

# The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No 261

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## Editorial

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April I received an e-mail from Brother Tony Cox saying, - “Ray Faircloth has just translated, with the help of Professor, Sir Anthony Buzzard, the New Testament. It is called “The Kingdom of God Version” - and translates the New Testament from a Unitarian monotheistic position. It is available from Amazon, and is priced at circa £10:65, (in the UK). It looks a very good translation actually - you can view some of the pages of the work, on Amazon. It might be worth getting.”

So I sent away for a copy (from Abe Books) and have now read about one third of it. I am indeed very impressed with, what Brother Faircloth calls, his “rendition” of the Greek. I have here reproduced Brother Faircloth’s Preface, which again impressed me for I believe it is in some ways unique in approaching a very complicated task and well worth reading and hope it will tempt our readers to add it to their most used bookshelf: -

### PREFACE

#### WHY "THE KINGDOM OF GOD VERSION" HAS BEEN PRODUCED

Firstly, knowledge of the background of both the culture of the Bible lands in the first century and of the Greek language in which the New Testament was written continues to grow. So, although we certainly learn from the inherited scholarly work of the past, it is impossible to rely totally on the New Testament translations and versions produced in previous generations if we wish to understand more closely what the writers of the New Testament taught. Secondly and closely related to the above factors, many very modern literal or modern dynamic equivalence versions still contain much unexplained jargon as well as dated and inaccurate terms. These have been avoided in "The Kingdom of God Version" (**KGV**). Instead, modern words and phrases of everyday writing, but having the same meaning, have been used.

Thirdly, large numbers of Bible scholars and students recognize that almost all versions of the New Testament carry a certain amount of bias. This is because there are numerous New Testament texts and passages where there is uncertainty as to the exact meaning expressed by the original writers of the Greek text. This has produced a number of issues concerning the syntax and even punctuation, the latter issue being because there was no punctuation in the original Greek uncial writings. This naturally leads translators and producers of versions to lean toward their own doctrinal understanding in making choices in their renderings. So it is evident that no version or translation is totally free from bias, even if produced by a large translation committee

representing many denominations. This is because the individuals chosen for such committees are selected as those who hold the general orthodox interpretations of doctrine and so excluding many minority views on correct renderings, and yet which have a great amount of scholarly support. This version attempts to apply many of those renderings of the minority but leading Greek scholars to the text. In particular this is because such renderings fit better with their immediate and wider contexts as well as harmonizing with the direct statements in various New Testament texts.

#### THE APPROACH USED IN PRODUCING "THE KINGDOM OF GOD VERSION"

Although aimed primarily at adult readers, this version has the goal of rendering the inspired Christian documents in good plainly understandable contemporary English, but without resorting to paraphrasing of the Greek, although on some occasions a thought-for-thought (dynamic equivalence) rendering is given.

So the KGV is an essentially, but not overly literal version. This is because the Greek language of the New Testament generally omits words meant to be supplied mentally by the reader much more than does English. So the KGV keeps as close to the structure of the Greek as good flowing English will permit, hopefully without being either difficult or cumbersome for the reader.

#### THE SOURCES USED IN PRODUCING "THE KINGDOM OF GOD VERSION"

In making the word and phrase choices for rendering the various passages in this version the following Greek-English interlinear translations, Greek-English lexicons, commentaries, grammars, and other reference works of scholars were used:

*Then follows a comprehensive list of sources, and to conclude this section, which has been left out for the sake of space. Raymond Faircloth continues : -*

Furthermore, the comments of a number of current leading theologians and Greek language specialists on points of translation have been taken into account. My special thanks go to Sir Anthony Buzzard, Bt, MA (Oxon), MA Th., A.R.C.M. for directing me to many very significant issues and the sources for their solutions and, of course our heavenly Father whose guidance was sought daily for this work.

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### MAIN FEATURES

#### TEXTUAL FEATURES EXPLAINED IN THE APPENDIX

**1** As stated in the preface, the jargon and the dated and inaccurate terms that are found in most verbal and even dynamic equivalence versions have been avoided. A list of the most significant of these TRADITIONAL JARGONISTIC TERMS may be found in the Appendix.

**2** The symbol ^ placed after the first occurrence of a phrase in a particular passage is to direct the reader's attention to the NOTES ON SIGNIFICANT WORD AND PHRASE CHOICES in the Appendix where an explanation is given for the particular choice.

**3** The symbol @ is placed after NOTABLE VARIATIONS IN RENDERINGS COMPARED TO SOME STANDARD VERSIONS.

**4** An asterisk \* placed after a word or phrase in certain passages is to direct the reader's attention to the EXPLANATORY COMMENTS section for those particular passages. These comments include: noting of literal terms, alternative renderings, grammatical points, conversions into current measurements, and most probable references. These comments are presented as for example: Romans 3:27: "Where does that leave our (*Jewish*) boasting?"

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## OTHER TEXTUAL FEATURES

- a Certain difficult Greek idioms are expressed in the corresponding English idioms containing the same thought as for example in Matthew 20:33 where "let our eyesight be restored" replaces the more literal "let our eyes be opened."
- b On certain occasions a single Greek word, in its context, requires an English phrase to express the full meaning as for example in Mark 14:24. "This is my blood **which ratifies** the covenant" rather than "blood of the covenant."
- c. The continuing action of the present tense is presented as for example in Luke 7:22: "The blind **are seeing**, the lame **are walking...**"
- d. The present progressive tense is presented as for example in 1 Corinthians 5:8: "*So let's **keep celebrating the festival...***"
- e. A capital first letter is used in reference to God in "He," "Him," "Himself and "One." Although this has become an outmoded technique I feel that it is helpful in distinguishing God from all others where possible according to the context.
- f. Both singular and plural forms of the word 'you' exist in the Greek. Only in instances where the context may not be determinative does the KGV express the plural form as: "all of you," "you all," "you (verb) all," "you people," and "you yourselves."
- g. In accordance with many modern translations, which endeavour to promote smoothness of reading and in giving the text a conversational flavour, I have contracted many small phrases e.g. "isn't" rather than "is not."

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## LAYOUT FEATURES

- i) As with most other versions, the KGV presents passages which may have been later additions to the text, but which are of evident antiquity and importance, as for example in Mark 16:9-20: [[<sup>9</sup>After he rose early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom he had driven out seven demons. <sup>10</sup>She went out and...]].
- ii) Parentheses as part of the text are presented as for example in Ephesians 5:5: "or covetous person (such a person is an idolater) has any inheritance in the kingdom..."
- iii) Parallel events in the Gospel accounts are noted alongside the relevant sub-headings as for example the Matthew chapter 4 subheading: **Jesus is Tempted by Satan - Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13.**
- iv) Main quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures, the Septuagint (LXX), and the Aramaic Targums are presented as for example in Romans 1:17: "as it is written, **"The man approved of by God will live by faith"** (Hab. 2:4 LXX).
- v) Hebrew or Aramaic words are also italicized as for example in Mark 7:34 "*Ephphatha*"
- vi) When Paul quotes from a letter sent to him it is presented as italicised and set in emboldened quotation marks as for example in First Corinthians 6:13: "***Food is for the stomach and the stomach is for food, but God will do away with both.***"
- vii) Hymns, praises, prayers, letters, and certain sayings etc. are indented as for example in I Timothy 3:16: -  

"which was revealed in the flesh, approved of by God in spirit, seen by angels, ..."
- viii) For clarity there are implied thoughts in the English rendering based on context and background knowledge. These are bracketed as for example in Matthew 11:17, we played the [wedding] flute for you, yet you didn't dance; we sang a [funeral] dirge for you, yet you didn't weep.'
- ix) Also for clarity it has been necessary on rare occasions to replace a pronoun with a bracketed noun as for example in Matthew 8:14 where "[Peter's]" replaces "his." And in Romans 4:16: where "[the promise]" replaces "it."

x) "Satan" appears in the Greek text in the majority of cases as *ho satanas* meaning "the Satan." This identifies the particular or well-known person also identified as the Devil. Except for the rendering "the Satan" in Revelation 12:9; 20:2 and 7, I have rendered this simply as "Satan" (note the emboldened 'S' for identifying "the Satan.") for smoothness of reading.

