

# Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No 191

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## Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends,

Loving Greetings. Anyone who looks for the coming of Jesus Christ for the second time, as He promised, always has an eye on the Middle East and its complex affairs.

There does not seem to be much doubt that because of the present intifada the Palestinian Arabs are suffering very greatly at the hands of their Jewish relatives. After months of violence, hundreds of lives lost and the destruction of uncounted amounts of property, apparently many of the Palestinian elite are leaving in unprecedented large numbers, to go to Australia, Canada and the United State, in an attempt to make new lives somewhere in peace and safety. One Palestinian who intends to leave in August for Australia said “I know they are civilized, calm people in Australia. It is a beautiful country where there is no shooting and everyone minds his own business.”

Doctors, teachers and entrepreneurs, the very people key to building a state will leave a void that religious fundamentalists and political extremists will fill. These departures reflect not only how bad things are but also the loss of hope that things will ever get better.

At the AI Najah School in Ramallah, which teaches kindergarten through high school, at least 20% of the student body has gone. At a Quaker run Friends School for English speaking Palestinians, 15½ % have left or will not be returning in the Fall the Principal reported.

An economist, named Hisham Hamid, who teaches at Bir Zeit University has watched nearly half his neighbourhood clear out. “Everybody came back here with the idea of doing something,” he said, “and now that isn’t possible.” His children’s school filled with smoke and teargas too many times and they will all leave for another country in September. Hamid said “I kept trying to convince myself that eventually things would get better, but its only getting worse and worse. I can see no light at the end of the tunnel. I’ve never seen or felt the hatred between Jews and Palestinians like now.”

To arrive at the university these days the entire faculty have to navigate around Israeli roadblocks that have sliced much of the West Bank into isolated pockets. The exodus will further deplete business, banking and other components of an economy that is already devastated by the fighting and stiffened sanctions imposed by Israel. So dire are the conditions in the West Bank and Gaza that some of those leaving are not recent returnees but families who have stayed here for decades only to give up now.

After suffering unspeakably at the hands of their enemies it is difficult to understand how the Israelis can go on inflicting such pain and difficulties on the Palestinians. All that is happening is the continuation of a cycle of hatred. Everyone in power seems to be implacable and those trying to live and raise their children are caught in the endless crossfire.

Whether they recognize it or not the Jews and the Palestinians like the rest of us are in God's hands. Even God cannot change the past but He can orchestrate the future out of what wicked and good men do to His world.

Messiah will come and there will be peace one day.

With love, Helen Brady.

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**“Behold I stand at the door, and knock:  
if any man hear my voice and open the door...”**

**Revelation 3:20**

The people who were privileged and I repeat, privileged to read our Circular Letter No. 190 July/August 2001 should not be shocked or surprised by what Brother Eric Cave has exposed in his booklet, “The Birmingham Amended Statement of Faith - Handbook For Christadelphians.” This has come to him after around 60 years of his faithful membership of a community he thought had the Truth in contrast with all other denominations, and why not?

It has happened with others though probably in a lesser period of membership, but this does not deflect from the fact that they all realized the blatant erroneous teaching of ‘Christadelphianism’ they had been unwittingly drawn into in accepting as honest and sincere the views of those who had also been deceived.

Can any member of the community subscribing to the name Christadelphian prove James Brown’s diagnosis of their doctrine of ‘sin in the flesh’ as incorrect and not according to biblical Truth or is it still as it has been from the year 1953 that they prefer the epithet “dumb dogs they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber” (Isaiah 56:10)? Did no responsible person heed the direct warning against the written errors and absurdities of Dr. Thomas made by James Brown in their magazine in 1953? “Were they as dumb dogs, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber” having not read his article, had nothing to bark at? It certainly appears to be the case, for even the Australian Logos Magazine has managed to survive this criticism by James Brown 48 years from the time he wrote it and they are not alone for all who subscribe to the doctrine of “sin in the flesh” are as Isaiah says of such “They are blind watchmen, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark,” they want to slumber and be left alone, no one must upset their contentment under the traditions and doctrines of men. Their policy therefore is to act dumb and refrain from barking at people who know the Truth and desire to arouse them to the insecurity of their position in relation to salvation through Jesus.

James Brown was no novice, he was a responsible Editor of a Christadelphian Magazine which was in circulation in Australia in the 1950’s and he could discern on the basis of Scripture the gross errors in the writings of Dr. Thomas and drew attention to them, not for the purpose of vain glory and knowledge, but in

an effort I believe, to heal and restore a community to the Apostolic Faith which was believed to have been revived by Dr. Thomas and which he found by the grace of God not to be wholly so but a combined doctrine of Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts which argued its converts back to Rome.

This is the so-called Faith the Logos Magazine adherents profess to uphold in their false accusations and lies against E. Turney who never once taught “clean flesh” or “unclean flesh” as a physical quality, but was the false term invented by Robert Roberts who believed the physical flesh of Adam was defiled and made unclean by the Creator as a result of Adam’s sin. I counsel all Christadelphians to apply for, and read the article by James Brown in his attempt to show them where they have failed to read the Bible effectively, preferring to accept the writings of men instead. Hence their acceptance of the false doctrine of Original Sin upheld by Thomas and Roberts and also consequently by ‘Logos’ members, who prefer their writings to those in the Holy Scriptures obviously.

On page 16 of our Circular Letter we read of another Christadelphian showing the position of his community to be a way that seemeth right but in fact leading to death, not the common death experienced by all but the death by sin which hangs over all until made free by a principal of belief and faith in the sacrificial mission of the Son of God. This has been demonstrated by this unknown author except for one important error where he states on page 18, words that appear to imply that his view of Adam’s nature was superior to that of the animals at creation until by sin he became subject to the Spirit of the Law of Sin and Death and

“was made equal with the animal in processing toward that which he came from, “dust and ashes.” The difference between Adam and Abraham is, Adam was dead in Sin before entering the grave, Abraham was dead to Sin before dying physically, this is held to be “asleep” by God during the waiting period, for the manifestation to the world of the sons of God. (Romans 8:19).”

As our footnote states: “This observation seems to us inconsistent with the author’s previous reasoning.”

For example:- Adam’s nature was of dust at his creation, for when he sinned there was no change of his nature, but there was a sparing of his natural existence by God’s remittance of the sentence of death in the day he sinned. This was through the shed blood of the lamb by which his sin was covered until the real substitute, the Lamb of God, Jesus, was produced on the scene, therefore Adam’s nature was allowed to take its course though he was no longer under the “Death by Sin” nor “dead in sin” as the author mistakenly stated.

Physically, God said of him, “Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return,” this was also because the waiting period of sleep for Adam for as long as he remained faithful in his redeemed position, he was free from the law of sin and death. Where then could there be in this case any difference between Adam and Abraham?

Paul taught in Romans 5, “By one man (Adam) sin entered into the world and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men in whom all sinned.” Adam was already subject to death by creation according to the physical law related to his species, therefore natural death could not be passed upon him as a penalty, it is a legal sentence not a physical law of decay. When a judge sentenced a murderer to death, he did not refer to a common experience of decay; he meant it to be inflicted as a penalty according to the law of the country, the murderer already being the subject of death by natural decay.

So, if as Paul says, death passed upon all men by imputation of being in the loins of Adam when he sinned, was not Abraham born under this position? How then did Abraham become dead to sin before dying physically? Was it not as with Adam who associated himself with the substitutionary lamb slain in Eden to free him from under the law of Sin and Death that he might continue to live unto God? And does not Paul teach this very thing in his letter to the Romans? “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:3 to 11).

This was the position of Abraham as confirmed by Jesus: "God is not the God of the dead but of the living," but Abraham must have done something to free himself from the legal position of death which through Adam had passed upon him. Yes, he associated himself with sacrificial means of which he had been made aware from the events in Eden and the period of Noah, therefore Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad." Paul said, "For without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." It is obvious then that death by natural cause could not atone for sin and as God said of the blood wherein is the life of the flesh, "I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls," This was the blood of Christ foreshadowed in the animals slain and required repetition until the substance appeared and shed His blood in ratification and by the mode of death (bloodshedding) Adam had merited by sin.

It is simply amazing that in Clause IX, Christadelphians deny that shedding of blood was the penalty Adam incurred by the righteousness of God, yet this very Clause IX states of Jesus as One who could rise after suffering the death required by the righteousness of God which everybody knows was by bloodshedding of a sinless man not worthy of death by sin. Yet they claim without any evidence from Scripture that Jesus died because He was of human nature or as they put it "He died for Himself."

They derive this false theory by likening Jesus to the High Priest under the Mosaic Law who offered first for his own sins and then for the people, thus they miss the important facts of Scripture teaching which testify that Jesus could not be a Priest on earth and had no sins to offer for and neither was he of the tribe of Levi. And again, the Priest under the Law did not offer his own blood or he would not have been alive to offer for the people; in both cases he offered the type of the antitype Jesus the substance.

As the Apostle declared "It was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin," the reason being that human life was in pledge through Adam's sin and the equivalent life free from sin could only be given in its stead to satisfy the law of Sin and Death and destroy its power over those who were under its dominion by imputation. Therefore by their enlightenment, belief and faith in the Man who gave His life willingly in the shedding of His life-blood not under Sin, they could be imputed righteous and rise from essential Baptism, to a walk in newness of life.

Those people who refuse to accept Jesus as their Substitute in that they affirm He died for Himself through His unclean flesh (condemned nature) are self-condemned by His own words especially when they profess to meet around His table to commemorate His death in partaking of bread and wine as symbolic of His body and blood.

Incidentally, have you ever considered the reason why God forbade the eating of the blood of the species of His creation? Was it not as He declared to Noah, Genesis 9:4, "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat..." and verse 6. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." This is the one blood all nations are made of from the creation of Adam, declares Paul, Acts 17:26, and determined (before Adam sinned) the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." The reason then that God forbade the eating of blood is that only the blood of His Son could atone in substance and reality for the sin of the world in one willing offering and sacrifice, no other man was in a position to obtain Redemption and forgiveness of sins for He was never alienated from God nor under the dominion of Sin. If as stated in Leviticus 17:10, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, then Jesus was a combination of both and the only means therefore of salvation, hence His words to that effect, though symbolic, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you, for my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed, he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him."

This then is the position of those saints who believe that Christ died as a substitute first for Adam and all in his loins, who can by enlightenment understand its reason and meaning and take the necessary steps for salvation and eternal life. Thus Christ is their life as the Apostle declared, "And when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The account given in Luke 22:14-20 is very plain and so important. After eating of the Passover Lamb Jesus took the cup of wine and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come."

Please note what follows, "And he took bread (unleavened), and gave thanks, and break it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you (not 'for myself): this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you (not 'for myself).

Have you absorbed the lesson? The sacrifice of Jesus was not for Himself, it was to take away the Sin of the world. He could not take away what He did not have. Those people who believe He had a condemned nature and sin in His flesh, as they indulge in what they call 'The Table of Remembrance,' stand condemned by His own words in that He did not include Himself as benefiting by His sacrificial death. Paul endorses this in 1 Corinthians 11:26,27, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Verse 29, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

To discern the Lord's body is to understand that it was a body that needed no cleansing from defilement or of condemnation. His body saw no corruption, the life in His blood purchased us from the Law of Sin and Death. If this is not a correct discernment, then why was He raised from the dead? And why teach and believe that He had to die to cleanse Himself from His condemned nature?

I therefore appeal in this context to all the divisions of Christadelphia world-wide, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the Faith; prove your own selves."

Jesus is at the door, hear ye Him.

Phil Parry.  
(28.8.2001)

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### **A further response to the letter from Brother Peter and Sister Meryl Morgan published in our last Circular Letter: -**

Dear Brother Russell, Further to the letter from Brother Peter and Sister Meryl Morgan in the July/August C.L. may we begin with a few premises such as -

Psalm 138. "Thou hast magnified thy Word above all thy Name."

