

**The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter**  
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**Editorial**

Dear friends, brothers and sisters,

Russell has asked me to start helping with the newsletter, which I am very pleased to do so.

As I have mulled over what it is I should feature in this editorial, I have found myself feeling the need to put some explanations in place for why it is we focus so much on the nature of mankind, of Christ, and the importance of understanding the atonement correctly.

Could there be anything more important than the person of Jesus Christ? Anything more useful than to understand OUR standing before God, and how the provision of Jesus brings us justification, through God's grace? Surely, it is of the UTMOST importance that we understand how God has drawn near to us, by providing Christ?

Though most of us have come from Christadelphian backgrounds, we are here trying hard to approach God's word afresh, taking NOTHING for granted regarding our previous background. There is no animosity towards our Christadelphian brethren, but we feel we MUST clarify this issue of "sin in the flesh" (as it is known).

We of course take ALL areas of the word as important, and are happy to discuss all aspects of our Christian faith. Yet, we are committed to bringing the truth out regarding this "original sin" doctrine, which was instigated by the Catholic Church.

So, with this said, I would like to summarise what our understanding of this topic is.

Firstly;

1. How was mankind created?
2. How did sin come about?
3. How did sin "change" mankind, if at all?
4. What was the punishment prescribed for that sin, and what punishment was handed out?

When we have looked through these questions, and come to a conclusion from reading the word, what then do we believe was mankind's state from then on? Are we to believe mankind would be BORN sinful? That they would be accounted as sinners purely by being born? That therefore meaning God would put Adam and Eve's sin upon all mankind, before they might commit any sin of their own! Does the word support this idea? Let's take a look.

**GOD AND MANKIND - A SUMMARY** of the origin of mankind and their relationship with the creator.

Genesis Ch 1, verse 26 "Then God said, Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, [the earth] and over all the creatures that move along the ground." 27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." 29 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that

move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food. 31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Genesis Ch 2 SUMMARY - there was no one to work the ground - the Lord God formed a man [ADAM] from the dust of the ground (PHYSICAL BODY OF FLESH AND BLOOD) and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (ANIMATED, AND CONSCIOUS).

God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. He commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; (which as above included the tree of life) but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

God brings the creatures to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

God specifically creates woman (Eve) from the man’s flesh, to be a "suitable helper" (though this presents a problem with the account in Ch 1 , where both appear to be formed together).

The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”

Adam and his wife were both "naked", and they felt "no shame".

STATE OF MANKIND: IN THE LIKENESS/IMAGE OF GOD. VERY GOOD. NO SHAME.

THEY CAN EAT OF THE FRUITS OF THE EARTH.

TO DO COMMANDMENTS:

1) TO RULE (SUBDUE) OVER THE EARTH AND WHAT IS IN IT.

2) TO WORK THE LAND (ENVIRONMENT) AND TAKE CARE OF IT.

3) NAME THE OTHER CREATURES

3) TO PRO-CREATE AND POPULATE THE EARTH. (As a couple, they become "one flesh").

TO NOT DO COMMANDMENT:

1) Must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. PUNISHMENT - DEATH (for when you eat from it you will certainly die - IMMEDIATE)

THE FALL - Gen Ch3

Now the serpent was "more crafty" than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.

God creates the serpent in this state, which is to have an ability to be "crafty", which means it can form a thought of its own, that can be at odds with God’s. (We really cannot reach any other conclusion here to that).

There then follows the whole story of the serpent tempting Eve to take of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and her doing so, and giving to Adam also.

We will not go into that now, as there are a few things in there that are puzzling, but let us not be distracted from our main purpose for now.

Suffice it to say for now, that they hid, covered their nakedness with leaves (covered as they now felt shame) tried to pass the blame on, and Adam seems to blame God for providing the woman. God provide HIS covering for their shame, with goat skins (showing the death of the goats, obviously). He does NOT put them to death, as the punishment that He had prescribed, but instead expels them from the garden (man to work the ground), with what we see is a curse. The Tree of Life is now NOT available to them, as it was before. They eventually get very old, and die a natural death. THIS is extremely important. That they are given a commuted sentence, and their punishment is NOT the one prescribed. There is NO change to them physically, other than the woman will have increased pain in childbirth, and Adam will have to work harder. Their flesh is exactly as it was at creation. Their minds are NOW open to choice, that of good, or evil ( by way of having now got the knowledge of both). Nothing else has changed.