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#### OTHER ISSUES

- The tetragrammaton (YHWI) of the Hebrew Scriptures, which may be read as Tehouah' or 'Yehowah' or Tahoua' (and other variations) but which is mostly read as Yahweh,' 'Yahveh,' or 'Jehovah,' does not occur in the New Testament documents. The conspiracy theory which states that the divine name was removed from the original copies cannot be true for the following reasons:

1. The very randomness of production, geographical dispersion, and preservation of the copies of the inspired Christian Scriptures means that the chances of all of these copies being replaced with copies without the divine name, according to the conspiracy theory, are so remote as to be nil.

2. For there to have been such an intention by apostate Christians to eradicate the Name, it would require the co-operation of all the faithful Christians.

3. Christians were never party to wilful destruction of manuscripts. These were so precious to them that they did their best to preserve them as is evident in the more than 5,000 copies in the original Greek that are available today.

4. It would have been impossible to gather all existing manuscripts containing the Name so as to consign them to destruction at a single time.

5. If, over a period of time, such destruction and/or replacement had been accomplished there would have been a mix of manuscripts with some using the Name and others using the word *kyrios*. Then newer copies would also have been made from the ones containing the Name so that it would never go out of circulation.

So, for the above reasons, the divine name should never be rendered in the N.T as a substitute for *kyrios* (Lord) in those documents.

Nevertheless, how does one distinguish between Yahweh as Lord God and Jesus as Lord Messiah? Usually one can note the distinction from the context of the relevant passage. However, where this is not the case it is good to bear in mind that the Lord God is never called "my Lord" as is Jesus.

- Several versions have rendered the Greek word *Christos* as "Messiah," no doubt, partly to counter the fact that "Christ" is sometimes mistakenly taken to be the surname of Jesus. However, I have not rendered *Christos* as "Messiah," for the following reasons:

1. Just as "Christ" is a transliteration of *Christos*, so, too "Messiah" is a transliteration of *mashiach* @ a Hebrew word. So there would be no justification to switch a Greek transliteration for a Hebrew transliteration by rendering *Christos* as "Messiah."

2. The Greek text uses the Greek term *messias* on only two occasions (John 1:41 and 4:25). So, because these are rendered correctly as "Messiah" it would be conflicting to render *Christos* in its many occurrences also as "Messiah."

3. The solution could be to render *Christos* according to its meaning, which is "anointed one." However, this is not a term that is readily acceptable to the general Christian reader.

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For these reasons I have kept to the traditional transliteration of "Christ" except in the passages which refer to "false messiahs" to clarify their role.

- The word "apostle" has been retained throughout the text, although its meaning is "emissary" or "missionary."

- Although the Greek word *baptiso* literally refers to immersion in water I have retained the familiar transliterations baptize, baptizing and baptism.

*Raymond C. Faircloth*



The Appendix referred to in the “Main Feature” is at the back of the volume and covers five sections. This too is comprehensive and instructive.

I wish to thank Brother Faircloth for his very considerable work and already feel I have gained a deeper insight into the work of God in Christ, but whether I am able to put it into words is another matter. One day, by the grace of God, I hope to do so.

With love in Jesus to all, Russell Gregory.

## **HERITAGE; Civilization and the Jews**

During 1985 a series with the above title was presented on I.T.V. channel 4. The following is a summary taken from my notes. Various scriptures came to mind as the speaker proceeded, and these references are placed in brackets. They may not have a direct connection with the matter under consideration; some have a dual, i.e. past and present application or a past and future application to complete their fulfillment. The series were dealing with Jews and their acceptance, or otherwise, by the world; not as we may look upon the them. (Romans 2:28 and 29). Some times it seems men try to forget the Jews and have to have a reminder they are still a force to reckon with and are given a reminder, as happened in Uganda when an Israeli plane was rescued with its passengers at Entebbe airport.

In the series the speaker was Abba Eban, a historian in his own right, at the time he was the Israel Foreign Minister in their government. More than 40 scholars took part in the preparation of the series which was in 9 parts, each of which was of an hours duration. As Abba Eban points out much of the Jewish experience evades explanation to most (though we would say in the purpose of God we have a full explanation). The series asked, “Are Jews, a race, a religion or a culture? HERITAGE offers the non-Jew a window and the Jew a mirror,” says the author. Throughout however we see the Jews unable to fully integrate with the nations among whom they came to be, if they did at any time appear to be getting anywhere events under the hand of God occurred to shake them up. The series dealt with what were described as from 3500 B.C.E. up to date (C.E.). Abba Eban has a book written running into many hundreds of pages.

The material dealt with in this series is under nine headings:- 1. A People is Born. 2 The Power of the Word. 3. The Shaping of Traditions. 4. The Crucible of Europe. 5. The Search for Deliverance. 6. Roads from the Ghettos. 7. The Golden Land. 8. Out of the Ashes. 9. Into The Future.

**1). A PEOPLE IS BORN.** The speaker commenced with the words, “In the book of Genesis, Abraham is described as a Hebrew (Genesis14:15) which possibly means that he ‘crossed a river’, either literally the Euphrates or figuratively, in the sense that he and Lot separated themselves from their surrounding culture in Ur of the Chaldees” (Genesis 12 vs 1-4). Mostly the series dealt with the physical aspect of the nation which in the past had such kings as Saul, David and Solomon, but later mention was made of the Judges etc., including the prophets among whom was Gideon and Samson who appear to have been more political and military leaders of the Jews. The division of the land into Israel and Judah was mentioned, (I Kings 12:19 and 2 Samuel 2:1) as being the result of the heavy taxation burden which Solomon had imposed. About 721 B.C. the Assyrian empire subdued Israel.

Solomon’s positive contribution to Jewish life was the building of the Temple in Jerusalem which in turn brought Politics and Religion together in one place and with one mind. But sadly it provided an opening to

corruption as materialism, and self-interest crept in. Later many prophets spoke against this. e.g. Amos 5.12: Jer.51.54.

**2). THE POWER OF THE WORD.** A quotation from the Book of Psalms was the introduction to this section:- “How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” (Psalm 157). Following the conquest of Israel by Assyria, Judah survived a few more years but in 586 B.C. fell to the King of Babylon. The Temple was burnt to the ground and Jerusalem reduced to a mass of ruins. Persons of any use were taken to Babylon. Thus in both Israel and Judah their victors were to start the process of Exile (Deuteronomy 28:65) which was carved into their experience.

By keeping the Law of Moses, the Jews established their identity. When they were in exile in Babylon Jeremiah urged them to establish themselves there. (Jeremiah 29 vs 5-8). So well did they do this that when they had the opportunity to return to their own land and Jerusalem for their worship, many stayed where they were. By now they had become bi-lingual, Hebrew for their literature, Aramaic for use in every day matters. The scribes now began to write things down, and so well had they begun to integrate that in 539 B.C. when Cyrus conquered Babylon, they were given the opportunity to return to Jerusalem and start to rebuild the city. Nehemiah oversaw the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem (Nehemiah 1:3, 2:3-8). Ezra came on the scene with the Book of the Law. (Nehemiah 8 vs. 2, 3 and 6).