Isaiah 66. "To this man will I look, even to him that is of a humble and contrite heart and trembleth at my Word" and "Hear the Word of YHWH, ye that tremble at his Word."

1 Samuel 15. "To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams."

Amos 3 "Surely the Lord YHWH will do nothing, but that he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

Clause 12 of the BASF says "That for delivering this message, Jesus was put to death by the Jews and Romans who were, however, but instruments in the hands of God." This is Calvinism at its worst. For it makes God responsible for the murder of His Son on the principle as John Thomas claimed "that what one doeth by his instruments he doeth by himself" (Ambassador, April 1868, page 117) and is not what Acts 2:23 or 3:18 are saying.

The former reads, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken... and by wicked hands nave crucified and slain," and the latter reads "And now brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers, but those things, which God before had shewed by

the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.” The meaning is plain enough - God by His fore-knowledge had given Jewry His Son to be their Saviour, knowing that the people would kill him through their wickedness. In this their cup of iniquity was brought to the full, with the result that that murder has not yet been requited for by Israel.

To say as Christadelphians do that God delivered him up to be crucified logically necessitates that Jewry committed no sin in crucifying Him and therefore brands Christadelphians as allies of the Jews who committed the crime. Jesus Himself was in complete control of events and of His own free will submitted to the crucifixion of His *psuche* life, that he might rise in the glory of His *zoe* life and lead many sons unto glory. His Father permitted this murder to take place for both He and His beloved Son were of one mind that only thus could the divine purpose and plan be fulfilled.

I think that Brother and Sister Morgan are wrong in saying that “There are several Bible definitions of sin.” There is only one definition of sin, namely that in 1 John 3:4, “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” When John records that “All unrighteousness is sin” this is true because the law required that a man be righteous. When Paul wrote “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin,” this is true because the law demanded “faith.” When James declared “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin,” this too is true because the law required that a man “do good.” When John records Jesus answering the Pharisees “If ye were blind ye should have no sin” because had they really been without sight they would not have been able to read the law, and as Paul contends in Romans 4; 15, “Where no law is, there is no transgression.” Luke 12:47,48 are fully in harmony with the definition of sin. When the servant who knew his Lord’s will and transgressed he was to be beaten with many stripes, but the servant who knew not his Lord’s will (law) and committed transgressions worthy of punishment escaped with few stripes.

As a definition therefore we conclude that ‘sin’ is “transgression of the law,” but which Law? Deity changes law in accordance with His plan and purpose for the time then present. Consider, only one prohibition prevailed in Eden; Adam must not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. From Adam to Noah it appears that a distinction was part of the law because Noah knew the distinction between clean and unclean beasts when filling the ark. After the flood this distinction appears to have been dropped because God said in Genesis 9:3, “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb have I given you all things.” But the distinction was re-imposed at Sinai when the eating of unclean animals was defined in such detail by Moses, only to be withdrawn again when the Mosaic law was replaced by the freedom in Christ and Peter was given the vision of the sheet containing all manner of unclean beasts and creeping things and birds and told that what God hath cleansed must no longer be called unclean, and as Paul told Timothy, “Every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving: for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer” (1 Timothy 4:4) and we can now rejoice in our “freedom in Christ” whilst obeying His law that we should “walk in Spirit and not after the flesh.”

I conclude therefore that it is not a question of “attempting to put God’s plan of salvation in our own terms which are necessarily inadequate, rather is it a matter of understanding it on God’s terms.

Neither do we need to come to terms with the fact that God could have prevented the crucifixion if He had so desired, and permitted it to go ahead. It is sufficient to accept that God so loved the world that He gave an only begotten Son who of His own free will endured the cross and despised the shame and rejoice in the salvation He accomplished at Jerusalem. Nor do I believe that it is God’s treatment of sin that varies. It is law that changes in accordance with the divine plan for the times then present.

God always condemns sin but is merciful and gracious to forgive us if like David we truly repent and strive to walk in accordance with His law and tremble at His Word.

May grace and peace be with you all in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Brother Eric Cave.

We are grateful to Brother John Stevenson for sending the following article which appeared in the Melbourne Anglican newspaper for July 2001:-

## **Immortality - The Gift of God for Those 'In Christ'**

"The Last Things", the heading within Systematic Theology under which 'heaven', 'hell', and 'the afterlife' fall, is one of the most confused areas in Christian Theology. The explanation probably lies in the fact that it stands at the interface of theology and folk religion. A 1999 joint Edith Cowan University and NCLS Research study involving 8500 Australians found that 53 percent believed in heaven and 32 percent in hell. Belief in natural immortality, the conviction that 'the soul' survives the death of the body was not surveyed. This probably also runs at high levels.

It is interesting to reflect on how beliefs in heaven, hell and human immortality are sustained. The key is probably neither preaching nor Christian literature - but rather a benevolent but uncritiqued conditioning to which well meaning families submit young minds during infancy. *Heaven is where dead people go* (and hence a child's quite reasonable question "if Jesus is not dead, how come he's in heaven?"). *Hell is where you would not want to go. Immortality is what makes it possible after death to go anywhere.* The depth of the conditioning is reflected in the prominence of these themes in shows like *The Simpsons* - the power of which resides in their exposure of deepest thoughts and beliefs.

A major difficulty lies in the fact that not one of these three deeply-instilled concepts enjoys biblical warrant. This suggestion is deeply disturbing to many people, and understandably so. This places Christian teachers and preachers in a real dilemma. Will they promote scriptural truth or endorse popular sentiment? Nowhere is this tension more acute than in funeral and bereavement ministry. This minister, for one, would appreciate prayers for clergy who have to struggle with this tension weekly, if not daily.

The remainder of this article is an attempt to set out an accessible biblical understanding of 'The Last Things.' It could have been peppered with texts and references, but that would have rendered it difficult and long. These details are available from the author for any who would like them.

In the Bible heaven is either the part of creation above earth, or it is where God and angels dwell. It is not the place to which people 'go' after life on earth (though there are two or three arguable exceptions in Jesus, Elijah and possibly Enoch).

'Hell' is used to render two disparate Bible words - 'Sheol', which is the lifeless place of the dead, and 'Gehenna'. The latter concept was popularized by the Pharisees, who had built a powerful expectation of post-mortem punishment of unrighteous persons after death in 'Gehenna', constructed upon the sketchy Old Testament image of the burning rubbish dump in the Valley of Hinnom.

Gehenna occurs several times in the Gospels, but nowhere much else. There, it is found in Jesus' appeal to two distinct groups - the disciples and the Pharisees - both with motivational rather than informative intent.

Heaven and hell did not feature in Jesus' proclamation of the Gospel, or in the preaching of his apostles. He never spoke of 'souls' or 'immortality' as such. His modern followers will do well to avoid reliance on these concepts in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus today. While they may have utility as 'shorthand' for marvellous yet mysterious Christian truths, to the extent that they dislodge these grander concepts, they are in danger of debasing Christian expectation.

The real villain in the piece is probably an even more foreign element - the belief in innate human immortality. This notion, though commonplace in Western thought from Greek times, is fundamentally alien to biblical conviction. The Old Testament knows little of immortality: human life begins with birth and ends with death. The New Testament, in contrast, holds out immortality as the special gift of God, in Christ, to all who believe. Death is real, but need not be the end. Believers are assured that their Lord will come again, and raise them to life immortal. But this immortality is future, and it is conditional. It is for those who are 'in Christ', and it will be his gift when he comes again, raises the dead, and claims his Kingdom.

Significantly, in the creeds, heaven and hell occur in the second section concerning Jesus' incarnation, death, ascension and return. The clauses touching upon human experience of 'The Last Things' are those in the third section covering 'the communion of saints', 'the resurrection of the body/dead', and 'the life everlasting'. That section refers to neither heaven nor hell.

Some readers will be immediately formulating objections, and these will almost certainly be based on one or other of three greatly overworked texts - Jesus' words to the penitent thief; his story of the rich man and Lazarus; and his assurance to his disciples that he was going to prepare a place for them. These texts are not typical of the broad thrust of the New Testament concerning the prospect of resurrection life, suggesting that they each call for re-examination. Jesus' words to the thief can be understood as an assurance that he would most certainly share with Christ in his fulfilled kingdom, Jesus' story about the rich man could be a surprise protest against Pharisaic piety and expectation. Jesus arguably went to the cross rather than to heaven to prepare a place for his disciples, and his promise to them concluded not with "I will come again and take you to where I have been" but rather with "I will come again and take you to myself."

Over-reliance on these texts has tended to reduce the Gospel to a call to believe so that you will go to heaven instead of hell when you die. Such summation is inadequate and misleading. It objectifies hell, suggesting that it is part of God's creation. It immortalizes all humanity, whether in Christ or not. And it obscures the importance of Christ's return to Judge and reign.

But this is to jump ahead. What may we discern about human destiny in Scripture, beginning with the Old Testament?

The significance of the truth that God created, and that creation was 'good' cannot be overemphasised. The goal and purpose of something is often apparent in its beginnings; to the degree that 'The Last Things' are about restoration, the original state will be the key. But humans turned from God's way, bringing estrangement and conflict and necessitating death.

God, through covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses and David, committed Himself to saving humanity. God's saving initiatives culminated in the prophetic expectation of a person and a time, the Messiah and the Day of the Lord, the means by which restoration would come.

What may we discern about human destiny in the New Testament? To start with, New Testament hope makes sense only in the light of the Old Testament expectation. Jesus was the Messiah anticipated in the Old Testament. He proclaimed the Day of the Lord, that is the Kingdom of God, and invited all to enter in. He willingly suffered and died, that his people might be released from sin and condemnation, to enjoy the blessings of the Kingdom. He rose from the grave, victorious in his quest and as the first-fruit of resurrection. He promised to come again to realize his kingdom, raise the dead, vindicate his own, and grant them immortal life within restored creation.

The New Testament says little about the fate of those outside Christ, save in reference to "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth", resurrection to judgment, and eternal death/condemnation. Importantly, these imply endless suffering only if one adopts the view that humans are naturally immortal. They are far better understood as referring to a brief experience prior to cessation of being. This is consistent with the conviction that God is the Sustainer of all life, and that separated from God, non can live.

It needs to be stated plainly, that quite apart from being unbiblical, the doctrine of natural immortality puts its adherents pastorally 'between a rock and a hard place.' If humans are innately immortal, there are only two options - either that those who refuse Christ will exist, and presumably suffer, for ever without him - or that the Kingdom of God will be compromised through the admission of some who do not honour its King, or because their loyalty to the King is not fully free.

During Lent our parish with many others across Australia displayed a poster which read "Jesus died to save the whole damned world." It was a crude yet truthful poster. The wording caused such deep offence to someone that they blocked out "damned" and replaced it with "blessed." I was then in a dilemma, because the second statement is also true. The question in my mind, however, was what drove the person to deny the

first truthful statement. I suspect it was that he or she is captive to the doctrine of natural immortality, and had opted for the 'hard place' of universalism instead of the 'rock' of hell. Happily, these are not the alternatives: God will give immortality only to those who accept the invitation to be part of his Kingdom.

Some will naturally ask whether amongst those 'in Christ' there will be some who never had opportunity to profess his Name. This is a separate, though important question. It is tempting to answer affirmatively, but to do so would be to go beyond the testimony of Scripture, and further erode contemporary resolve to obey Christ's Great Commission.

Gathering these thoughts together, if we are to abandon unsatisfactory talk of human destiny in terms of 'heaven' and 'hell', what should we say instead?

Immortality will be the gift of God in Christ to those who have received him. There is no Christian basis for anticipating ongoing life after death for those not in Christ. In the interval before Christ's return, his people who have died 'sleep in Christ' presumably an unconscious experience, but very much in God's care. When Christ appears, all will be raised to encounter him, and will be judged. Those who belong to Christ will then enter the fulfilled Kingdom of God, that is, creation restored. Death, sin, sickness and sorrow will be no more.