Now then, for the purpose of this study, we want to focus on the "change" in the people, and the "change" in their relationship with God.

Mankind now lives under the curses, of working the ground to live, and the woman with increased pain in childbirth. She also now lives UNDER the authority of the man (again, we have lots we can discuss on that, but not now).

DEATH was NOT the judicial death punishment that had been described by God, they now will live OUT their natural existence (and, it was a long life span) until they died a NATURAL death.

This is our opening summary, and I hope we can agree that NOTHING changed in mankind that made them automatically sinful? Rather, they now knew how to decide to either do good, or do evil, without having to have a third party suggest it.

Freedom to CHOOSE to obey God, or not, MUST be a fundamental and central doctrine, or we distort the word, and suggest God Himself creates us as sinners before we ever even sin! THAT will NOT do.

Mankind had now a more limited interaction with God that we see develops differently, as we read further into the generations that follow Adam. The loss to mankind is massive, yet not as devastating as it would have been. Grace and mercy, in accordance with God's will (for mankind to continue) was there, right at the start.

Julian Shipley May 2022

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## **“God Hath Shown Me”**

### **Peter, Acts 10**

## **Can You Say The Same?**

As I sit and meditate certain things come to mind such as the account of Peter's vision of a sheet let down from heaven by its four corners containing all manner of four footed beasts and creeping things which were legally by the Law of Moses unclean yet all were flesh and blood by creation and physical nature. On account of the voice from Heaven three times, Peter said “Nay Lord for I have not eaten anything common or unclean.” Why then was it now permissible to kill and eat?

The answer is that the Law of Moses had been fulfilled by the sacrifice of Christ as the Apostle John said, “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.”

When Jesus cleansed the lepers the Mosaic Law was in operation and Jesus respected it, “Go, show yourselves to the Priest and offer for your cleansing that which Moses commanded as a testimony.” The Virgin Mary did the same but the physical nature of the lepers, neither that of Mary was changed from what it was before the cleansing. Those who believe the doctrine of sinful condemned flesh should begin to take notice.

Peter said, “God hath showed me that I should call no man common or unclean” yet certain people have been doing it of Jesus for over a hundred years, how then can a man who dies under his own penalty of condemnation be said to have sacrificed himself for others under the same penalty?

Condemned flesh is a teaching foreign to the Bible. Paul does not teach it in Romans chapter 7; he talks of himself in the past tense unconverted to Christ.

Augustine and others whom I know, like to make it an excuse for their shortcomings yet Jesus of the same nature as St Paul was sinless to the end. Edward Turney believed and taught this so what of the false accusers of his day and at the present time? In Galatians 3:22 Paul says, “The scripture hath concluded all under sin” but this does not mean all are sinners for Paul also says of some that they are concluded righteous, he also says that the scripture teaches this. It is time those people who boast of knowing “The Truth” should have sought and found this in the scriptures and explain it but we know it is all of God to reveal it. Romans 3:9, “We have before proved...” said St Paul.

From the time of righteous Abel it has been revealed in the scriptures and rituals of the Law to Calvary, all involving the shedding of blood which commenced with that covering for Adam's sin which was provisional for the probationary period until he died a natural death relative to his created nature when he could be termed legally justified and morally justified if he had died faithful unto that death.

From Eden to Gethsemane the covering provided for Adam and Eve had been recognised by faith, how else could it be said that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain? Even the ground was cursed from which Cain brought his offering and perhaps he was too proud to ask Abel for a lamb or ignored what Abel had been taught. As the wise man in Proverbs said “There is a way that seemeth right to a man but the way thereof are the ways of death.”

What death? Even the righteous in Christ die natural deaths. Comprehend?