However a change was about to take place, for after Cyrus, during the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. came the Grecian Empire. The Hellenistic culture followed, and to quote words from the series - “Jews were shocked by the extravagance and way of life... offended by the display of nakedness and distressed by their religious rituals, they were however impressed by their art and literature.” It was at this time the Hebrew scriptures were translated into Greek so that the Jews could read them; Greek being the common language used among the masses. Only the Scribes and religious leaders had stayed rigidly with the Hebrew language. It was about this time Jewish beliefs and values had begun to show among non-Jews, as the Jews began to make an impact on many. But the result was that Antiochus IV started to suppress Jewish Life by outlawing their central beliefs and practices as Sabbath keeping ( Exodus 20 v 8), and Circumcision (Genesis 17:10), and even owning a copy of the Torah (Exodus 55:1); this distress was followed when the Temple was plundered, and troops were stationed in Jerusalem. A few Jews fled and spent their time in the study of the Old Testament in the region of the Dead Sea, and now nearly 2000 years later the Dead Sea Scrolls have been found; it is thought that these were the result of a few who fled Jerusalem. The distress of the times culminated in the well known events of 68-70 A.D. with the destruction again of Jerusalem by the Romans. About 57 B.C. Herod was set up by the Romans as a governor, maybe as he was partly Jewish thinking he would be accepted by the Jews, but, No. They did not recognise him as a Jew, they looked on him as a ‘mere Roman puppet’.

Another point was to be noticed. From the time of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, there commences the decline of the Roman Empire, which was at its greatest around the end of the first century. At this time at least three quarters of the Jews lived outside Judea. It was at this time Jerusalem was established as a pagan city by Rome, and the Jews were forbidden to enter on pain of death; at the same time the country was renamed Palestine by the Romans, which accounted for many Jews going to other parts of the Roman Empire, here we have what can be described as the ‘Roman Diaspora’, previous to which there had been the ‘Babylonian Diaspora’.

The outside world had never known a people like the Jews whose lives were bound up in their Religion and their One God. All could join in with the Greek and Roman culture, but not the Jews. Till the destruction of the Temple, it was the centre of their worship, culture and society.

**3). THE SHAPING OF TRADITIONS.** The priests could no longer function. About 132 A.D. the Rabbi took control of Religion and Tradition (Mark 7:9) which resulted in the Mishnah - a collection of binding precepts which formed the basis of the Talmud and embodied the contents of the oral laws and traditions of the Jews.

After Constantine there began to develop what began to be known, and still is, Anti-Semitism. There was bitter conflict, Christian versus Jew. Then during the 7th and 8th century A.D. Mohamed was supreme

with the Arab nations; here we saw strong conflict; for with the Jews, Moses was their great prophet; but at the same time we remember the Jews had rejected Christ. So we now see:- Moses versus Mohamed versus Christian. Nine tenths of Jews in the 9th century and onward were living in Arab lands or Christian lands. The world was split into varying peoples with different religions and cultures;- a. The Christian world: b. The Islamic world: c. The Jewish world.

Constantine by 315 A.D. (Deuteronomy 18:15) had issued various edicts against the Jews and they were locked outside the systems of government etc. In what few places they could live, they were classed as a people of no moment. The new source of inspiration was centred in Arabia, with the religion of Islam: the only thing they had in common was their Monotheism but the Islamic god was not the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as is the Jews. (Exodus 20:1-5). The Islamic world was and today it still is a very militant one, hoping to dominate the world. Because of this many of the Christians gave up using the main trade routes through Arab lands which enabled the Jews to develop and use them, becoming craftsmen and merchants. They were given the name of “ahl-at-kitab” by the Islam which meant “the people of the book”; it was noted they were merely tolerated as a minority, but they were not to be converted. As a result of using the various trade routes the Jews became a truly international community and found themselves with new interests, abilities and a creative energy which burst forth by the 10th century, for by then a Jewish philosophy had been written by one named GOAN, also a dictionary and a Prayer Book. Soon many Jews and Islams had united, for the Jews had seen the destruction of their land and businesses, but they themselves still existed a ‘Separate People’ in their ways of life, and still do today, or at least a large proportion of them still do, even if only nominally, and as in religion.

**4). THE CRUCIBLE of EUROPE.** We now come to more modern times and countries. When the Islamic armies conquered Spain, the Jews took full advantage of the culture which the Islamic peoples had brought with them, including Mathematics and various other sciences. The Jews also began to speak Arabic so as to converse to the fullest degree and soon began to share their (Islamic) culture, etc., but they still maintained their own identity without fear or favour. It was in Spain that Hebrew was re-vitalized as a common language in use along with Arabic, whereas until now Hebrew was only a Religious Language.

During the 11th century, Christian Europe began to provide homes for the Jews after the Moslems overran Spain, the Jews of Europe were able to practice their religion in comparative freedom, but having been in Spain a long time before moving in any large numbers to Europe they found Europe to be cold by comparison. In these new areas the Jews were regarded as a ‘fringe people’ or ‘nowhere people’ and foreigners, however they formed an important link between Spain and the rest of Europe, being able to communicate and bargain for both sides, but it was during this period that Anti-Semitism began to be preached on an alarming scale, especially by the Christian Churches at Easter Time. Because of this many Jews moved closer together as it were to protect themselves, they also built walls, this being the beginning of what became to be known as ‘ghettoes’. Still the most fierce opposition to the Jews came from the Christian Churches, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, for said they it was the Jews who murdered Jesus Christ. However at some time even among the Roman Catholics some Popes were formerly Jewish, but to save their own skins they had been baptised and even renounced their Jewishness. The Lateran Council of 1215 states they were of no account, i.e. the Jews. In 1240 Pope Gregory condemned the Talmud and set fire to all available copies. Economically however the Jews were still a powerful and an essential people. They had had a tough time, being excluded from most craft guilds which were a form of ‘closed shops’ as we would term them today thus severely limiting the possibilities of Jewish occupation. Despite this, one thing brought them to the fore - money. Money being an essential for all trades, this resulted in Jews falling into the role of Money Lenders (Deuteronomy 15:6), which caused further resentment and Jealousy. Even today in 1985, we only have to look at the top financiers and heads of most major businesses and the like, most are headed by Jews. On most Boards of Directors a large proportion are also Jews.

The speaker pointed out “The centre of Jewish life was shifting again”. The Jews spoke also a medieval German, mixed with a little Polish and Russian, nevertheless it still sounded Jewish, it was nicknamed ‘Yiddish’ and is still commonly used, especially in the Jewish Centre’ of NEW YORK. Two passages of scripture came to mind as Mr. Eban was speaking (Deuteronomy 28:12 and Luke 16:9). Surely these references have been literally fulfilled before our eyes.

**5). THE SEARCH FOR DELIVERANCE. (1492 to 1789).** In 1492 a royal edict was signed which expelled all Jews from Spain on pain of death; up till then, since the destruction of Jerusalem and the

Temple, despite spasmodic persecution from time to time Jews had found and settled - in small groups and families in Spain. This edict was mainly the result of the Spanish Inquisition dominated by the Roman Catholic Church. The Spanish called the Jews 'Marranos' which means they were as 'pigs'. Many then fled to various parts of the Ottoman Empire, some even returned to Palestine, to the upper region of Galilee, while they looked for the redemption of Israel. During the year 1492 a number of Jews set sail from Spain, it is rumoured even sailed with Columbus to the New World; at least 150,000 are stated to have left Spain.

But wherever they went they found no rest, sorrow followed them. (Deuteronomy 28:65). Venice was another city they went to, here they were badly needed, for a restoration was taking place in Italy, trade with other countries was booming and expanding which in turn needed finance. Here it was the Jew who was in his element as money lender or banker. At that time they were called 'Bench-men' as they plied their trade from benches (John 2:14) and soon became to be known as 'BANKERS', to which class Shylock, in Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice belonged.

Books up to now being read by Jews were all being printed or written in Hebrew, but from now on they were printed in various languages. However it was not long before the Jews were again segregated, and in 1516 a model area for Jews was set up in Venice which was the first specially built Ghetto. It was not long before other countries started to do the same, thus again separated the Jews found themselves. In these ghettos the Jews were shut in at night. Continuing their seeking for rest, they came to Holland; here by way of a diversion one wonders concerning matters today in South Africa. Remember the Afrikaans' are descendants from Dutch Stock, are they trying to keep the natives down as the Jews were at one time in Holland made to feel inferior. For the Jews who moved to Holland in the first place found tolerance was shown towards religion in the Netherlands. In Amsterdam the Jews were called Sephardims, by the middle of the 17th century came a steady stream of Jews from Eastern Europe, known as the Ashkenazim. Next because of anti-Semitism in Germany as a result of Martin Luther's virulence towards the Jews along with the German Catholics, they next fled to Poland. Before long Prague started building ghettos for the Jews to live in. Next the Ukrainians turned against the Jews around the middle of the century, whole areas but excluding the ghettos, were decimated, over 100,000 were massacred. During the second half of the century a number of false 'Messiahs' proclaimed themselves. But now in Western Europe the age of enlightenment held great promise for the Jews. They took to it and began to assimilate with those around, gaining esteem and wealth, but still they were not settled, for many thousands of the poorer Jews were in ghettos. By 1712 it was realized Jews were very varied and much needed.