This expectation is biblical, even if not simple or popular. It reminds us of the importance of reading the Scriptures according to biblical categories (e.g. Kingdom of God, Eternal life, His coming again, judgment, resurrection) rather than according to those of the world (e.g. heaven, hell, and afterlife). Our belief as Christians is in a person (Jesus), rather than a place (heaven), let alone in ourselves (our 'souls'). He promised that he will come again to claim and restore his creation, and to raise his own to enjoy the life which he planned from the beginning.

And so, with countless Christians over two millennia, we can pray "Maranatha - Come, Lord Jesus!"

The Reverend Dr. David Powys.

Vicar of The Anglican Parish of Mount Eliza, Australia

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**In reply to the above article I wrote as follows:-**

Dear David Powys, A close friend of mine in Australia kindly sent me your article "Immortality - The Gift of God for those 'In Christ'" which appeared in The Melbourne Anglican newspaper, and I must say I was very pleased to receive it as a testimony from an Anglican Vicar who has put the Bible before popular sentiment or belief.

Perhaps I was fortunate as a child in that my parents never told me that anyone went to heaven at death or that there was such a place as hell in which people suffered, but that the Bible was the only source of knowledge of God, His plan and purpose with mankind, and that prayer was important. Now at the age of 73 I greatly appreciate the love of my parents in their guiding wisdom.

I have, for a long time, felt that the term 'Theology' instils an unwarranted fear in the minds of many and find your approach to the subjects of Hell, Heaven and the afterlife quite refreshing. You take for granted that 'ordinary' people are just as able to understand the Bible as any theologian. "And the common people heard him gladly." Why? I believe it was because Jesus didn't 'beat about the bush' but was direct, straightforward and spoke plainly.

In your third paragraph you say "these deeply-instilled concepts" of heaven, hell and afterlife "places Christian teachers and preachers in a real dilemma" - but is there really a choice? You show that for the Christian there is not. If they are Christian people they should promote only Bible teaching and have nothing to do with promoting popular beliefs, which are after all only fables. I understand the seeming harshness in saying that someone was mistaken when it is too late for them to find the truth but they had their lifetime in

which to show some interest in finding where the truth lay and if they have failed then there is nothing anyone can do about it afterwards, and it is false comfort submitting to popular sentiments in order to assuage the grief of others. Such a course does not show real love for the surviving relatives who should be encouraged to seek the truth for themselves and turn to Jesus who alone can make them free from condemnation - as He said, "The truth will make you free."

In another place you refer to the concepts of heaven and hell as "mysterious Christian truths." I wonder, is it really wise to talk of "mysteries" with regard to Christianity? If one is using the term in place of "secrets" then perhaps it has its place, but the common association of mystery is one of a doctrine involving difficulties which human reasoning is incapable of solving; or something beyond comprehension (except of course, for theologians?). I feel it is an unfortunate word to use and best avoided. After all, God has asked us to reason with Him, while Paul exhorts us to prove all things; where then is there any mystery?

But I am writing to you as one who is looking forward to the return of Jesus Christ to set up His Kingdom and who sees that not all will receive eternal life in that Kingdom, and one who wishes to set out an accessible biblical understanding of 'The Last Things.' Some of my comments may possibly be new to you but, above all, I hope they will be helpful in some degree.

Most certainly Jesus went to the cross rather than to heaven to prepare a place for His disciples and here is where the Gospel stands or falls; herein we have the Atonement. When saying "He willingly suffered and died, that his people might be released from sin and condemnation, to enjoy the blessings of the Kingdom," I feel you stopped short of showing how His crucifixion achieved this end. I wonder if you have ever considered the explanation of the Atonement on the Federal Principle? I will try to put the view very briefly thus: -

Alienation from God was brought about by the sin of Adam in breaking God's Law. The penalty for which was judicial death on the day he sinned. Had this sentence been carried out Adam and Eve would have perished that day and returned to the dust from which they were taken, never again to receive life. There would have been no offspring of theirs to fill the earth and no human race as we know it today. But rather than carry out the sentence, the principle of sacrifice was introduced and an animal was killed instead - as a sin-bearer. This indicated to Adam and Eve that God not only required justice to be done but that He also showed mercy by providing a way of escape from their imminent death.

Paul tells us that all the progeny of Adam are concluded under sin, that is, the one sin of Adam which brought about this alienation from God. We see then, Adam as one Federal Head of the human race, the life of which was forfeit to sin - sin as a Master, Paul further explains - which holds the human race in bondage, a bondage from which we must be made free if we are to receive immortality. To conclude the race under sin was not a punishment but was part of God's plan for the purpose of saving the race from destruction and especially saving the faithful from judgment.

Jesus, the second Adam, also had His life direct from God. He was the only begotten Son of God and was not therefore a son of Adam in as much as He did not have a human father, and was not in bondage or under condemnation as were all the descendants of Adam. He was the other Federal Head and was in the position of being able to pay Adam's debt by the surrender of His own life on the cross - without forfeiting His own right to immortality. Restoration then, through Jesus' righteousness is freedom from this alienation brought about by Adam, and hence the need to be 'in Jesus' - to have His righteousness imputed to us in place of the Sin of Adam which had been imputed to all mankind. Once in Christ we can have the forgiveness of our sins which in due time will lead to everlasting life.

God is love and this love is perfect. God wants us to be like Him. If we don't want to be then we have no future. It is, by the grace of God, our choice, but it doesn't come easily to us and so we have the exhortation to "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness."

But how do we accept Christ? Is it not by baptism? "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptised into Christ were baptised into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" - here and now in this lifetime, this newness of life 'in Christ.' How else can we be 'in Christ'?

Even as we must not go beyond what is written we must also not fall short of what is written. All who will do the will of God shall also have the opportunity to choose baptism for themselves as the way of coming out of Adam, the one Federal Head under which all die, into Christ, the other Federal Head in whom all will be made alive.

I know there are many explanations of the Atonement but feel the above is the only accessible biblical understanding which not only fits all the facts laid down in the Bible and also appeals to common sense, it also, by the grace of God, leads to immortality through Jesus Christ.

With all who love His appearing we say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Russell Gregory.

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**Brother Gordon Cooper writes:-**

Dear Helen, Since I returned to the Central Fellowship of the Christadelphians three years ago, I have received your magazine. Many of the articles have been very interesting and most certainly hold a high degree of truth. But I am very disappointed that there is always a significant amount of cynicism and sarcasm thrown at brethren who are noteworthy for the things that they have done within the brotherhood. They are usually of the kind who have managed to hold together a strong fellowship against the opposition of vociferous critics who show little of the true spirit of Christ but who are determined to assert their alleged unique knowledge of the atonement and the associated doctrines.

How little regard you have for those for whom Christ died, turning the sacrifice of the Son of God into a technical exercise, rooting into the most minute detail of the Creator's mind, which none of us can possibly understand fully.

I am uncertain as to how many members of the Nazarene Fellowship there really are, but I am positive that there are very few. The use of sympathetic articles from writers now deceased is one of the oldest ploys of spin doctors to give the impression that there is a strong current following.

July/August 2001, Page 1: "Is it any wonder that the Archbishop's church is so empty?" And you then propose that the church is empty because of the propagation of unsound doctrine. Why then is your "church" even more empty? Such a frivolous and unsound claim could equally well be made against the Nazarenes.

Page 2: Your sympathisers seem always to confuse the issue of death because of Adam's sin which comes upon all men, with the actual cause of the cessation of life. Whether by accident, or violence, or natural causes, the fact remains that we all die because Adam disobeyed God. That we also all commit acts of disobedience to God's commands is equally beyond doubt. If we lose sight of that, we lose sight of the mercy which God extends to us through Jesus, in that he raised him from the dead. And we can lose sight of these basic principles by building on them a structure so dense and impenetrable that none can see the basic truth any longer.

Page 6: "He reiterates the usual Christadelphian beliefs..." Why not? "He states his firm belief in the following terms..." Because you endeavour by the use of eloquence to denounce him in the reader's mind. More directly, you call him "naive" and in a position where you do not consider that he "knows what he means." How low in the field of honest argument and discussion can you possibly get? It is one thing to put forward what you consider to be different views to what has been said. It is quite another to attack the integrity of the writer or speaker.

It is not difficult to see the psychology behind the listing of paragraphs of a writer's article, and adding at greater length your comments after each. It looks persuasive, but seldom is.

Pages 13ff: More of the same. Replies to a letter, the text of which is not available to the reader. This sort of device is usually employed by politicians who would shine at the expense of others' claimed shortcomings. Pages full of snide remarks and sarcasm against a brother of considerable spiritual stature. Not the unifying spirit of Christ, but rather of division.

And so it goes on. A potentially good publication ruined for me by its wholly unnecessary negativity. I have allowed it to come here for many issues in the hope that I first saw some unfortunate instances of what I have referred to above. Alas, that is not so. I find its pages very disappointing, lacking in the humility of the Lord Jesus, and as a result, with a great tendency to destroy faith, not encouraging it in these last days, I do not therefore wish to receive any of these magazines in future, and I earnestly pray that at the very least your style might become more positive.

Sincerely, Gordon Cooper

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### **Reply by Sister Helen Brady dated 29th August 2001.**

Dear Gordon, Thank you for your letter. I am sorry to know you find so much about the Nazarenes and the Circular Letter disagreeable and we will, of course, remove your name from our mailing list as you ask.

I don't know who the brethren are to whom you refer who have done noteworthy things in your brotherhood. But whoever they are I think the only truly noteworthy thing to do is to preach and spread the truth about the Gospel of Salvation as it is revealed in the Bible. If we don't get that right all the rest is filthy rags. The Christadelphians don't preach the truth about Jesus and His sacrifice because they don't know it and it is precisely because we have great regard, contrary to what you say, for those for whom Christ died that we send out the Circular Letter in order to preach and spread the truth about the sacrifice of Christ, His nature and ours, and with the hope that enlightenment will follow.

The Nazarenes are indeed few in number, we have never as far as I know concealed the fact. We use articles by dead people because they have written truths that are worth repeating. I don't quite see how this could give you or anyone else the impression of a present strong following.

It also seems a bit unreasonable to call a comment about the Archbishop's church being empty "frivolous and unsound." You can hardly compare the C of E with the Nazarenes. We do not have several buildings in every town and village across the country with a paid employee in charge of them. Supposing we had we might not do any better than we do now but at least we would be trying to uphold the principles God laid down for His people, which is certainly more than the Archbishop sees fit to do.

I think it is you and the Christadelphian movement who confuse the issue of death. We do not "all die because Adam disobeyed God." If sin became a fixed principle in Adam and Eve's flesh only after they sinned how did they manage to sin in the first place? And how do you know everyone else commits acts of disobedience? I know I do and you probably know you do, but you cannot possibly speak for everyone else. If it is impossible to obey the Ten Commandments what are they there for? "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father..." Perfect people have lived as we know from the Bible and have lived since. How do they do it with sin fixed in their flesh? They did it and they do it still because they are determined to obey as Christ was. But unlike Christ all other human beings are born under a legal condemnation because of Adam's sin. This is the sin/condemnation that Christ died to save us from, not natural death, which happens simply because we are part of the natural creation. As Jesus tells us "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" and Paul confirms what our Lord says with "There is therefore NOW no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." So if the Christadelphian notion that the condemnation resulting from Adam's sin was 'natural death' then those 'in Christ' are still under condemnation, for they are still corruptible and dying, and so both Jesus and Paul are wrong in their assertions. Christ's death has achieved nothing according to Christadelphian belief, and baptism in symbol into His death is pointless and changes nothing for you. Thankfully my situation is not the same as yours for I believe I am saved. I have moved out of Adam into

Christ, my sins are forgiven day by day, if I ask, and therefore I do not await Judgment as I understand Christadelphians do. In other words my whole life has been turned around, can you say the same of yours?

I certainly don't regard the sacrifice of Christ in any way a "technical exercise" and I very much regret if it appears that way. But, unlike you, I do believe we have been given minds capable of understanding it. Why should it be a mystery when such a wonderful blessing is for our benefit?

