and the guilty allowed to live’.”“ We are very pleased to agree with him that this would be a terrible injustice - obviously it would be wrong to put to death an innocent man.

Was Jesus Christ put to death? Where in Scripture does it say that Jesus Christ was put to death in the sense that His life was taken from Him? Nowhere! Wicked men of the Jews and Gentiles were convinced they had put Him to death when they saw Him die on Calvary. Or did God put His own beloved Son to death as the Pentecostals and Christadelphians say? No, He did not. Jesus Christ laid down His life of His own free will - “for no man taketh it from me.” There is all the difference in the world between having one’s life taken away and laying down one’s life freely. One is taken in hate the other is given in love. But no one had the power to take away Jesus’ life however much they hated Him. He laid it down of His own free will, in His unsurpassed love for us and for the Joy set before Him in bringing many sons to glory.

The fourth point where C.C.Walker is wrong is where he states that “No, it was not substitution, but representation and association.” We have shown above that the death of Jesus Christ was in fact substitution and not representation. If, by association C.C.Walker means association with a Christ who was put to death because He had defiled flesh and crucifixion was the just penalty for having it and necessary in order to destroy such defilement, then we have to say we want no association with such blasphemy. However, association with Jesus Christ is essential if we are to be in covenant relationship with Him. This is achieved by baptism into Him; a putting off of our relationship with Adam and a putting on of Jesus Christ, going into the water, symbolic of His death, then rising from the water to a new life symbolic of His resurrection to eternal life- Christadelphian baptism into a physically defiled Christ changes nothing. True baptism into Jesus Christ is a covenant which changes our relationship to God and by it we are adopted into His family.

* * *

The Review of Robert Robert's book "The Slain Lamb" which we have commenced to reprint in this Circular Letter is a thorough, in-depth analysis of R.Roberts work. We shall see as we progress through it that he is a falsifier of Edward Turney's teachings, his purpose being to beguile his readers into believing E.Turney didn't know what he was talking about with regard to understanding Scripture while he, Roberts, has all the answers. We shall see how time and again R.Roberts, instead of facing honestly what Edward Turney contended for, side-stepped Turney's argument and "set up skittles in order to knock them down again" while Edward Turney's arguments remain untouched.

This strategy of R.Roberts is dishonourable yet its pernicious results can be seen in Christadelphian articles on the Atonement ever since, where so many writers imagine they are combating Renunciationist beliefs when in fact they are wide of the mark. It is to the shame of Christadelphian leaders who have followed R.Roberts' so blindly.

What we are endeavouring to do is help others see the truth of Scripture teachings by proving all things. Jesus said. "But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23,24). How we wish Christadelphian leaders would show to us where they believe we are in error and we will gladly reason things out together, for the sake of everyone's lasting peace and joy.

In considering the letter printed above from a Christadelphian agreeing, largely with what we are teaching and asking for more information, it is interesting to note how the understanding of these matters comes in different ways to different people. Brother Eric Cave wrote in his "The Divine Plan" on page 15, that up to that time he had

"never met a member of this (Nazarene) fellowship, nor corresponded with them, or received any literature from them. His only knowledge of their beliefs came from the occasional mention of their "clean flesh heresy" in Christadelphian magazines. He began to ask around when he was accused of teaching their doctrine in April 1997..."

We rejoice that he now knows "that no child is born 'unclean' least of all the child that God sent to be a propitiation for our sins. Even though the writer has arrived at that conclusion from a different starting point"

Whatever one's starting point it is our desire to be helpful and supportive especially as we know from personal experience how devastating it can be to be disfellowshipped. The Christadelphian community have through long practice devised an impenetrable system of intolerance, refusing discussion and demanding that one recants or goes. The alternative, which I was offered, of keeping complete silence about ones glorious discovery of truth is virtually impossible and designed to prevent others from finding it also.

Regarding the subjects of the Resurrection and the Judgment which our correspondent raises we would like to hear the views of others. Do please write and let us share them.

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On page 24 of the last Circular Letter I said I was waiting for a reply from Graeham Mansfield, editor of "Logos." I have written to him again and am still waiting. Why all this delay in responding? If Graeham has changed his mind about taking part in a written discussion on the Atonement then it doesn't take much to write and say so. What has he to lose?

With love in the Lord to all our readers, Brother Russell Gregory.

"When ye shall have done all things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do." Luke 17:10.