**6. ROADS FROM THE GHETTOS.** It was now realized that the Jews were the people who held together Trade and the Financial Network, especially in Germany. By 1754 it was realized by those in power that a Jew could be a valuable asset in life. As a result of their trials etc., they had developed. In France after much debate in 1791 the Decree of Equal Rights for Jews was brought about. In England many Jews were converted to Christianity (for their own material ends only, not of religious conviction). As liberalism progressed in the west the reform Jews strode ahead and were having social emancipation, in politics etc., an organized body of Jews was recognised in England. The Board of Deputies represented British Jewry in their social and legal interests. Lionel de Rothschild became the first Jewish M.P. in England, Benjamin Disraeli, who had embraced Catholicism, became leader of the Conservative party in politics and later Prime Minister. However still Jewish children were taught they are a separate people and must remain so. Rothschild when taking the oath in parliament insisted that it was only the Old Testament and in particular the Pentateuch. About this time it seemed things were a little easier for the Jew in Europe. But Russia intensified her persecution of the Jews and when the Tsar was assassinated it was the Jews who were blamed. Mass attacks were made upon their ghettos and pogroms were the order of the day in that country. Again Jews fled, mostly to America and again a few to the East and Palestine. The change from a rural society to an urban-based one, mainly industrial brought Jewish success and as usual more anti-Jewish sentiment, with their ability to change and adapt in England and elsewhere because it was felt they were filling the more skilful and lucrative occupations. In England it was seen with certain individual bodies and families, but the government stood aside and did nothing. Theodore Herzl, saw only one answer, the creation of a Jewish homeland - Zionism found ready support among the Jews in Russia. The authorities having realized this, it was not long before the major cry among Russians was:- "You must fight the Jews", even today (1985) the same cry is practiced of suppression of the Jews, look at the prominent dissentients held in U.S.S.R. Block countries, and many others who want to leave Russia but are not allowed, among which are Jews. Herzl's book, The Jewish State, appealed to many world leaders. In the late 1800's the

World Zionist Organization was formed, its object:- “The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine, secured by public law”.

**7). THE GOLDEN LAND.** Many Jews looked to America as the Golden Land during the late 16th & early 17th centuries. 1654 saw the first Jewish arrival in North America, by 1750 the Jews in the colony numbered around 2,500, this colony was at first named “Nieuw Amsterdam”, later to be known as New York. The ‘Remnant of Israel synagogue was built here during the 1750’s. The Quakers had a more advanced and liberal attitude towards the Jews. During the American war of Independence the Jews played an honourable part, both as soldiers of all ranks, and politicians. When the Constitution was ratified, a Jewish Rabbi joined with other Christian leaders to ratify the foundation of Freedom of Religion. German Jews began to emigrate to America en masse and established many well known Jewish areas in U.S.A. which are with us today, bringing with them the Reform Judaism views.

During the issue of ‘The abolition of Slavery’ Jews fully supported the abolitionists, in many cases to their cost, for many who had established themselves in business, had their premises and homes burnt to the ground. Until World War I Palestine had little Zionist appeal to the American Jews who were too busy finding a niche for themselves in the Golden Land. The influx of Jews from Tsarist Russia and Eastern Europe during 1890 and 1900 brought masses of poor Jewish garment makers to the Lower East Side. In a census taken in 1900; 53% of those employed in the Rag trade were Jews (male), while 77 were Jews (female). However when Justice Brandeis who was with the Supreme Court in America became leader of the Zionist Organization of America, thousands of influential and wealthy Jews joined the Zionist movement.

**8). OUT OF THE ASHES.** Here we are brought to the more recent events in the series. Out of World War I & II. The Jews began to take a more influential and major part in politics in Germany, so much so that many Jews looked upon themselves as German citizens first, and as Jews secondly. In these more favourable conditions prevailing Jewish creativity began to blossom. Many Jews have become household names in many trades, professions and sciences, e.g. Sigmund Freud (psycho-analysis): Albert Einstein (relativity): Isaac Newton (gravity): Martin Buber (Hasidic mysticism and folklore). During 1925 and onward in Germany along came ‘THE NAZIS’ looking for a scapegoat upon which to lay the blame for all Germany’s troubles, many of which resulted from World War 1 and had left them impoverished, high inflation, mass unemployment and the mismanagement of State Affairs, so there was a mass endeavour to blame someone or something. Hitler the Nazis leader in his well known book, “Mein Kampf”, came up with two causes. Communism and the Jews. The latter were the principal culprits, as most firms and organizations were headed by Jews. The Nazis were skilful in re-activating anti-Semitism as soon as Hitler had gained the majority of votes for his party (32%, the nearest other party only having 26%) in 1932, he started to put in hand his first phase for the extermination of the Jews, ousting them from all top jobs in Government and Private Firms, next in his mind was the removal of all Jews from Germany and so gain his idea of a ‘Pure Aryan German Master Race’. In 1935 the German parliament unanimously adopted the Nuremberg Laws, which virtually excluded Jews from all activities in local government. They were not even allowed to vote, or take part in Jewish religious community activity; even restrictions were put upon Jews as to their marital status and activities. Earlier in the Middle Ages Jews were told:-

“You cannot live among us as Jews “                      Later the order was  
“You cannot live amongst us”                      Then  
“You cannot live “                      This was the Nazi order.

So the Holocaust was put in motion in Germany by the Nazi’s, for to them the Jew represented everything evil, worse than Communists, Socialists or Capitalism. The Jews were regarded as the scum of the earth, worse than gypsies and sub-human by the Nazi whose leader decreed that Europe must be “free from Jews” (Deuteronomy 28:57). How did the rest of the world react? They declared war on Germany, but not on behalf of the treatment being meted out to the Jews, only in their own political and national interest. A few Jews were able to escape to anywhere, yes to anywhere and gradually all over the world doors began to close on Jewish refugees, even Palestine, which the British had designated in 1917 as a possible home for the Jews (for fuller details see a book written by Mrs. Edgar Dugdale on the origins and background to the ‘Balfour Declaration’), but even so we restricted their entry to 75,000 over a period of 5 years, then no more. Resistance to these restrictions of their return to Palestine took many forms: there the Warsaw Ghetto

Uprising and what came to be known as the Treblinka Camp Break-Out but in countless small ways Jewish men, women and children defeated the restrictions and the Nazi aims.

“Though I make a full end.....a remnant shall be saved”.

Many individuals were rescued and hidden by families. As evidence we have in Israel today the “Avenue of the Righteous” – an avenue of trees planted in memory of many who helped save Jews from the Nazis.

9). INTO THE FUTURE. This was the last section in the series. But to me it was disappointing, for no mention was made of God in any respect. It covered from 1945 up to date. After World War II in which 6 million Jews had been murdered by the Nazis and their associates, apart from those who died in various battles and skirmishes of war, those who remained looked for a place of safety, especially after the Balfour Declaration of 1917, to where else could they look other than Palestine? But one obstacle kept coming up. The Franco-British recognition of an Arab State, promised by many British governments during World War I and after in the very areas as the Balfour Declaration which promised Palestine as a National Homeland for the Jews. The seal was stamped in 1920 when the League of Nations gave to Britain the Mandate over Palestine which did not please the Arabs, no doubt Britain restricted the number of Jews allowed in and found trouble from many quarters, at the hands of both Jews and Arabs, as the events of the blowing up of the King David Hotel by the Jews, which at the time was the Head Quarters of the British army. Britain indeed found Palestine and Jerusalem a burdensome stone (Zachariah 12:5). The next move was to hand back the Mandate to the United Nations in 1942. Further trouble came in 1947 when the United Nations voted for the Partition of Palestine, the plan was rejected by the Arabs who made constant attacks on Jewish Palestine. Britain was then left with the unenviable task of trying to keep some form of law and order, but found it hopeless. Attacks on the British Army continued by both the Arabs and the Jews, with the final result that Britain withdrew from Palestine in 1948. The intensity of the fight between Arab and Jew for Palestine continued, on a larger scale. The fighting carried on throughout 1947 and into 1948. After Britain’s withdrawal in May 1948 the Independent State of Israel was declared by David Ben Gurion.