With all good wishes.

Helen Brady.

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### **Reply to Brother Gordon Cooper from Brother Eric Cave, dated 30th August 2001**

(Part of Brother Cave's letter contained matters of personal or private comment which have been left out. - Ed.]

Dear Brother Cooper, Your letter of the 8th to Sister Helen has been passed to me for comment. As the source and cause of some of your criticism I feel it is only fair that you should be "in the picture" and therefore enclose a copy of brother Alfred's letter for your information...

I had a great admiration for his fluency and scriptural knowledge, and still have... I judged his pamphlet "The Holy Spirit and the Believer Today" to be both unfair and unscriptural...

After 60 years as a loyal Christadelphian a brief article of mine in the Testimony was rubbished by a 'logos' brother which provoked me into a careful re-examination of Genesis and the discovery that Robert Roberts "Statement of Faith" was seriously flawed by the pagan Roman Catholic undercurrent of 'Original Sin' and the conclusion that his doctrinal somersault after the death of John Thomas, himself contaminated by the same error, was amongst others the cause of the contentions and divided state of 'Christadelphia.'

In October 1998 I published "The Divine Plan - A Re-appraisal of some Christadelphian Traditions" which was very well received by 95% of all the Christadelphians who responded. All the handful of critics who wrote had only "the writings of the pioneers" to recommend, or in the case of Michael Ashton an appeal "not to rock the boat." Not one opponent offered any scripture to contest the points I had made or had the will to ask "which death, of the three types of death found in scripture, did Adam bring into the world? At the time of publication I knew nothing of the Nazarene Fellowship. Only subsequently did I find that they had been making almost the same contentions for the Truth that I had discovered, and with more evidence than I had found, for the last 125 years!

But I will leave this for the moment and deal with your criticisms of the Circular Letter in the order in which you castigate them.

Paragraph 2. Our regard for those for whom Christ died... It is precisely because all our friends have been baptised into the Name that we seek to warn them of the deadly peril into which their acceptance of the BASF has placed them, principally CDN teaching of an 'unclean' Christ which in the words of the apostle constitutes "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit" – (Mark 3:29,30). Jeremiah 9:24 reads, "But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am YHWH which exercise loving kindness, Judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith YHWH." Ephesians 3:3 and verse 10 make the same point, that we are expected to know God. So if you choose to believe that these verses are merely a "technical exercise" which none of us can understand fully, then with respect, we must disagree. The gospel was preached to the 'poor' in language that all can understand.

Paragraph 3. That there are very few who publicly claim to be Nazarenes is true, but as we have no membership list and simply a mailing list (which includes many 'establishment' brethren), the subject is of no consequence. God knoweth who are His, just as He did in the days of Noah. Only about 120 constituted the faithful after the resurrection according to Acts 1:15, yet the common people we are told "Heard Jesus gladly." Elijah believed he was alone, yet there were 7000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

Subsequently to my own disfellowship I received many offers to break bread with CDN friends, even from some I had never met. I am not the only one who prays for the day when the notice "Christadelphian Meeting Place" will have the added words "Non BASF." "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it." My own experience in the limited circles of my acquaintance would suggest that there must be at least 7000 worldwide who have not bowed the knee to Robert Roberts.

Paragraph 4. As Sister Helen was commenting on the 'public image' of Archbishops and their 'whited sepulchres' do not your own comments fall into that same category of 'cynicism and sarcasm' of which you have accused us? Even in the Anglican community there are still pockets of Bible believers, e.g. the fundamentalist Bishop Barry Shucksmith of Portsmouth appears to have no difficulty in filling his pews, unlike Canterbury and other Anglican bishops whom he regularly criticises in the readers page of the Daily Telegraph for their neglect and ignorance of Scripture.

Paragraph 5. "That we all commit acts of disobedience to God's commands is equally beyond doubt." Or is it? Will you please advise us when Jesus committed an act of disobedience? Or Abel? Or Enoch? Or Noah? Or Daniel? Or Job? Or John Baptist? Or the virgin Mary? Or Simon and Anna in Luke 2? Did Jesus ask the impossible when he exhorts "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect?" I am aware that 1 John 1:10 states that "If we say that we have not sinned we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" But the preceding verses also make it clear that the apostle is speaking of our situation before baptism, and that our confession at that time ensures that we have been forgiven and cleansed from all unrighteousness. Whilst Romans 8:1 confirms that there is now no condemnation (Gk. *katakrima*, Down judgment) for those who continue to walk in the spirit and not in the flesh. Numbers 16:29,30 informs us of two types of death. The common death of all men (because they have come to the end of their allotted span, or are victims of 'visitations' such as sword, famine, wild beasts, or pestilence [Ezekiel 14:21] and secondly, the judicial death suffered by Korah and company), Jesus himself informs us of a third type of death, "those who are dead in trespasses and sins whilst still living. Scripture clearly teaches that like all living creatures Adam was created with a limited span as John Thomas and even R. Roberts originally believed and taught from 1848 till the death of the doctor when R. Roberts performed his doctrinal somersault and took the majority back to the doctrine of 'Original Sin' and subsequently judicial death for all Adam's progeny.

Paragraph 6. Brother Graeham Mansfield. Your contention that his opponents must not impugn the integrity of one who chooses to ignore the Word of God in favour of idol worship of Robert Roberts' BASF and dismisses the Son of God as "unclean" and "being possessed by a devil," seems to this writer at best illogical. Did not Jesus impugn the integrity of the Scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 23? or Paul describe as a "fool" the man who asked how the dead are raised up? Or with what body they came? "Cry aloud and spare not," exhorts Isaiah, "show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isaiah 58:1). We should most certainly be guilty of injustice if we failed to print the false teaching we contest. We seek to inform, and any eloquence involved is that of scripture itself, which we quote against error. Graeham chooses to ignore the plain simple facts of scripture and continues to align himself with those Scribes and Pharisees who repeat the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit that Jesus was "unclean" as is the case with the whole CDN 'establishment.' Only occasionally do they let slip the gospel truth about salvation. An example of this may be found on page 11 of the July/August C.L. where in a subsequent letter Graeham himself complains that Brother Phil Parry "Does not comprehend that Adamic sin did not change the nature; it merely put it under a law of sin and death."! "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Finally my comments on the letter from Brother Alfred: I am in total agreement with what Sister Helen and brethren Russell Gregory and Phil Parry have written (C.L. 190 July/August 2001) and to paraphrase the words of Paul in Romans 10, 'My hearts desire and prayer to God for Alfred is that he might be saved. For I bear him record that he has a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.' Most certainly and from personal knowledge the so called 'dear souls' of 'simple faith' have a better understanding of why Christ died than he possesses at present. I have seen no evidence of 'disabling grief only gratitude and pleasure for the scriptural discussions we have shared since my disfellowship. Interestingly you will note that Alfred, together with the members of his ecclesia received their copies of the 'Handbook' last May. To date, August 29th, not one of those who were supposedly 'preparing to do battle' have uttered the faintest squeak. Could it be that they have mislaid their ammunition?

Sincerely your brother in the Lord's service, Eric Cave.

**The following commentary is a response to Brother J.S.Roberts' book entitled -**

## **“The Bible, The Lord Jesus Christ, and You”**

I presume the intention of the author is to make the Bible message, as he sees it, more interesting and presentable to the reader by relating the experiences of everyday events and conversation in modern life and times, which reflect the lessons already taught in the Bible in various ways but emanating from God the Creator of all things and especially in regard to the salvation and future of mankind. The author asks his readers to set aside ‘preconceived notions.’

He asks you to give the Bible a ‘Hearing.’ I find this advice very commendable, but is the author consistent in following that advice himself? I find he is not. His book continually hinges upon preconceived notions, error and contradictions as a result of basing his remarks on false premises handed down to him by men who have wrested much of the Bible’s teaching out of its context and have also added to it a doctrine which is not there.

When speaking on the subject of death the author appears to have only one death in mind and this is the death to which all natural animal creation was subject, including Adam, before sin entered the world by his disobedience. He then confuses the issue by saying that “The Bible is the only book which offers an escape route from death;” can he show from the Bible (apart from the vague meaning of Enoch’s case) where anyone has escaped death unless it be the “death that came by sin”? Adam and Eve escaped the latter (Judicial) but they did not escape the death common to all animal creation otherwise they would have experienced a change from their corruptible nature to an incorruptible nature while still alive.

The author makes some reference to this God-appointed escape route as he calls it, in the animal types slain to procure the covering for Adam’s and Eve’s sin and which foreshadowed the death of Christ, but he refuses to accept that this was the means and provision for their escape from inflicted death by blood shedding, the slain lambs being substitutes, not representatives, in foreshadowing the sacrificial death of Christ which God had foreseen from the beginning.

The author is incorrect when he says that God condemned Adam’s flesh when he disobeyed. God did nothing of the kind - for this would mean that He regarded the nature He had created “very good” as a mistake on His part and that what He had enjoined on Adam and Eve as a commandment and condition for continuance of natural life was an impossibility for that nature, so He condemned it, and regarded all who received it through reproduction as participants of this condemnation.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say that God condemned the physical flesh, but it does teach that God condemned sin as being transgression of His Law.

Why then does the author’s community add to this something God did not do, and make it a clause in their Statement of things to be believed, thus making God the Author of their false doctrine of ‘sinful flesh,’ ‘defiled-nature’ etc., which originated in the Apostate Church of Rome? I refer of course to Clause V of the Christadelphian Statement of Faith whose compilers have neither given the Bible a fair “Hearing” nor a fair Reading as did Pelagius, whose fair reading and fair reasoning of the Bible was soon suppressed and silenced by a Pope, especially on this false doctrine of Original Sin by implantation, introduced into the Apostate Churches and contained in Clause V which T have referred to.

The Bible teaches that Adam’s sin did not change his flesh. Why should it if he was able to sin in this “very good” nature? Why defile it by implanting an inducement to sin and the ability to reproduce in his posterity this added and further inducement, and then condemn posterity (including Jesus Christ) for possessing it when they had no choice?

In reference to the Genesis account J.S.Roberts says, “Distortion of their simple facts has led to ignorance and misunderstanding. We need to get back to Bible Truth. We need to get back to the beginning. Then we can make some sense of life.”

No one needs to do this more than the author and the community to which he belongs, for instead of starting at Genesis - the beginning - it has started from two men of the 1870's who contradicted Scripture and one another, the one, R.Roberts finally forcing his blasphemous teaching of condemned nature and a cursed Christ on to his brethren and making it a condition of fellowship in a written document assumed to be supported by the Holy Scriptures, if one takes only his word for it.

J.S.Roberts dwells quite a lot on the Bible as an instruction plan of God to man and makes some very good points, but he has destroyed, by his own indoctrinated errors, the good points of instruction to be gained by a fair and unbiased reading of God's Book.

Sincerely yours in contending for the Truth and Salvation in Christ.

Brother Phil Parry.

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## **A Question of Penalty**

We ask two questions -

- 1). Was natural death the penalty due to Adam for his transgression?
- 2). Was judicially inflicted death the penalty due to Adam for his transgression?

We first present some views in support of natural death being the penalty due to Adam for his transgression.