Love in Jesus, Phil Parry.

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“And as they were departing from Jericho a large crowd followed Him. And it came about that when two blind men sitting at the roadside heard that Jesus was walking by they cried out saying, ‘Have pity on us, Lord, Son of David!’ But the crowd told them to be quiet, but they kept calling out all the more, saying, ‘Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!’ And Jesus stopped and called them, and he said, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, that our eyes might be opened.’ So Jesus, moved with compassion, touched their eyes and instantly their eyes regained their sight, and they followed him.” (Matthew 20:29 to 34)

What would you ask the Lord to do for you?

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**Continued - Part 7**

## **VERITAS AND HIS FRIENDS**

“I REMEMBBR,” said Dubitas, “my mother reading to us, children, out of the gospel of Matthew; I think, about the 25th chapter, where Christ says to the wicked, at the day of judgment “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” I remember, also, of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, where the rich man is represented as “lifting up his eyes in hell, being in torment;” and other passages of the same kind. I don’t see how you can escape the conclusion that hell forms part of the teaching of Scripture.”

“Oh, I admit that there is a Scriptural hell,” replied Veritas, “but I deny that the popular view of it is the correct one.”

“What do you take to be the popular view?” asked Dubitas.

“The view with which you yourself have been familiar from childhood. Pietas will perhaps tell us what that teaching is that he has listened to and read in the popular sermons of the age.”

Pietas being appealed to, declared that he was quite familiar with a certain doctrine of lurid and terrible complexion, but as a matter of fact he had not heard many references to it in the pulpit to which he had been in the habit of listening for some years past. He thought it was getting out of fashion in the pulpit to mention hell and the devil.

“But I suppose,” said Veritas, “though preachers are not in the habit of shaking their hearers over the burning pit as of old, the doctrine of incarceration with an arch-fiend and all evil spirits still retains its place in the half-beliefs of the church-taught public.

“Oh, yes, I think so,” said Pietas, candidly; “and I think the doctrine is freely made use of in Sunday Schools, and to the young generally, to create in them a salutary fear.”

“Just so,” replied his friend, “but what I want you to do is, to tell us in the most naked way what the doctrine is which you say is still current, though not much adverted to in public.”

With a slightly heightened colour, and the faintest degree of hesitation, Pietas said, considering just a moment, “Well, I suppose it is that somewhere in the invisible world there is a place of fiery torment, where the devil and evil spirits will finally be shut in to endure endless pain; and that the wicked are cast into this prison when they leave this world. I admit he added apologetically, “the facts cannot be made very intelligible, but I think this is substantially what is taught; whether it is believed is another thing.”

“I will not ask you, now,” said Veritas, “whether you believe it, but I will demand of you all, does the Bible teach that?”

Dubitas said he thought it did; Pietas said he thought some texts favoured such terrible teaching; Mentor did not express any opinion, but remarked, “I suppose you are aware that less revolting interpretations are put by learned men upon the passages usually quoted in support of this doctrine, especially as regards the fire which is not quenched.”

“Oh, yes,” replied Veritas, “I am aware that very many liberties have been taken with the Scriptures, by men who wish to keep the doctrine of hell, and at the same time make this prison as comfortable as possible, but I think their interference with the Scriptures is quite unjustifiable, as I think I can show you. But at present allow me to put to my two friends here a few questions.”

“What,” asked Veritas, turning round, “does the English word hell mean?”

Pietas replied he had read that it meant “a covered place,” coming from a Saxon word signifying to “cover.”

“Quite true,” said Veritas, “so that as far as the English of the matter goes, the word ‘hell’ does not involve the idea of torment, but only of invisibility. Now if the English word ‘hell’ means ‘covered place,’ would not it be perfectly suitable to make it apply to the grave seeing that the dead in their graves are covered or buried out of sight?”

“That would seem justifiable,” was the reply.

“Then the next question is, what are the original Hebrew and Greek words for hell, and what do the original words mean?”

Mentor supplied part of the information sought by saying that SHEOL was the Hebrew word for hell.