Then followed: The Sinai Campaign of 1956; The Six Day war of 1967; The Yom Kippur war of 1975, this has been followed by the Lebanon War of 1982 which was mainly to eliminate the P.L.O. with their aggressive attacks upon the civilian Jewish population, which has involved Israel ever since in their struggle for existence as an Independent State, the aftermath of which is still with them. Yet Israel has succeeded in gathering together Jewish Exiles from well over 42 countries among whom they were scattered. But only for their own political ends, but what has been the cost? Rich Jews who had hoped to be comfortably off and settled in their own land, as they thought it to be, are now finding it difficult at times to keep up the standard of living to which they had been used to. Some few weeks ago the Israel Shekel exchange rate to the English Pound had fallen to 1600. Its government is very unstable and disunited. The words of a well known Jewish philosopher recently wrote:-

“How is life possible without God”. he also said,  
“My nation is at war with my state, the army may protect, but they cannot give peace”.

A few words from the final part of the series; which is full of meaning to Bible Lovers and confirms the scriptures:-

“In the land of Israel the Jewish people came into being a nation.  
In this land was shaped their Spiritual, Religious and national character.....  
here they created a culture of national and universal import and  
gave to the world the eternal BOOK OF BOOKS.  
Exiled by force, still the Jewish people kept faith with their land in all the countries of their  
dispersion... and here they revive their political freedom”.

I feel I must add, like their forefathers they have not kept faith with their God. The God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. One thing they have yet to learn, the words of their illustrious King David of old. Psalm 46 verse 10, “Be still and know that I am God...I will be exalted in the earth.”

Though God has allowed the present gathering of a number of Jews, who are born by natural descent to return to the land of Israel, they are not returning for Him, they are returning for themselves.

Sister Evelyn Linggood.

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## **Romans chapter 7 and the Flesh of Original Sin**

Most people think the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans to be a most confusing subject, yet in its introduction it is such a plain explanation of what constitutes the old man and the new by Law and by faith without any physical change in nature.

Paul's address to the Roman believers implies that at the time of writing neither he nor they were in the flesh; how can this be seeing he was a living body of flesh and blood physically even as they also were? Paul had not died physically and risen from physical death neither had they, so how do we explain his words "When we were in the flesh"?

Did not Paul say, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God, 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."? Romans 8:8-9.

Jesus said of Paul that he would bear witness of Him in Rome; this is the result of that witness; those that were baptised into the inflicted death of Christ by water and Spirit understood what he was teaching in this 7<sup>th</sup> chapter because they were ordained to eternal life. It is the same at this present dispensation, the Truth is in the word and available to those who are willing and eager to accept it. Jesus reminded the Jewish rulers of this fact and much proof of this is found in Old and New Testament records, but they reviled Him for it. We have the recorded words of Jesus while in the synagogue at Nazareth of Elijah being sent to a woman of Sarepta during a severe drought when it rained not for three and a half years, and also of Elisha being sent to Naaman the Syrian. He says there were many widows in Israel but Elijah was sent only to that one, also many lepers in Israel but Elisha was only sent to a Syrian. (Luke 4:25).

The Apostle Paul was sent to the Jews of the circumcision but they would not hear but "judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, therefore we turn to the Gentiles and they will hear it." Acts 13:46. The Apostle Paul received direct revelation from Jesus and was chosen to preach to the Gentiles the Gospel of salvation, not the doctrine of Original Sin as it is mistakenly believed by Christendom due to the inability to rightly divide the 7<sup>th</sup> chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans where he speaks of the Law of sin in his members which could not be so when as a New Creature in Christ he had the members of Christ.

Did he not say, "Shall I take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot?" 1 Corinthians 6:15). Again, "Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." (1 Corinthians 12:2). Again, "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds and have put on the new." (1 Colossians 3:9). "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away and all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17). "As the body is one and hath many members so also is Christ." (Romans 12:12). Judge for yourselves "If the Law of Sin" was in Paul's members he must have been speaking in the past tense not as a new man in Christ prepared to live and follow Christ's example even to the death. "How to perform that which is good I find not." (Romans 7:18). How can you believe that of Paul? Even Jesus knew Paul was capable of doing good and that certain men were capable of good if they put their hearts and minds to it. "A good man out of the good treasures of his heart bringeth forth good things." (Matthew 12:35). So the heart of a good man is not deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. (See Jeremiah 17:9). Why then misconceive Paul's words and say "In the flesh dwelleth no good thing" when he is in fact speaking of himself in the past tense as the old man not in Christ?

When Adam sold himself to Sin together with all in his loins he and they came under the Law of Sin, the bondmaster. Thus Adam was styled "The body of Sin," or belonging to Sin with its many members, all serving Sin until made free. The only wages for service rendered to Bondmaster Sin was all that he had to

offer, whereas the gift of God was redemption, freedom from Sin and eternal life through Jesus Christ. Instead of being members of the old man Adam when he sinned and before his typical redemption in Eden, having put on the new man Christ Jesus we become members of His body and His servants by grace, not of works but serving righteousness.

The Law of Christ is therefore in our members not the Law of Sin, for as Paul said, the body belonging to sin has been destroyed (made powerless). See Romans 6:11 and onwards and you should understand why Paul's words in Romans 7:22 are in the past tense when he was unconverted to Christ, sold under sin. His final words that Christ has delivered him from such a wretched position, not telling the Roman believers or any other people that he was a wretched man who could not, because of his physical flesh perform that which is good.

Jesus was flesh and blood like Paul and it could not be said of Him He did not perform that which was good, for He was just and righteous and pleasing to His Father. To say as some do that His nature was "condemned flesh" is a lie not found in the Holy Scriptures, nor that He or ourselves have condemned flesh. The words of Paul in 1 Timothy 1:15,16 are said to be worthy of all acceptance "that Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." But to say as some do that Jesus died on Calvary to demonstrate what was due to human nature or the physical flesh is a doctrine of man uninspired; not of Paul nor of Jesus Christ. Therefore, please hold fast that which is good and worthy of all acceptance while there is time and the oil we are offering free to those whose lamps are not burning.

Yours in the patient waiting for Christ Jesus. Phil and Rene Parry.

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## Veritas and his Friends.

"It seems clear to me," continued Veritas, "that when Jesus makes the sending of a messenger from 'Abraham's bosom' equivalent to one rising from the dead, he intends that we shall see, or at any rate enables us to see, what his own opinion is, as to the condition of those who have 'departed this life.' In Christ's judgment they are dead, and in order to return to men they must needs be raised from the dead. Then the Scriptures instead of speaking of 'heaven' and 'sheol' as being in near neighbourhood, speak of them as being a whole antipodes apart, as in the 84<sup>th</sup> Psalm, 'If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.' Then, in sheol, the dead are represented as being unconscious, as may be established by many texts, of which we will take Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, as an example: 'for the living know that they shall die, but the dead know not anything...' also their love and their hatred and their envy is now perished."

"I see," said Mentor, "that your views are destructive of the immortality of man: if man ceases to exist in death, he cannot be regarded as immortal."

"These views in no wise conflict with the Scriptural doctrine of immortality," Veritas answered, "but only with what is merely a speculation, which has come down from ancient times to our own."

"I see we are drifting further into the deep," said Pietas, with a sigh.