In the early days of the Christadelphians it seems to have been the general understanding that Adam and Eve would naturally grow old and die at the end of their allotted life-span, but this view was later changed to accommodate the belief that natural death was the penalty for their transgression. Therefore it was assumed that their lives while in the Garden, would continue with the ageing process held in abeyance, until such time as they should disobey the law given them that "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," or "dying thou shalt die", claiming this means a slow process. It is further held by many (but not by all) that eating of the Tree of Life was the means of withholding the ageing process and, after they were turned out of the Garden of Eden for their transgression and no longer had access to the Tree of Life, the ageing process took its natural course and they duly died as the result. An alternative view is that the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil held some 'poisoning agent' which caused mortality, or changed their superior nature to the nature of animals. It can be argued from the above that the eventual resultant death of Adam and Eve was the due penalty for their transgression. It is held then, that the flesh of Adam and Eve was changed in some way and hence called defiled flesh. Further it is held by many that the hardships Adam and Eve experienced were also part of the penalty. Furthermore, the slaying of the animal in Eden typified the Crucifixion of Jesus which highlighted the Divine estimate of Adam's condemned nature (defiled flesh), worthy only of total repudiation and death. Thus the promise to the serpent, or devil, (human nature personified - as they suppose) was fulfilled, that he (it) should be destroyed. The murderous death of Jesus then was a representative death, and, as natural death was the penalty for Adam's sin, there is no way that Jesus death could be substitutional.

While these beliefs may seem to accommodate most of the facts of the matter it has many failings when we consider some aspects more closely. Perhaps the greatest problem facing Christadelphians is the idea of sacrifice being substitutionary, supposing it necessary for an innocent person to be punished in order that the guilty go free. Brother Henry Sulley was one such person, who until July 1873 shared fellowship with Edward Turney at the Nottingham Ecclesia. He opposed Edward Turney in the following way: -

- (a) If Christ died as a substitute no man after His death ought to die; but they do.

(b) If Christ died as a substitute he ought not to have been raised from the dead, unless the punishment due to sin was death for three days; in such case no saviour was necessary.

(c) If Christ died as a substitute, all men, good and bad, should equally share the benefit of his death.

(d) If Christ died as a substitute there is no place for forgiveness.

(e) If Christ died as a substitute all benefits should accrue from his death alone to those in whose stead he died, whereas the believer is saved by his life (Romans 5:10). \*

Henry Sulley refused to accept that substitution did not require an innocent person to be punished so that the guilty may go free and his stubbornness in this matter forced him to make the unnecessary charges above, for these charges fail utterly to counter the teaching of Edward Turney who was well aware that God would never punish an innocent man for any reason or purpose and he never made this dreadful notion any part of his exposition on the subject of the Atonement.

There is another fault which is perhaps more understandable since Brother Sulley may not have been aware in his day of the two words used in Scripture for 'life,' and more light has been circulated within the community since his time. This light concerns the words used for "life" and how they are applied. In both the Old and New Testaments there are two words used, and so far as the New Testament (also the Septuagint i.e. Greek Old Testament) is concerned we have the two Greek words "*zoe*" and "*psuche*." As examples we will refer to the way in which Jesus used them in John's Gospel.

In John 10:11,15 and 17 Jesus used the word *psuche* - "I am the good shepherd, and the good shepherd giveth his life (*psuche*) for the sheep... I lay down my life (*psuche*) for the sheep... Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life (*psuche*) for the sheep."

In the gospel of John prior to the above quotations from chapter 10 we find the word "life" occurs 28 times and every time it is the Greek word *zoe* that is used. We make the following references: -

John 1:4, "In him was life (*zoe*); and the life (*zoe*) was the light of men"; John 3:15,16, "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life (*zoe*). For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoso believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (*zoe*)"; John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life (*zoe*), and shall not come into condemnation (judgment); but is passed from death unto life (*zoe*). Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live (*zao*). For as the Father hath life (*zoe*) in Himself: so hath He given to the Son to have life (*zoe*) in himself."

These few references are given by way of examples. We hope readers will look up and check for themselves and see that we are never offered eternal *psuche* (life) but always eternal *zoe* (life). The words *psuche* and *zoe* and their derivatives are to be found over 450 times in the New Testament and occasionally the distinction between them is not as clear as the above quotations from John's gospel may suggest.

The important thing to note is of course, that when Jesus said "I lay down my life for the sheep" it was not the *zoe* life He laid down which the Father had given Him to have in Himself, but the *psuche* life which He obtained through Mary. After the crucifixion He rose with *zoe* life. Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth (*zao*), and was dead; and behold, I am alive (*zao*) for evermore, Amen."

We next wish to note that there are two ways in which substitution is expressed;

Firstly, as we have considered above, it is referred to as punishing an innocent person in order for the guilty to go free.

There was a time when whipping boys suffered as 'scapegoats' for the mistakes of young princes with whom they shared their education. If the prince were to commit some deed for which his elders considered any other child should be severely punished then the offender, because he was a prince would not himself

suffer the penalty but the whipping boy would suffer it in his stead while the prince looked on. This system was a great injustice of course, but to put an innocent person to death for the errors of another would be revulsion in the sight of our Creator - just as it is to any right thinking person. More importantly, this is not a willing sacrifice on the part of the victim and must be ruled out as having any semblance in the Sacrifice of Christ.

Secondly, let us consider another view of substitution. A person may give his or her life for the sake of another and we have probably all heard of tragic cases where one person has died trying to save another. Should the person in peril be saved we would say the one life was given in place of the other. This is also substitution and does not entail punishment but love for the person in peril.

Those who know the Charles Dickens story of "A Tale of Two Cities" will understand something of the poignancy of true substitution. Those not familiar with the story, may yet have heard the quotation: "It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to, than I have ever known." These words were spoken by the one who took the place of his friend after bribing the guards to allow him into the prison where his friend was held, there to exchange clothes, the one for the other; his friend going out free while he, the substitute, was put to death the next day on the scaffold. This is true substitution.

Jesus Christ knew what He was doing when He gave His natural life (*psuche*) in place of Adam's. By laying down His *psuche* life on Calvary He gave *psuche* life to Adam after he lost hope of it through transgression. Jesus gave His natural life for the sake of the world but more especially for His friends in the world, for to them he gave the opportunity of *zoe* life for evermore. He knew He would rise to be alive (*zao*) for evermore. "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" - John 15:13,14. Again, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." John 17:24.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:6-8. True substitution indeed!

Let us reconsider the position from the beginning:

Jesus was the Saviour in the mind and purpose of His Father even before the foundation of the world. The Father knew what His Son would do to save the human race and He loved Him for it.

Adam and Eve failed in their test of obedience (works), and so, fearful of the penalty of death to be inflicted by the Lord God, they hid themselves. When found and questioned they excused themselves as best they could by passing on the blame, but to no avail for they were without hope and could not save themselves. However, in God's love and mercy for His children He forgave them and slew the animal(s) instead.

This slaying of the animal(s) provided only a temporary covering for their sin, and it foreshadowed the slaying of the Lamb of God on Calvary when He would lay down His life to take away the sin of the world. It is recognized that this is the case in the words to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The seed of the serpent is personified in the Jews and the Romans responsible for the Crucifixion, while the Seed of the woman is Jesus Christ, the One who was to come and take away sin completely.

The significance of these events cannot be overstated for herein we see the whole purpose of the work of God in Christ. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them." Thus, with the slaying of the animal God provided covering for Adam and Eve. Once their sins were covered over in symbol, they knew they were not to be put to death - they were then given a chance of life eternal on new terms to be set out - salvation by faith and not by works.

This forgiveness instead of the slaying of the guilty pair was not a matter of God going back on His word any more than on other occasions, e.g. when He forgave Nineveh, or, again, Hezekiah when told he would die but had his life extended. There are many such instances, and this case of Adam and Eve is just one of them.

It was after God had forgiven Adam and Eve their sin and the animal(s) slain to provide the covering, and after the reference to the bruising of the Seed of the woman and the destroying of the seed of the serpent, that God now told them of their new conditions. They were to leave the protected environment of the Garden of Eden and suffer hardships in their toil to 'make a living' for themselves and their children.

They had not been warned beforehand of these trials and hardships outside of the Garden, and it is wrong to assume that these hardships were any part of their punishment contained in the warning that "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." They were part of their new environment, and outside paradise life would never be the same again.

Adam and Eve, having failed in the trial of obedience, were now to live by faith in order to please their Creator.

So to answer b) "Was judicially inflicted death the penalty due to Adam for his transgression?" We answer, Yes, most certainly it was, but Adam did not receive the penalty. Adam's life was in peril because of his transgression and he could not save himself, so Jesus Christ saved Adam by taking his place in death. In this we see the loving kindness and mercy of God and His Son for us. By taking the penalty due to Adam upon Himself, Adam was allowed to continue to live; he was given a second chance. "Therefore 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" - John 10:17.

We now answer the five points raised by Brother H.Sulley:-

**H.Sulley:** If Christ died as a substitute no man after His death ought to die; but they do.

**We reply:** Jesus died as a Substitute in order to give natural life to the world. His death was never meant to save people from dying a natural death but to give opportunity of life for evermore to those who love God.

**H.Sulley:** If Christ died as a substitute he ought not to have been raised from the dead, unless the punishment due to sin was death for three days; in such case no saviour was necessary.

**We reply:** It is shown in Scripture that Jesus laid down His *psuche* life and that He rose in *zoe* life to live for evermore.

**H.Sulley:** If Christ died as a substitute, all men, good and bad, should equally share the benefit of his death.

**We reply:** All do equally share the benefit of His death in that all who have ever lived have received their natural life because Jesus died.

**H.Sulley:** If Christ died as a substitute there is no place for forgiveness.

**We reply:** All owe their natural life to Jesus. He purchased the whole human race by His death and He will forgive as He sees right.

**H.Sulley:** If Christ died as a substitute all benefits should accrue from his death alone to those in whose stead he died, whereas the believer is saved by his life. (Romans 5:10).

**We reply:** Truly, in Romans 5:10 Paul wrote, "For if, when we were sinners, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his Life (*zoe*)." So even as the Father has (*zoe*) life in Himself and gave His Son to have (*zoe*) life in Himself, He will give this same (*zoe*) life to all the faithful. However, by His death Jesus gave us natural

(*psuche*) life; so that by His resurrection He is able to give spiritual (*zoe*) life, therefore we are saved by His life.

In the light of this Bible teaching we would ask all who will to relinquish the false teachings of defiled human flesh, and of a defiled Christ. There is no support in Scripture for such doctrines.

We ask you to seriously and prayerfully consider the position you hold. "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit." 2 Tim. 4:22.

Russell Gregory.

(\* Henry Sulley. "The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy." 5th edition, 1949. pp 236-250)

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### **Letter from a Christadelphian:-**

Dear Sister Helen, Thank you for sending me your Circular Letter... I am grateful for them, but feel it would be a waste of your resources to send me any more.

I sympathise with the Nazarenes in their position of ostracisation; there is no doubt in my mind that Edward Turney and those of like mind were diabolically treated by bro. Robert Roberts. But the present editor's little finger is thicker than bro. Roberts' waist and you will get scant satisfaction from him or any Christadelphians in awe of him.

...the Christadelphian hymn writer, Charles Caldicott was of bro. Turney's opinion, but having seen the arguments in some detail I can only view it as a disputation about words; if the 'clean flesh heretics' had not been so badly treated, would you still view it as an issue of paramount importance 130 years on? And basically I disagree with your contention. Basically I think you're as wrong in your way as the minority of Christadelphians who know enough about the issue to oppose you.

Jesus went to the Cross for His own salvation because if He had not obeyed His Father in so doing, He would have sinned. But this is an irrelevant 'what if.' As we have all sinned questioning whether our nature could have stayed sinless is futile. When Job questioned God, God rebuked him by showing him it was not in him to understand creation still less to comprehend his Creator.

Paul tells us we see through a glass darkly - our nature, God's nature, Christ's nature. Anyone wasting pages of type puffing themselves up with their knowledge like bros. Mansfield and Gregory and labelling one another catholic when they should be about their Master's business is repugnant. The whole 'clean flesh' debate is an argument about words. We're all sinners 'in Adam' - Jesus, having committed no sin saves us 'in Christ,' I don't need to be a doctor and a pharmacist to know I'm ill and to have a drug cure me. Jesus was tested by our inclination to evil until the devil was destroyed on the cross.