“Correct,” said Veritas, “and an infallible way of getting at the real meaning of the word is to notice how it is employed by the various writers in Scripture who use it.” “Now, can either of you give me a single instance where sheol is used in the Old Testament to express a burning pit, a place of pain, or the prison of living evil spirits?”

Veritas waited, but the silence was only broken by his own voice saying, “What! after having told me the popular ideas of hell, cannot you find me one passage in which the use of sheol will bear them out? In all the multitude of texts where the Hebrew word for ‘hell’ occurs is there not one pointing to a place of fire, or pain, or torment?”

The candour of Pietas helped him to maintain silence but Dubitas did not care to be shut up, and so was beginning to shuffle by remarking that though sheol as a word was not used to indicate a place of torment other passages might teach it.

“One thing at a time, if you please,” said Veritas “we are dealing now with the Bible hell, and trying to ascertain what it means. Now the fact is, it is never in the Old Testament used to mean a place of torment for living beings, neither devils, evil spirits, nor wicked men. If this is true, and you know it is, then it is false to use the Bible word for such a purpose, for this gives to a falsehood an apparent Bible authority.”

“Do not the translators sometimes render sheol as the grave?” enquired Pietas.

“Yes,” said Veritas, “and with perfect justness; for sheol like ‘hell’ means a place covered or concealed. But if sheol meant a place of torment it would be impossible to render it ‘the grave.’ I daresay you have often heard the words of Job quoted, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest, and applied to saints who are supposed to have gone to heaven but look at the passage (ch. iii.) and you will see that the words refer not to heaven but to hell or sheol. How absurd it is to hear ignorant preachers and others talk about a ‘burning hell,’ and then quote words which apply to hell when they are wishing to describe the fancied peace and rest of heaven.”

To be continued

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## **Jesus And People**

Although He was a leader, swamped by crowds wherever He went, with an entourage of children always behind Him, Jesus had none of the characteristics of the cult leader. Those religious reformer, cult leader types are usually highly strung, compulsive, angry, austere people who make others feel uncomfortable in their presence. Yet the way the Gospels make it clear that He made all types of people and children feel happy in His presence indicates that Jesus just wasn't like this. He wasn't critical of others' weaknesses. And today just as much, Jesus attracts all types of people to Himself, thus forging the unique fellowship which we know so well - from taxi drivers to insurance executives, saints to sinners. The light of who He was revealed the areas of improvement required in others; but it was His very uncriticalness which attracted people. Yet this wasn't because He simply wasn't the critical type. His lambasting of the Scribes and Pharisees shows that clearly enough. What He was so passionately against was hypocritical organized religion that abuses and damages people; and a disproportionately large amount of the Gospel records goes into recording His criticisms of this. There were at most 5000 Pharisees in the whole of Israel; and yet the Lord's passionate confrontations with them are so extensively recorded. As far as I can tell, Jesus only spoke of the reality of future condemnation when talking about those who had been insensitive and uncompassionate towards their brethren, protecting their religious structure at the cost of tragic human wastage in the personhood of others.

His otherwise uncritical spirit is shown by His patient bearing with the immaturity of the twelve. Recall when the Lord was walking ahead of them, and they were fiercely debating who should be the greatest. He either sensed what they were talking about, or simply overheard them and didn't let on. He slows down and lets them catch up. And instead of blasting them that "Come on, that's not how you should be talking...", He almost congratulates them on wanting to be greatest by saying that whoever wants to be greatest must be servant of all. So artless, so gentle, so careful not to humiliate them by force or spiritual manipulation. Or think of the rich young man who wanted to follow the Lord. Jesus told him to keep the commandments. There is a glaring contradiction in the way this young man says that from his youth he has kept them. But he's young... Yet Jesus doesn't point out the arrogance and inappropriacy. He encourages the young man to rise up to the highest level, and loves him for his spiritual ambition. It's an essay in the Lord's masterful way of combining challenge with gracious acceptance - all in the same breath.