"As long as we keep to the Scriptures," said Veritas, "I hold that we are safe, whether near to shore or far out at sea. It is speculation that is the unknown and perilous ocean."

"Science certainly won't help you in proving man to be immortal," interrupted Dubitas.

"Whether that remark is true or not," Veritas replied, "science is not the first authority on this subject. What man is will have to be determined by reference to the Creator's revealed word. If the belief in natural immortality were absolutely universal (which it is not), and if the desire for immortality could also be proved universal, the question as to the fact would still have to be settled by an appeal to Scripture."

“But surely,” observed Pietas, “such universal instincts and desires that mankind feels toward a life beyond the grave, count for something in the argument for his survival in death. Every known faith of the world, I believe, embraces this doctrine, and the common instincts of humanity may be regarded as a natural revelation.”

“I hold that you are wrong,” replied Veritas, “both in your facts and your reasonings upon them. In the first place, it cannot be proved that the masses of humanity that live in the present, and have lived in past ages, have any longing for a future life, or have anything more than a mere fleshly recoil from death, while millions of pagans, such as the Buddhists, have it as their highest hope that they will hereafter lose individual existence by attaining to the Nirvana.”

Dubitas nodded assent.

“Then suppose the longing were as universal as you seem to think, what does it prove? The desire for happiness is surely as universal as any desire within us, but does this prove a future provision of happiness for every individual of our species?”

“One moment,” said Mentor; “such a desire certainly proves that happiness is a fact.”

“Granted,” Veritas resumed; “but what I am saying is that while the desire for happiness may be universal, the attainment and possession of it are not so. These are limited by certain conditions which attach to the thing, and which prevent many from adequately getting it at all. I am not denying that immortality is a fact (which is all that instinct for it could be urged to prove), but the Scriptures show that it is limited to such as fulfil the conditions of its bestowment, and that it is not the natural birthright and inheritance of human nature.”

“But ‘happiness’ is within the reach of all,” Mentor remarked.

“Yes,” said Veritas, “but perfect happiness is not, which is what our instinct longs for; indeed, it may be doubted whether simple happiness is a possibility for all, though, bear in mind, I do not deny it.”

“You may safely do that,” said Dubitas, with a shrug.

“No, I will not: my contention does not require it, and I leave it an open question.”

“Then what is your view of man’s immortality?” enquired Pietas.

“I believe that it is the gift of God to all those who fulfil the terms of future existence, viz. belief of, and obedience to, the gospel, that it is a physical ‘change’ from a ‘natural body’ to a ‘spiritual body,’ which takes place at resurrection; that it will only be entered upon by such as ‘seek’ for it by patient continuance in well-doing.”

Dubitas said here that he admitted his friend’s views, so far as he had expressed them, hung together in remarkable symmetry, and that for his part he had no idea that man was immortal, only his impression had been that the Scriptures taught this.

“That arises,” said Veritas, “from your being only fragmentarily acquainted with the Scriptural teaching on the subject, and as for your ‘impression,’ what is its value? Touching the ‘symmetry’ of these statements, they are none the worse for that; but a truer observation would be, had you information enough to make it, that they harmonise the whole Book, whereas popular teachings can only be maintained by ignoring many of the most pregnant passages contained in the Scriptures. But allow me to ask you, gentlemen, have you made a careful examination of the entire testimony on this subject of human immortality?”

The three friends joined in the confession that they had not.

“That is what I generally find to be the case, wherever I put this question,” Veritas continued, “and as long as people generally are content just to keep afloat the current traditions which have been drifting on from age to age, I fear the truth stands little chance with the multitude.”

“But though we may not have threshed these things Scripturally out,” Pietas observed, “surely they have been examined and sifted to the very bottom by those whose professional duty it is to make such investigations.”

(To be continued).

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## CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM.

The Circumcision and Baptism of Jesus have been brought forward as proof that He was under sentence of death on account of the disobedience of the first man, Adam. Both these ordinances, it has been affirmed, had reference to the law of sin and death, and Jesus by submitting Himself, or being submitted to them thereby acknowledged that so it was.

It seems strange that some wish to establish an equality between the Son of God and the descendants of Adam, which not only degrades and dishonours Jesus in making God’s Holy One a defiled being, but renders the redemption of mankind an impossibility.

From much that has appeared since this controversy on the nature of the Christ began, it might really be supposed that the object was to prove that Jesus had a man and not God for His Father, so constantly is the fact of His heavenly origin kept out of sight. In the anxiety to establish His descent from Adam, His relationship to God is ignored or forgotten. Our opponents might just as well maintain that Jesus was the son of Joseph. That He was “made of a woman” “made under the law,” of corruptible flesh and blood, we admit, for so the Scriptures teach. But while admitting these facts, we deny the soundness of the inferences drawn from them. That the nature of Jesus, at His first appearing, was corruptible, does not prove that He was under condemnation for Adam’s sin, for the first man was in the same condition before he committed the act of disobedience, which brought death for sin into the world. That is to say, though of a nature capable of death, he was not necessarily destined to die; neither because he was corruptible was he thereby necessarily destined to return to the dust out of which he was taken.

His continuance in life or deprivation of life depended entirely on his obedience or disobedience to the law under which he was placed. It follows that corruptibility was in the world before sin entered, and that the nature possessed was pronounced by its Creator to be “very good.” Let this consideration not be forgotten, but allowed to have due weight in the investigation of the things concerning the Christ.

The Lord Jesus, on the other hand, was destined to die, not because of sin inherited from Adam, but because He was the appointed sin offering for us and brought into the world for that special purpose - if He was willing. And though corruptible, yet being God’s Holy One, He was not permitted to see corruption. (Acts 2:27). His mission in this world as the Lamb of God to take away the sin necessitated that His nature should be the nature of the seed of Abraham, and not the nature of Angels, but as the appointed sacrifice for sin, it was necessary also that He should be holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. To meet this necessity He was born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. His blood which was shed was that precious blood which alone could wash away sin and redeem mankind from the lost state in Adam. Had He been otherwise constituted, or His blood the blood of a transgressor, it would have been the reverse of precious, and His sacrifice of Himself would have been as inefficacious as that of the bulls and goats under the Law of Moses, which, we read, could never take away sin, and, moreover, Jesus instead of redeeming others, would have needed a redeemer Himself.

While it is quite true that Jesus stood related to sin and death, it was in the sense of bearing away the one and triumphing over the other. Being “made under the law” He must needs be circumcised, and this circumcision made Him a debtor to the whole law. (Galatians 5:2). And this He did, so that the law could not condemn Him as a transgressor. If, as alleged, He had “infringed” the law, His circumcision would thereby have been made un-circumcision, and His sacrifice would have profited us nothing. Jesus was circumcised, not because He needed justification, but because He was placed under a law which required obedience to that particular rite. At its first institution, circumcision was a sign or token of the covenant which God made with Abraham concerning the everlasting possession of the land of Canaan, and in his (Abrahams) case, it was a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being uncircumcised. (Romans 4:11). Undoubtedly it pointed to the future cutting off of the Messiah, as the confirmer of the covenant, without which the land promised could not be inherited, either by Abraham or by his circumcised descendants. And it pointed also to the putting off of sins by those who should hereafter become the subjects of the circumcision made without hands. (Colossians 2:11). But this putting off of sins had reference to personal transgression, and not to the sin committed in the Garden of Eden, and, moreover, it did not deliver those who conformed to the ordinance from their condemnation to death in Adam. Jesus had no sins to put off, He was without sin and consequently had no need to submit to any ceremony for the remission of sins so far as He was personally concerned.

The statement put forward, that because circumcision was a rite practised on infants and could not therefore be for individual sin but must have been on account of the condemnation inherited from Adam is entirely devoid of any scriptural foundation whatever. It is simply the opinion of a writer who having unfortunately committed himself to a false theory, labours hard to persuade his readers that he is right. Surely, if Jesus could be delivered from His supposed condemnation to death in Adam by circumcision, He needed not afterwards to be baptised.