I agree Bro. Graeham does not talk a great deal of sense, but the Logos Magazine has spent decades proudly proclaiming it's closed mind and more fool Bro. Russell for bothering to trouble its torpor. Stop wasting resources trying to set the Central Fellowship right - it is a sinking ship. In 10-20 years Christadelphians will be extinct in the UK at the rate of decline that has prevailed since the 1960's and more likely it will disintegrate before that. Concentrate on preaching to unbelievers; if by some miracle of grace radical reform is possible (and there are plenty striving for it) we'll do right by the Nazarenes, depend on it.

I heartily approve of your stance towards your statement of faith, we in the Central Fellowship have a ludicrous situation of being saddled with a Victorian relic, which we can freely call fallible but cannot question. There's a mockery of 'Truth' if ever there was one!

With love in the Lord Jesus, Brother X.

\* \* \*

**Reply by Sister Helen Brady dated 29th August 2001:-**

Dear Brother X. Thank you for your letter and interesting remarks. We have removed your name from the mailing list as you requested.

I don't agree with you that our differences with Christadelphians are just about words, they are radical differences. It is about vital matters which impinge on the very foundation of the Gospel and our salvation. It is about whether we are intrinsically sinful or whether we truly have free will to obey the Ten Commandments. Christadelphians believe our flesh is full of sin rendering us incapable of obedience and that because of this state we die at the end of our life. We deny this categorically. There is nothing wrong with our flesh or any other part of us that prevents us from being obedient. We have free will, we are free to choose to do good or evil. Which of the commandments is it impossible to obey? We die at the end of our lives because we are part of the natural creation. The second death is the wages of sin, not natural death. If this seems to you just "a disputation about words," it suggests to me that you have not yet begun to grasp the enormity, let alone the relevance, of the chasm between Christadelphians and Nazarenes.

Do you realize what you are saying when you say that when Jesus was crucified "the devil was destroyed on the cross"? Terrible echoes of A.D.Norris here. Was Jesus the devil? Was Jesus the Lamb of God, holy, harmless and undefiled and separate from sinners or was He not? It is impossible to have the argument both ways. This is why we are diametrically opposed to Christadelphian doctrines. As for your contention that "Jesus went to the cross for His own salvation because if he had not obeyed His Father He would have sinned." What did Jesus mean when He said "I lay down my life, that I may 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." We believe that had Jesus chosen, or had His courage failed in the supreme moment, He could have claimed eternal life as His right, called to His aid more than twelve legions of angels and passed into eternity alone, leaving us lost in Adam, to perish as Adam deserved to and as we, Adam's progeny deserve to. How can you bear to besmirch the truly altruistic and loving sacrifice that Jesus made for His friends and say it was for Himself and even worse that the beloved Son of God in whom He was well pleased was defiled?

Ask yourself what Jesus died to save us from. If He died to save us from natural death, which you say is the wages of sin, it achieved nothing did it? For we still die. If however, you believe as I do and as the Bible teaches, that He died to give us life and give it more abundantly, we are saved from the second death and promised if we remain faithful, the inestimable gift of eternal life. When we recognize we are constituted sinners "in Adam" we can by baptism move "into Christ." Being constituted a sinner means however obedient we are to the Ten Commandments, even if we are perfect, we are still in dire need of God's grace, forgiveness and above all Christ's sacrifice, for it took away the sin (singular) of the world (Adam's sin) under which we all exist. When a Christadelphian is baptized what are they saved from? Nothing so far as I can see. He/she still dies and awaits judgment. Please think again about what you are believing and promulgating.

Maybe you are right and the Christadelphian organization is a "sinking ship." It certainly deserves to be. I understand and sympathize with your view that we are probably wasting our time trying to teach Christadelphians truth. Most of them particularly the leaders are dead but not buried: but hope springs eternal in the human breast! I am sorry to say I think unbelievers can be a fruitless target too. Most people now have little or no knowledge of the Bible, so necessary for learning about our salvation. Groundwork that once was available in Sunday Schools or even Religious Instruction classes in school are no longer widely practised or of interest. This is where Christadelphians should score. They read and know the Bible and so have the requisite foundation on which to build a real knowledge of the true Gospel. But sadly they prefer to wallow in what I have come to regard as their false humility in choosing to shelter behind the illusion of their innate and, they believe, their God inflicted "inability" to obey the commandments and then they go even further into the mire by giving the pure and spotless Lamb of God sin-in-the-flesh as well, and so robbing our Saviour of the reverence His perfect obedience, as a human being like us (our pattern) deserves and treading under foot the suffering He endured to secure our Salvation.

Thank you for writing, I send my love to you in the Name of Messiah, with the hope that He returns soon,

Helen Brady.

## Reply by Brother Eric Cave dated 30th August 2001

Dear X, Your letter to Sister Helen Brady has been sent to me for comment, as the author and compiler of the "BASF Handbook" distributed with our May/June Circular Letter and I thank you for your confirmation of the "ludicrous situation Central Fellowship being saddled with a Victorian relic which may be called fallible, but cannot be questioned." The first response arrived from Brother A.D.Norris who complained of being "sick at heart" at the "re-opening of old controversies" and warned that knives were being sharpened to "do battle again" presumably to destroy our heresy! He wrote on 27th May, but to the present August 30th not one single shot has arrived, perhaps the 'establishment' has mislaid its ammunition. What I have received are many intimations of approval from the flock and confirmation of my own estimation that there must be at least 7000 CDN's worldwide who have not bowed the knee to Robert Roberts.

However the purpose of this epistle is to point out one or two points from your letter which you may wish to consider. After 60 years as a loyal CDN. The fact is that virtually all my friends were in Central Fellowship and of similar persuasion, and some still are. I would very much like to see them all in the Kingdom and subject to that first resurrection, yet scripture convinces me that they will remain in their graves till the end of the 1000 years if they continue to believe that their Saviour was unclean (see Mark 3:22,29,30). To persist in this fallacy is to be guilty of the unforgivable sin. I cannot therefore subscribe to your contention that it is a disputation about words and intend to do my best to warn them of their danger if God permit.

Secondly I do not agree that Jesus went to the cross for His own salvation. As the only begotten Son He had no need of salvation; He was the Heir, but "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24). He went to the cross "for the joy that was set before him" of bringing many sons unto glory. His motivation was love, which is as strong as death (Song 8;6). I do not believe it would have been sin if He had failed. He would simply have "abided alone" the Heir of the universe. God hath concluded all under (the dominion of) sin, and unless some other way had been devised we should all like sheep have been lain in the graves. I thank God that my Redeemer did not fail.

With sincere love in our Messiah, Eric Cave.

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Since the publication of Brother Eric Cave's booklet entitled "The BASF — Handbook for Christadelphians" our minds have been concentrated on the gross errors the BASF promotes as Truth. The article which follows was first published in the Circular Letter for January 1976 and in it Brother Phil Parry sets out his findings. These well deserve to be publicised again at this time:-

### **“Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?”**

These two questions by the spirit in Isaiah the prophet might be answered more truthfully and sincerely by the unbiased seeker of Truth after considering my comments and review of the STATEMENT OF THE FAITH FORMING THE CHRISTADELPHIAN BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP, SEPT. 14TH 1908, and still adopted at the present time, though not very enthusiastically by many in Australia.

The compilers have separated this statement of faith into 30 article but I will only deal with those that are erroneous and unsubstantiated by the Scriptures though the Scripture references are printed, in my view, to dazzle the eyes of the unwary and also as a counter-attack against the truths expounded by Edward Turney, a very sincere Christadelphian, contemporary with Robert Roberts. For if the reader took the trouble to look up all the references it would be discovered that they do not all prove correct the theories of the compilers, consequently their statement at the beginning, "Truth to be received" in many instances turns out to be a "Monstrous and Blasphemous Lie."

They profess as their foundation the Bible consisting of the Scriptures of Moses, the Prophets and the Apostles, the only source of knowledge concerning God and His purposes at present extant or available in the earth, and that the same were given by inspiration of God in the writers, and are consequently without error in all parts of them, except such as may be due to errors of transcription or translation. 2 Tim. 3:1-6 - The Word of God – Sound Doctrine. 1 Cor. 2:13. The words of God - “The spirit of God which we have received that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God.” Heb. 1:1. 2 Peter 1:21. 1 Cor. 14:37. Neh. 9:30. John 10:35. “If He called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken. Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest?”

We agree with them, the foundation - the Bible. We agree with the Scripture references and you will note I have quoted two of them as examples of what I said regarding dazzling the eyes of the unwary. You will note that Paul’s words referred to in 1 Cor. 2:13 is listed No. 25 under the heading “Doctrines to be Rejected,” page 13. Now take a look at article VIII, page 9. Here Christ the sanctified One is branded as in the condemned line of Abraham and David and under condemnation.

Why the expression “condemned line”? Were these two men, Abraham and David, in more of a unique position of condemnation than, shall we say, Cain who was a murderer? If the spotlight is on condemnation then Jesus might just as well have come from the line of Cain, as there is no more merit in the flesh of Abraham and David than in the flesh of Cain, that is, if we are considering condemned flesh or condemned nature - invented phrases of early Christadelphians, not found in the Scriptures but still used by them quite often today. Why confuse flesh or human nature with sinful character? The Scribes and Pharisees adopted the attitude of boasting of themselves as being the seed of Abraham after the flesh, but if, as in the case of Christadelphians, they believed Abraham’s flesh to be condemned, they would have had sufficient sense and reason not to boast in it. On the contrary their boasting in Abraham was on account of the promises made to him and inheritance in the same and not in the quality of his flesh. Their greatest mistake was thinking the inheritance was sure of them by reason of natural descent only, and not by Justification through faith.

I cannot reconcile the words of Paul to the Galatians chapter 3 verses 26 to 29 with such a phrase as “The condemned line of Abraham.” I have never heard of the children of God being classed as condemned - they belong to Christ, and if Christ’s, are Abraham’s seed.

Is there any merit in being baptised into Christ - becoming Abraham’s seed - heirs to the promises, only to remain in “the condemned line” position? What nonsense!

All through this Statement of Faith forming the Christadelphian basis of fellowship there is a deliberate and intentional under-current inducing the reader to believe that the flesh is full of sin - that Adam’s flesh was changed from very good to very bad - that the flesh was condemned and not Adam’s act of disobedience. This is only because the compilers failed to understand Paul’s letter to the Romans and also the letter to the Hebrews and preferred to stop their ears and blind their eyes to Edward Turney’s logical reasoning from the same. In other words they failed to discriminate between what Paul describes as being “in the flesh” as the carnal or unregenerate person “in Adam” as a federal head, and the flesh or nature common to all men including those whom Paul addresses thus, “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit.” Romans 8:9.

Having established at the outset by only a few comparisons, the unreliability of the compilers I will now proceed to deal with the numbered articles.

I agree entirely with Clause I. Clause II is a statement of fact and truth but not entirely qualified by statements made elsewhere by Christadelphians in calling Jesus a Son of Adam which He could not be. He was a brother of Adam but not a son, He was in fact another Adam - “The last Adam.” They were both Sons of God, but the first Adam sold himself and all in his loins, into the bondage of Sin. Hence Clause 111. We agree that the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the earth was necessitated by the position and state into which the human race had been brought by the circumstances connected with the first man. (1 Cor. 15:21-22; Rom. 5:12-19; Gen. 3:19; 2 Cor. 5:19-21.)

But the list of Scripture references can mislead the reader into believing something that is not true, therefore clarification is necessary. For example, Gen. 3:19, "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The reader is here intended to believe that this was the death or sentence which passed upon Adam for disobedience or sin, but upon examination this is not the case. Adam was already a corruptible being and if he had remained obedient for a thousand years could still have been allowed to die a natural death if God willed it that way. By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin. Romans 5. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Genesis 2:17. In the time it took Adam to eat of the forbidden tree he became a sinner; instantly under the sentence of death - he had forfeited his natural life and as Paul states in Romans 5:12, all life in Adam's loins was forfeited; and so in this way death passed upon all men (not in the physical sense but as a legal sentence on the federal principle).