Circumcision which is outward in the flesh profits nothing apart from circumcision of the heart. This is apostolic teaching, and quite a sufficient refutation of the notion that “it must have been on account of the condemnation inherited from Adam.” It amount indeed to sacramentalism; for if condemnation inherited from Adam could be got rid of by an outward ceremony, then circumcised infants ought never to die.

But circumcision is not justification. Abraham obtained justification by faith long before he was circumcised, and his circumcised posterity can only attain to justification in the same way. And inasmuch as Abraham’s circumcision contributed nothing to his justification, of his literal descendants. The mark in their flesh shows their descent from Abraham, the father of the faithful. Their relation to the covenant with which they can only realise by manifesting a like faith to his.

These considerations show that the rite of circumcision was not practised on infants, as affirmed “on account of the condemnation inherited from Adam.”

In submitting to the Baptism of John, who was His Forerunner, Jesus voluntarily surrendered Himself to what was a national requirement at the time not because He needed washing, but because of His desire to fulfil to the uttermost the righteousness required of Him. The use of the plural in the Lord’s saying, “Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness” we would suggest referred to Himself and John the Baptist. The “others besides” who flocked to John’s Baptism were transgressors and were baptized confessing their sins. Jesus had no sins to confess nor any defilement to wash away. He was not in their position, and John knowing this, might well express surprise that Jesus should come to him for such a purpose. If the Baptist had looked upon Jesus as a defiled one, needing to be washed, it is scarcely conceivable he could have addressed Him as he did. But perhaps some of our modern scribes consider themselves better informed on the question than the Lord’s forerunner, who was specially sent to prepare His way. However that may be, for our own part we are satisfied from the testimony that Jesus was not defiled, and that John could have held no such idea concerning Him. A theory that can resort to such arguments in order to support it must indeed be in desperate straits.

John’s Baptism was thy “baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,” and at the same time he made a public proclamation to the people, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand;” or more literally rendered, the words are, repent, for the Royal Majesty of the Heavens has approached. (John 3:2). “John verily baptized with the Baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” (Acts 19:4). “That He should by made manifest

to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.” (John 1:31). These are the words of Paul and John, and they define the nature and intention of the Baptism then practised. From all which it is clear that John’s Baptism had reference to repentance on account of personal transgressions and not to defilement inherited from Adam, and also show that it was made the occasion of announcing to the nation of Israel that their long expected Messiah was then in their midst. The confession made by those who were baptized was a confession of sins actually committed, and not a confession of being under sentence of death for Adam’s sin. In submitting to it the sinless Jesus who had nothing to confess, nor any defilement from which to be cleansed, rendered an act of obedience to an existing institution, and thereby typified His own death, burial, and resurrection. The conclusion therefore is that the Baptism of Jesus did not prove Him to be “physically unclean,” any more than His circumcision proved Him to be “unclean,” but that both ceremonies were typical of events concerning Himself in the relationship already mentioned. The question, “Was it not the existence of sin in the world that gave rise to such ceremonies?” seems very unnecessary, and admits only of one answer. Of course if sin had not entered into the world no expiatory sacrifices or offerings would have been required and consequently no ceremonies enjoined which were in any way typical of them. But while admitting this, we entirely fail to see how it furnishes any proof that He who was destined to cleanse the world from sin must himself be unclean in order to effect the object. In our judgment it proves the very opposite, and necessitates the coming of such a Redeemer as the Scriptures describe Jesus to be, that is to say, one who was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners.

It is said, “If Jesus was in the same position as Adam before the fall, how is it He was not freed from all ceremonies which owed their origin to the existence of sin?” In reply, we say, “Jesus was not in all points in the same position as Adam before the fall, though He was equally required to develop under trial. His nature was the same but the circumstances under which He was placed were different owing to the introduction of sin and death into the world. It has already been admitted that Jesus stood related to the law of sin and death, but the question is in what way? The relationship which He bore to it was not that of one who was under it either by inheritance or by actual transgression, but that of one who being Himself personally free from that law was able to redeem those who were involved in it both constitutionally as well as by actual offences. Had Jesus been born of the will of the flesh He would, like all the rest of mankind, have been under sentence of death and powerless to save, but being the only begotten Son of God, after perfecting obedience under trial He could, by the sacrifice of Himself, redeem the death-stricken race of Adam. This then, is the reason why Jesus was not freed from all ceremonies which owed their origin to the existence of sin.

Again, it is asked, “Why was washing necessary to the Priests under the law?” Because they were transgressors of that law, and therefore required to be made before they could minister before the Lord, or typify Him who was without spot, and blameless.

Such being the nature and character of Jesus, He did not require His flesh to be washed before being anointed as a Priest, nor did His compliance with the ordinance of baptism furnish any evidence that His flesh was unclean on account of Adam’s sin, as already explained. In conclusion, we remark that it does not follow because “orthodox commentators” are wrong on some points, as for instance, the eternal Sonship of Christ they are therefore untrustworthy on all and not to be regarded. However much they may be sneered at by those who deem themselves so much wiser than their fellows, “orthodox commentators” have, by their knowledge of languages and powers of reasoning, shed a good deal of light on many parts of Scripture, and the Bible student, whose only object is truth, will gladly avail himself of their researches, and accept of light from any quarter. But for the labours of such the probability is that the English reader would be to this day destitute of a copy of the Scriptures in his mother tongue. Moreover, disparaging remarks about “orthodox commentators” come with a particularly bad grace from those who do not scruple to quote from their writings when they find anything that harmonises with their own views, in which latter case that it is considered the opinions may be very appropriately made use of. “O consistency, thou art a jewel!” In the absence of a “thus saith the Lord” or an “It is written” which affirms that Jesus was under condemnation to death in Adam, we must continue to stand fast in our present position and decline to take the backward step to the apostasy. Mere inferences and assumptions will not do. We rejoice in the additional light which we have obtained concerning the Lord’s Anointed One and remain as unconvinced by the arguments of our opponent as we are unmoved by their denunciations.

## The Beginning Of A New Creation

Dear Brethren and Sisters, We give thanks to the Father, “which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” (Colossians 1:12-19). “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.” (Hebrews 1:1-4).

Let us pause here and reflect for a moment... “By inheritance He hath obtained... what? “A more excellent name”!

Not by works, O ye Christadelphians, but by birth. A birth which ye pronounced unclean, defiled, condemned! But what saith the Scriptures? Hebrews 1, “But we see Jesus who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (see Romans 5:18).

The Firstborn inherits from the Father what He chooses to give Him. “I will make Him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth.” “Ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” “For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? and again, I will be to Him a Father and He shall be to me a Son? And again, when He bringeth His firstborn into the world, He saith, and let all the angels of God worship Him.”

And did they not do so at His birth? And was He not by inheritance greater than they? Being of corruptible nature does not belittle this fact one bit. He had to be of this nature to suffer death for every man – the Just for the unjust – that He might bring them to God. For it was the grace of God which allowed Him to give His life as a ransom.

The quality of His flesh and blood was no different from ours. We are emphatic on this point – more so than any other sect but what we do stress most urgently is the matter of property. Before adoption as sons of God we were Adam’s children sold under sin when in his loins. Jesus was never adopted, therefore was never a son of Adam – having His life derived direct from His Father.

He was not therefore sold under sin, and was consequently, not sin’s property, or sin’s flesh. But we through Adam were sold under, or to sin and were consequently sin’s flesh or flesh belonging to sin. There is no difference in the flesh, but it is a matter of property or ownership. If Jesus were sin’s flesh, or flesh belonging to sin, God could never have said “This is my beloved Son. This day have I begotten Him.” Neither could we have been redeemed with sin’s own property. This is why the prophet of Israel could say, “Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel” (God with us).

It is of this birth many will have been speaking and singing, some for the sake of merriment and abuse, and some in blind ignorance - and some in sincerity, not understanding the real point of His birth of a virgin. As our Mr Ernest Brady has said, ‘if Jesus was in the same condemnation as Adam’s children then there was no point or merit in God being His Father, and Joseph might just as well have filled this office; in fact Christadelphians, by their Statement of Faith brand themselves as Josephites, i.e. those who believe Joseph was the father of Christ. There is nothing in their doctrine to warrant them believing Jesus to be the Son of God. We of the Nazarene Fellowship have been allowed to see these things and to understand them, that is

why we can rejoice honestly at the birth of Christ at a time when practically the whole world celebrates His birth for any reason other than the true one.

This is the time for sinful flesh mongers and unclean Christ conceptionists to examine themselves and prove themselves and try to extricate themselves from the trap of their own making into which they have fallen.

These people have invented a theory that the flesh is obnoxious to God and must be considered unclean – but this cannot be proved from the Bible.

No flesh is unclean of itself – it is the law which makes it clean or unclean., and as we are dealing with the birth of Jesus we might just as well quote the simple example of Mary in Luke 2:22-24, “And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the LORD, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” (See also Leviticus 13). This example is very simple. The woman become unclean by the law at the birth of a child; she does what the law requires and becomes clean again.

All animals were termed by God as very good in the beginning yet afterwards He defined those which were clean and those which were unclean, but He did not change their flesh – therefore if a person ate of an unclean animal, or sacrificed it to the Lord, the conscience, not the flesh, of the person became defiled or unclean because the Law said “Thou shalt not...”

There are some who say Mary was unclean before the birth of Jesus, and as no one can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, Jesus must have been unclean despite what has just been quoted, that “Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.” The fact is Mary was not unclean as per laws until after the birth of Jesus, and this condition was not wilful on her part for it was ordained of God.

“Have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days, the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?”

However Mary had respect to the divine ordinance and complied with it; after all the law had to be obeyed in the letter as well as in the spirit. What better example have we of this fact than the Last Supper when there was no leavened bread to be found; Jesus took the unleavened bread and blessed it and brake it and said, “Take, eat, this is my body.” We also must fulfil the symbol in the letter as well as in the Spirit. This is why we partake of unleavened bread. To partake of leavened bread is not fulfilling the institution of the Lord. If the letter does not matter but only the Spirit then we might just as well have water instead of wine. We need not also condemn those who sprinkle instead of baptise. So you see how dangerous this attitude can be.

Let us now reflect once more on the birth and greatness of Christ. I quoted in my earlier remarks, “He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than the angels.” I followed with the remark, “not of works” and what I meant by this was that He did not obtain Sonship by any works. And I add that He maintained His right to the inheritance offered by His Father through loving righteousness and hating iniquity. “Therefore God, even thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

The importance of Christ’s Sonship is expressed in many places in scripture yet there are those who wrest the scriptures in order to support their false theory that Jesus was the son of Adam. How this could be I fail to see when they were brothers, for Adam was termed the Son of God and Jesus also. But Adam forfeited his life and inheritance and had to give place to the his Brother who was able to redeem him and restore to him the opportunity of serving God and working out his salvation under a new dispensation.

When we say Jesus was not the Son of Adam we do not mean also that He was not of Adam’s flesh and blood nature; on the contrary, we most emphatically believe He was and furthermore we believe that He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh – which means that Mary was of the seed of David and therefore so was Jesus, being formed in the womb of Mary, would obviously be related to that same line of descent according to the flesh. Again some think He had to be born in the line of David to claim the right to David’s throne. How blind some people must be. Who was the first King over the kingdom of Israel? Why

God Himself. Did He not say to Samuel concerning their request for a king like other nations, “Hearken unto them in all that they ask of thee, for they have not rejected thee but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.” Therefore Jesus had right to the throne of David through God, His Father; otherwise why was not Joseph made king? Or why did he not claim the right to the throne of David?

If we discriminate in our study of the scriptures we shall find that “son of David” and “son of Abraham” are general terms of reference to the Spiritual seed and not to seeds as of many. Take for example, Zaccheaus, Jesus said to him, “This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham, for the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Now there are people who oppose this and say that Jesus came in the flesh in order to show how obnoxious it was to God, and exhibiting this fact upon the cross. Jesus said, “I am come to save that which was lost.” Now what was lost? The simple scriptural answer is “life”. If not, how could Jesus say, “let the dead bury their dead.” Therefore, until we receive what was lost we are counted as dead.

“For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” “And this is the will of Him that sent me, that of all that He hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

No, God did not send His Son to condemn sin-nature or sinful flesh, as some incorrectly term it. On the contrary, “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life. The death which Jesus suffered was the death which Adam incurred by sin; this was inflicted death or the taking of life. Now Jesus gave His life a ransom for many; this was a willing offering – a willing sacrifice in the prime of manhood. Suppose Jesus had lived the allotted span of life without sinning, would His natural death be accepted as a sacrifice or as a ransom for many? I think not. How could He be said to have given anything when He had received all the life allotted to Him under the natural constitution? To allow Him therefore to die a natural death would not be wrong on God’s part, but having fulfilled the conditions for eternal life, it would have been wrong for God to allow Him to see corruption. It was not wrong of God to allow Him to be put to death providing He was a willing party, but it was wrong for wicked men to do it for they were slaying an innocent man.

The fact that He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God did not detract from their guilt but God allowed it to be so for a good cause and because Jesus was willing. If Jesus chose He could have called for twelve legions of angels to deliver Him and God would have sent them; but this would have meant the failure of God’s scheme of redemption and salvation through Him, but it would not have made Him a sinner. He could have entered eternal life alone. But what merit would there have been in this; what unselfish achievement could He look back on, and forward to; how could He see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied? Jesus knew, and we know from the scriptures that He would not fail; but this does not detract from the trials, the hardships, and the terrible death on the cross which He endured that He might give life to the world, according to His Father’s will.

We of the Nazarene Fellowship do not rule out the possibility of Adam and Eve being raised to eternal life, but the teaching of the Christadelphians definitely rules out any hope for Adam and Eve. They probably do not intend this but their teaching conveys this fact. If at any time God forgave them, then their natural death could not have been the penalty for sin. Can God be said to forgive sin and then exact the full penalty? Our answer to this has always been in the negative. Without renouncing their belief that natural death is the wages of sin Adam and Eve must remain in the dust for eternity. (Incidentally, Jehovah’s Witnesses believe Adam and Eve remain the dust for eternity as their death was the penalty for their sin).

We fully understand that apart from Divine intervention Adam and Eve would have died the death they experienced whether they sinned or not. This is substantiated by scripture, and if they prefer Dr Thomas, well even he believed it and put it in writing.

What a beautiful picture the Creation and Divine scheme of redemption presents to us through the pages of Holy writ. “In the beginning God...” Let us think of this before we start on any venture when another year begins, when another day commences. “In the beginning God.” He is the First, The Creator, The Source of all life. We see the creation of Adam and Eve from the dust of the earth, the breath of life breathed into their nostrils, setting in motion all the wonderful parts of his body, making him an intelligent and active being

capable of reasoning and reacting to circumstances in which he finds himself. A mature being in mind and body.

‘It is not good for him to be alone’ - a companion is necessary; one who reflects the same feelings; one who can share with him the joys of life in God’s wonderful creation, and give God glory. God causes a deep sleep to fall upon Adam - the first major operation in the history of man. His side is pierced and a rib is severed, then in some mysterious way incomprehensible to us, a woman is formed. She is brought to Adam and he knows she has been created from bone and flesh of his own body. Perhaps a scar is still visible. And when the Lord God brought her unto him Adam said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.” “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh.”

Unfortunately they sinned and consequently forfeited their life. God did not take this life but allowed the life of animals to be sacrificed instead until the Anti-type should appear in the dispensation of the fulness of time, even Jesus the Christ. And here again we have the picture presented to us of the New Man and His Bride.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot, or wrinkle and any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:25 – 32).

We then, brethren and sisters are the body of Christ. His side was pierced that we might be created a glorious bride, “fashioned like unto His glorious body,” being of one mind.

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:” (Ephesians 4:11 – 13).

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15. Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:14 – 21).

Brother Phil Parry