A closer study of Romans 5 would show this to any reader who has no preconceived ideas. What a simple statement Paul makes for us to understand - Romans 5:15, "For if through the offence of one many be dead (not corruptible) - "dead," present tense, this can only be in a legal sense. By one offence death reigns, by one righteousness - "life reigns;" present tense again. One has only to pass out of one federal head into another to be in this unique position. As Jesus said, "I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly." Here He mentions two stages. 1) Receiving back the life which was forfeited in Eden through faith and baptism into His death, and 2) by a faithful and moral allegiance to Him, have life more abundantly through an incorruptible body.

Surely anyone should understand that we cannot be in two federal heads at the same time. There are the dead in Adam and the dead in Christ. The dead in Adam do not rise at Christ's return - only those in Christ, and only those in Christ who are alive at His coming will be changed in order to meet Him in the air or exalted place where flesh and blood cannot exist.

There are also the "dead" which Jesus said could bury their dead - this is the class in Adam - the same dead to whom He referred when He said "The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." He is not speaking of those who are in the graves, as He refers to them later as coming forth, some to life eternal and some to shame, condemnation and death (the second death).

"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Please note the present tense, the position of a man in Christ - no longer in Adam.

We have established then, that thorns and thistles, the sweat of thy face, laborious work and finally, falling asleep through decay, was as a result of consequence of Adam's sin but not the actual sentence or penalty incurred and I will emphasize this later in connection with Clause X.

I must ask you to consider the reference to 2 Corinthians 5:19-21 because it has been taught by Christadelphians from the time of Robert Roberts that Paul's words, verse 21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin;" mean that Jesus was made sin for us by being born of a woman and so became sinful flesh at birth, but this is absolutely untrue and a discredit on the Apostle Paul's intelligence as an expounder of the word of reconciliation.

Any intelligent person would know that this refers to Isaiah 53, "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" - on Calvary's tree this was done. In other words, "He who knew no sin" during His life of 33VI years, "God made to be a sin-offering for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," otherwise Christadelphians must give a time when Jesus knew no sin previous to His birth of Mary and they deny that Jesus was pre-existent with God, to which we also agree.

Now to Clauses IV and V which are more or less coupled together, Clause IV being scripturally true but, as we shall demonstrate, contradicted by Clause V. Clause IV reads thus: "That the first man was Adam, whom God created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life 'very good' in kind and condition, and placed him under a law through which the continuance of life (natural life) was contingent on obedience. Gen. 2:7; 18:27; Job 4:19; 33:6; 1 Cor. 15:46-49; Gen. 2:17."

Clause V: “That Adam broke this law and was adjudged unworthy of immortality.” Have you noticed the quick switch? It was the continuance of natural life that was contingent on obedience, now it is immortality. Immortality is not mentioned in Genesis as a condition of obedience. How inconsistent! What confidence can anyone have in such blatant contradiction? But there is worse to follow; “And sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken - a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.” How absurd, to think that God who was displeased with Adam’s disobedience should add further to it by infusing into his body a fixed law of defilement capable of reproduction in his posterity.

Are we to liken God to those men whom Jude describes as “Filthy dreamers who defile the flesh”?

How are we to understand the words of the Psalmist 119: “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord; Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart; they also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.” How is such a thing possible if there is a fixed law of defilement in the flesh?

Perhaps the compilers mean by defilement a process of decay and corruption; if they do then the word defilement is superfluous because it only refers to moral conduct in relation to God’s Law. Further to this, Adam was already corruptible and needed no change in his nature, as stated by Dr. Thomas in *Elpis Israel*, it was necessary only to prevent Adam partaking of the Tree of Life, a right which he had forfeited. But considering that Christadelphians are committed to a belief that sin is a fixed law or principle in the flesh by this compiled statement of their faith, it is not to be wondered at that the list of quotations in Clause V are all taken out of their context in an endeavour to support their erroneous and invented theories. THE LIST OF REFERENCES: Gen. 3:15-19, 22,23; 2 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 7:24; 2 Cor. 5:2-4; Rom. 7:18-23; Gal. 5:16,17; Rom. 6:12; 7:21; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22; Ps. 51:5; Job 14:4.

All through the history of Christadelphians they have confused the legal with the physical thus they are “ever learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth” - until they pluck up enough courage to challenge their blind guides. The Law of sin and death of which Paul speaks is not a physical law; all physical laws in the flesh were fixed when Adam was created; for example, desire, hunger, pain, happiness, emotion, sight, touch, sleep, etc. together with reproduction of the species.

“Sin” is transgression of God’s law, it is abstract, it cannot be reproduced in the physical sense. Persons can be reproduced who are capable of sin, but this is not a reproduction of sin, because they need not sin, as in the case of Jesus. Adam sinned while in the “very good in kind and condition” state and this did not alter his physical state one bit, only his legal position, and his relationship to God. Sin did not enter Adam, it entered the world. “By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin so death passed upon all men - not as a physical principle but as a legal sentence hanging over the whole human race who were in Adam’s loins when he sinned. So by the disobedience of one many are dead (legally) so by the obedience of one, many live (legally) but only by dying to the law of sin and death through belief and baptism into Christ. Romans 5:14-21, and 6:11 and 8:1,2.

Before selecting passages from Paul’s epistle to the Romans, Christadelphians should learn to discriminate and rightly divide the word of truth. For example, Romans 8:5, “For they which are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.” Verse 8: “So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” v-9 “But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his; and if Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.”

Does Paul mean that the Roman believers were not flesh and blood nature? Of course not. He meant that having been baptized into the death of Christ the old man belonging to sin as a Master had been crucified and they were no longer in the unregenerated state “in the flesh” under the condemnation as bondservants to Sin personified as a Master. The act of baptism is symbolic of death of course but as an act of faith it is acceptable to God as though the person had actually partaken physically of the death which came by Adam’s sin – which was inflicted death by the shedding of the life-blood. This is what Jesus did for us,

for all indeed have been concluded under the one sin of Adam so that all could by faith be concluded under the one act of righteousness by Jesus Christ. Romans 5:18,19. Please note verse 19.

If as Christadelphians believe, we can be made physical sinners by a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of Adam's being and transmitted to his posterity, it should follow that in Christ we are made physically righteous and this righteousness should be transmitted to our posterity by the same means-

Perhaps you can now see the foolishness of confusing the legal with the physical. If we follow the reasoning of the Apostle Paul in Romans 5:19, he shows us that by the one disobedience of Adam many were constituted sinners in him on the federal principle and were not actual sinners themselves, and also by the obedience of one. Jesus, many are constituted righteous, not by works of law but through faith in His shed blood - the blood of the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world (singular, not plural) Adam's sin. See Romans 5:10,11.

Clause VI. It is difficult to follow the minds of the compilers here. They state "That God in His kindness conceived a plan of restoration which, without setting aside His just and necessary law of sin and death, should ultimately rescue the race from destruction, and people the earth with sinless immortals. (Rev. 21:4; John 3:16; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 John 2:25; 2 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:2; Rom. 3:26; John 1:29)."

It appears from this that the law of sin and death was not set aside for Adam or anyone else, so what did sacrifice profit Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Lot and thousands more? They were all subjects of the law of sin and death according to this statement. How can the race be ultimately rescued from destruction? Rescue means to save, but if a person has died and is buried, that person cannot be rescued from a destruction that he has already experienced.

This theory is absolutely out of harmony with Paul's words to Romans 6 on the effect of belief and baptism into Christ's death. If you read the first 11 verses you will find that we are rescued from destruction, not ultimately, but now. We are asked, as people in Christ, to reckon ourselves to be alive unto God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were also in this position. "I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

Regarding people of the earth with sinless immortals - the compilers should have been more careful in their words. Christadelphians believe that the just and unjust will be raised in the same nature in which they died, for judgment. They believe that the Just will have flesh and bone nature and they will be re-endowed with the character they possessed as rational and sensible persons before they died. This means in fact that they will still believe that there is sin in the flesh - how then can they be styled as sinless immortals? What difference is there in flesh energised by spirit and flesh energised by blood? The difference is in the limitation of supply. The blood is the conveyor of life obtained through food and oxygen and is limited to the earth. The spirit is unlimited and does not deteriorate with time, for God, the source, is Eternal. How then has sin been eradicated from the flesh? It must still have been in the flesh of Christ when He rose from the dead if we are to believe Christadelphians, otherwise He left it behind in His shed blood which is supposed to cleanse us from sin. Draw your own conclusions.

We of the Nazarene Fellowship believe that the first resurrection involves only the Just and that they rise incorruptible, as stated by Paul; the resurrection of the unjust being a thousand years later. I will deal with this under Clauses 24 and 25.

There is not much to comment on in Clause VII apart from the fact that I do not know what promises were made to Adam, although I do not deny that promises were made to him. In fact, we believe that Adam was redeemed by the typical slain Lamb; that he identified himself with the death of the animal and was therefore granted a new lease of life to serve his Creator until natural death claimed him and there is no evidence to say that he will not rise from the dead. But the BASF opposes this view by saying that Adam received the wages of sin when he died a natural death. Wages are for services rendered therefore in their view Adam served Sin as a Master, until he died. Does God forgive or redeem and then exact the full penalty? Think on these things.

Clause VIII. I have already made some comments on this clause in my reference to the “condemned line” and apparently by “condemned line” they do mean “condemned nature,” an unscriptural phrase and therefore invented to support their erroneous and preconceived notions. They say in this Clause VIII that the promises made to Adam, Abraham and David had reference to Jesus Christ, who, though wearing their “condemned nature,” was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience, and, by dying, abrogate the law of condemnation for himself and all who should believe and obey him. Let me say here and now that Jesus did not come to obtain any title to resurrection; He did nothing worthy of death and therefore did not forfeit His life in any way. As a Son of God, direct from the source of life, He was not legally under the condemnation by Adamic descent and therefore was not under the law of sin and death. If He had been He would have been in the same bondage as Adam, a servant of Sin as a Master, and not a servant of God and therefore alienated in the same way as all in Adam.

This is why the first sixteen words in Clause IX are absolutely true and of such great importance, but sadly enough negated, set at nought, by the rest of the words in the clauses which follow and those we have already considered.

For the benefit of those who may not possess the BASF I will quote the exact words of Clause IX. “That it was this mission that necessitated the miraculous begetting of Christ of a human mother, enabling him to bear our condemnation, and, at the same time, to be a sinless bearer thereof, and therefore, one who could rise after suffering the death required by the righteousness of God. (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; Gal. 4:4; Is. 7:14; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:3; 2Cor. 5:21; Heb. 2:14-17; 4:15).” I presume that these scripture references are meant to prove that Jesus was born with the same flesh and blood nature as ourselves and that being born of Mary was by lineage related to David. I wholeheartedly agree with this, that He was the seed of the woman and therefore of David according to the flesh; nevertheless He was the Son of God by begetting by the Holy Spirit, for it is the Spirit which giveth life, the flesh profiteth nothing without life. His life did not come through the natural channels of fertilisation of the seed of Mary but direct from God and therefore Jesus, not being in the loins of Adam when Adam sinned, His life was not under forfeit or in need of redemption. This was the reason for His miraculous begetting, so that God could redeem man with a life that was “free” of the condemnation - a life which was not already forfeited to sin.

Adam and all in him were Sin’s property, Sin’s bondservants and could only be released by the equivalent life being offered, that is, a life which did not belong to Sin but belonged to God. You cannot pay the Devil with his own coinage. Here we will quote some important words written by Dr. Thomas: “Redemption is release for a ransom; all who are God’s servants have been released from a former lord by purchase; the purchaser is God; the price paid is the precious blood of Christ.” Ask yourselves then, did God purchase His servants with that which belonged to Master Sin? This is what your statement of Faith affirms, so you had better re-examine it and yourselves whether ye be in “The Faith.”

“Enabling him to bear our condemnation, and at the same time, to be a sinless bearer thereof.” If the compilers mean that Jesus did this on the Cross then I agree with this definition; but, having been a Christadelphian for seventeen years I very much doubt that this is the definition meant here. I think they mean that Jesus, by partaking of flesh and blood nature, wherein was the physical law of condemnation, as they term it, Jesus bore the condemnation during His 33½ years but did not actually sin, and was therefore a sinless bearer of our, as they term it, “condemned nature,” and could only get rid of it by allowing the Romans to render Him lifeless on the Cross.

This makes nonsense of the Atonement or Redemption in Christ, as taught by Jesus and the Apostles, but we have come to expect it from so many of the so-called intellectuals of the Christadelphian body and therefore we are not surprised, but what of the younger generation? Are they allowing themselves to be led in the same direction? “One who could rise after suffering the death required by the righteousness of God.” It is true that Jesus did suffer the death required by the righteousness of God, but the compilers of the Statement of Faith did not believe this, neither do the majority of Christadelphians. They have already said that the death required by the righteousness of God was by natural decay, and death by natural causes - “dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return.” Jesus did not partake of this kind of death; He “tasted death” for every man, and this being the case it must obviously be a certain kind of death, a death of important significance which indeed it was; a substitutionary death, in the place of Adam and all in him on the federal

principle; the death which came by sin which Adam was spared through the redemptive price; the life of Jesus on the principle of a life for a life.

Thus Clause X makes nonsense of Clause IX and denies the sacrificial mission of Christ, as in effect Jesus did nothing more than every man has done from the time of Adam and far from dying a natural death He suffered an agonizing death, which I accept, other men have suffered, some I suppose, justly and some unjustly, but Jesus suffered His death “the Just for the unjust” that He might bring us to God, and not, as A.D.Norris ignorantly states, to put out of action the Devil in His flesh. His mission was connected with His Father’s plan of redemption and restoration as He said, “Even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Mat. 20:28. This means that He did not die for himself as this would have been an injustice on God’s part, to allow His sinless Son to be put to death by wicked man, but God knew from the beginning that His Son would be a willing sacrifice, therefore He allowed him to be put to death and in this sense only “it pleased the Lord to bruise him - to make his soul (life) an offering for sin.” Isaiah 53.

The scripture references in Clause X are made merely to prove that Jesus was born of a woman, that He was the same flesh and blood as other men and we entirely agree that He was, but where we differ is in the fact of ownership; Adam’s descendants were Sin’s flesh or flesh belonging to Sin, whereas Jesus, though having the same quality of flesh was not Sin’s flesh but flesh belonging to God. The term “sinful flesh” is not a correct translation and should be rendered “Sin’s flesh,” a matter of property or ownership. Much has been written on this subject and the wise shall understand. But let me go further and say that in the references are the significant reasons for Jesus being born flesh and blood and Christadelphians usually blind themselves to them. Hebrews 2:14,17 are two references but Hebrews 2:9 is ignored for obvious reasons - ignorance of the Redemptive and Atoning work of Christ.

For the writer states “Jesus was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,” and that on account of this sacrificial death, through God’s grace toward man, He was crowned with glory and honour;” and well He should be, for He was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin thus showing that it was possible to do God’s will with the same nature as we inherit. Thus He was justified in delivering the message mentioned in Clause XI - “That the message he delivered from God to his kinsmen, the Jews, was a call to repentance from every evil work, the assertion of his divine sonship and Jewish kingship etc.”

Clauses XIII, XIV and XVI all contain the same theme, namely, obedience to God’s will as set out in the teaching of Jesus, the prophets and the Apostles. I simply marvel that they have the gall to print such things and then point to the Apostle Paul as an example in showing that it is impossible to do these things because of “sin in the flesh” (a Christadelphian phrase). Paul’s words are quoted in ignorance and out of context - see Romans 7:14, “For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.” Paul, is this true? You a man in Christ still carnal and under the Law of Sin and Death? How can you say such a thing unless you are referring to yourself as an unregenerated Jew unjustified by Christ? This you must be doing because you say “There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh (unregenerated state), but after the Spirit. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of Sin and Death.” “For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Romans 8:1 - 17.

Paul also says, “For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not...” Romans 7:18. Can anyone dare to say that Paul did not know how to do good, how to conduct himself as a Christian? Was not Paul among Christ’s kinsmen the Jews whom he called to repentance from every evil work? Clause XI. Of course he was and what an example of Christian conduct he set in his life after conversion to Christ. “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only but to all them also that love his appearing.” What a reward for a man who does not know how to perform that which is good!

Perhaps you can now see how foolish it is to wrest the words of Paul out of their context and so make him appear to be a liar. Clause XII - “That for delivering this message (that is, for preaching the restoration of the kingdom to Israel and a call to repentance from every evil work) he was put to death by the Jews and Romans, who were, however, but instruments in the hands of God, for the doing of that which he had

determined before to be done, viz. the condemnation of sin in the flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, as a propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins. All who approach God through this crucified but risen representative of Adam's disobedient race, are forgiven. Therefore, by a figure his blood cleanseth from sin."

This is the greatest concoction of blasphemy and untruth I have ever read and if blindness in part has happened to Israel, more so has it happened to Christadelphians. The Jews and Romans were not instruments in the hands of God. Jesus was taken and by wicked hands was crucified and slain. Were the wicked hands the hands of God? Does God require sinners to condemn sin in the flesh? If this was how God had determined before to condemn sin in the flesh of Jesus, He could have done it through His own ministering spirits or angels. But how a Just God could condemn something that He was wholly responsible for producing I cannot conceive. Sin is transgression of God's Law, so how it could reside in the flesh of Jesus or anyone else is beyond my comprehension, perhaps a member of the Christadelphian Body would like to explain it to me face to face, and also, why such an offering was forbidden under the Law of Moses and amounted to an insult against God. Also why this crucifixion was necessary at all in the eyes of Christadelphians, seeing that they believe that natural death was the means of condemnation of sin in the flesh. They should stick to one doctrine and stop their double dealing methods. Jesus is not a representative of Adam's disobedient race and never was, He was God's representative on earth and He is now the representative of His own brethren as a High Priest over His own house. Even the compilers state this in Clause XIV - "That he is a priest over his own house only, and does not intercede for the world, or for professors who are abandoned to disobedience. That he makes intercession for his erring brethren, if they confess and forsake their sins."

This is contraction to the utmost. First He is a Priest or representative over the disobedient, and second, He is a Priest or representative of His own house only- This is the confusion that sin-in-the-flesh mongers are brought to, and how indeed can people forsake their sins if Sin is in the flesh? Please, please give me a definition of how transgression of law got into the flesh of Jesus, for if it was in His, it was, and is, in ours, so how can we forsake it?

Christadelphians should make a closer study of Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 6, instead of quoting from it so glibly.

I have written more than I had intended but quite sufficient to convince any sensible person of the unreliability of most Christadelphians owing allegiance to the BASF., but I must comment on Clauses XXIV, XXV and XXIX. "That at the appearing of Christ, prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of God, the responsible (namely, those who know the revealed will of God, and have been called upon to submit to it), dead and living – obedient and disobedient - will be summoned before His judgment seat 'to be judged according to their works;' and 'receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad.'" XXV - "That the unfaithful will be consigned to shame and the 'second death' and the faithful, invested with immortality, and exalted to reign with Jesus as joint heirs of the kingdom, co-possessors of the earth, and joint administrators of God's authority among men in everything." - for a thousand years.

XXIX - "That at the close of the thousand years there will be a general resurrection and judgment, resulting in the final extinction of the wicked, and the immortalization of those who shall have established their title (under the grace of God) to eternal life during the thousand years. (Revelation 20:11-15).

Unfortunately for the compilers and those who accept their theories on the strength of superficial reading of scriptural passages referred to, these Scriptures do not support them and we of the Nazarene Fellowship are fully aware of the theories which they have had to invent in order to make things fit their erroneous views.

Paul is plain enough in his words to the Corinthians, chapter 15 verse 42, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Verse 51, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

1 Thessalonians 4:14, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." "Ever with the Lord" - there is no mention or room for rejected among this glorious number, their names are already in the Book of Life - they are the first resurrection on such the second death (which is at the end of the thousand years) hath no power. The Christadelphian theory makes it that the rejected live a thousand years before partaking of the second death. Paul has "shown us a mystery," so now it is plain; why try to add to it and make more of a mystery of it than ever?

The compilers of the BASF have more people in the first resurrection than the last, which they call a general resurrection. Is this not contradictory? Surely if all the responsible rise at Christ's first appearing this would be more a general resurrection than at the end of the thousand years - when disobedience is more limited with the very presence of Christ and His co-administrators and when a child shall die an hundred years old and a sinner will also live longer! Surely you must agree that the general resurrection at the end of the thousand years includes all the responsible from the time of Adam until then, excluding the faithful. This in fact is proved in Revelation 20:4,5 and excludes the class who are written in the Book of Life such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, David, the prophets, the Apostles, and all who have remained faithful. These all come under the resurrection of the just - the first resurrection on which the second death has no power. The resurrection of the unjust is at the end of the thousand years in which they are judged out of what is written in the books, but those whose names are in the Book of Life are not subject to this judgment, they have already been judged as worthy of life everlasting and had their names inscribed, and not blotted out of the Book of Life. Revelation 20 speaks of Satan being bound, or restricted from deceiving the nations for a thousand years, and afterwards being allowed this freedom for a little season. Verse 4 - "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and judgment was given unto them." "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" - 1 Corinthians 6. "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead (that is, those who are not the first fruits unto God) lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years."

The compilers of the BASF have the unjust and just in the first resurrection, so in effect they are all priests of God and of Christ, reigning with Him a thousand years! What nonsense! Read Revelation 20:11 to 15 and this you will find as the true definition of the "general resurrection" and also the true period of the second- death; which is at the end of the thousand year period only - the lake of fire. Revelation 20:10,14,15.

Now, in case you, of the Christadelphian Body (and adherents therefore of the BASF.) cannot comprehend all the contradictions and confusion of phrases presented to you therein, you will find on page 13 a list of 35 doctrines to be rejected Just in case you are wise enough to see through the error and blasphemy contained therein as a means to block the humble logical reasoning of those who would know the truth. Surely if members of the Christadelphian Body profess to a knowledge of the True Doctrine of Christ they would not need a list of "Doctrines to be rejected" forced upon them. This to any one should be regarded as an insult to their intelligence. But when on examination some of these doctrines should be accepted (at least 5) it is a greater insult still.

Do you desire to follow the Lamb withersoever He goeth, or cunningly devised fables?

"Who hath believed our report?" We conclude thus: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of

Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Corinthians 4:3-7).

You may think this discourse has been penned in bitterness. Not so, there is a difference between being bitter and being zealous for the Truth - remember Jesus in the Temple when He said "Ye have made it a den of thieves"? "Come and let us reason together."

Brother Phil Parry.  
(January 1976)

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## **A Pearl of Great Price**

Could anyone deny that Adam was typically redeemed in the figure of the animal slain - "The Lamb slain (in figure) from the foundation"? Therefore does it not follow that the Antitype died the violent death (not natural death) instead of Adam and we as "in Adam"? Why, the very fact that God spared Adam the violent death necessitated the Christ. The question will then be asked, Why did God place Adam under condemnation, i.e. concluded Adam and all in him under sin, if He had spared him from paying the penalty? I reply, The fact that God spared Adam the violent death did not mean that the price would not be paid, but that someone else would pay it - as per the figure of the animal slain for a covering. The debt was due to King Sin. The condemnation or bondage of Sin under which we were all sold in Adam is the principle whereby God's justice is presented. "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." We are born in bondage (Adamic relationship) and we can escape from the very bondage that we are born in by accepting the redemption from such. If the condemnation we inherit from Adam be our corruptible nature, I am at a loss to understand in what sense we are a purchased possession. If we are not fully cleansed from "Sin" until we pass through the grave, then Jesus in paying the price only paid in full for Himself and an instalment for us!!

From "Heresy or Truth, Which?" by E.Parker.