His body language would have spoken volumes. Grace as it were poured from His lips, Ps. 45 had foretold. His words were full of grace in a way that was altogether striking. You know how it is when it seems a fly or a bee seems intent on persecuting you. Think of your body language as you brush it away in exasperation. Think of His...in the blazing heat of Palestine. Time and again, day after day. I suspect it would have been different. And then think of how the scent of blood would have beckoned all manner of insects and even birds of prey to irritate the Son of God as He hung in His time of dying, unable to brush them away. Thinking of His daily demeanour helps us grasp how the cross was really an extension of His life; it wasn't simply an unusual, out of character pinnacle of uncharacteristic spirituality. And likewise our crises will only be surmounted if we can meet them in the spirit with which we live everyday life.

Jesus was in His life "separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). The Greek word very definitely means 'to actively depart from'- it's used about a partner walking out of a marriage. Yet the Lord is always pictured as

mixing with sinners, to the extent that they felt they could come to Him easily, and actually liked to do this. So how was He "separate" from them in the way the Hebrew writer understood? Here again we see one of the profoundest paradoxes in this supremest of personalities. He was with sinners, then and now; His solidarity with us, the roughest and the most obvious and the subtlest of us, is what attracts us to Him. And yet He is somehow totally separate from us; and it is this in itself which brings us to Him.

Jesus truly was all things to all men, as was his matchless disciple Paul; yet He managed to achieve this without being hypocritical, in the sense of being one thing to one person but acting another way to someone else. The fact He wasn't hypocritical and yet was all things to all perhaps reflects the way there were so many sides to His character; or it can simply be that He Himself had such compassion for people that He could somehow genuinely be the person they needed Him to be, without any insincerity about Him. God is perfect within Himself as signified by His name "I am that I am" nothing more nothing less, and Jesus as His Son was likewise complete within Himself. He was complete as a human being. When we look at our Lord there is no false self - a phenomena which dogs all of us in some ways at some times. What we see is what He is, nothing is hidden in the sense that He had no hidden agendas. This was extremely appealing to people.

All this was why He was able to attract all kinds of sinners to Him, when those who are spiritually marginalized tend normally to steer away from those who exude righteousness but no humanity. He was real, He really was who He appeared to be, there was total congruence between His words and actions; and He encouraged others in the same spirit to simply face up to who they were. And He would accept them at that. Yet He was real and human; although there was this congruence between His words and actions, consider how His spirit was "troubled"; "now is my soul troubled" (Jn. 12:27; 13:21). Yet He goes on to use the same word to exhort the disciples hours later: "Let not your heart be troubled" (Jn. 14:1, 27). Was this inconsistency, "Do as I say, not as I do"? Of course not. The strength and power of His exhortation "Let not your heart be troubled" was in the very way that His heart had been troubled but He now had composed Himself in calm trust in the Father. And Peter remembered that, as he later in turn exhorted his flock to not be troubled nor afraid under persecution (1 Pet. 3:14).

Brother [Edd Macintosh](#)

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## **What Was The Sentence Upon Adam**

### **Introduction**

Without law there can be no sin; and without law there can be no building of character, good or bad. With the law mankind must have free-will in order to choose to obey or disobey. God wants us to obey and so build good characters.

Adam was given just one law - 'Thou shalt not eat of a certain tree.' Adam had already been provided with plenty of food for God had said, "Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat (Genesis 1:29). But of one tree only he was not to eat and yet he did. Now, there always comes a penalty for breaking a law and in this case Adam had been told that if he ate of that one tree he would die that very day! However, the time had now come for his punishment and so Adam hid in the garden - yes, Adam tried to hide away from God for he feared the penalty. Next we see just how merciful God was to Adam for He spared him the penalty and allowed him to go on living with Eve.

Some say God would not say one thing and then do another and look for an alternative understanding of what God meant - and sure enough they believe they have found it in 2 Peter 2:8 where we read "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." As Adam lived for 930 years and then died some have said that must be the answer. But that will not do as we shall see...

Russell Gregory

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## What Was The Sentence Upon Adam?

The usual answer which is generally believed by religiously minded people is that the sentence was natural death. If this was so, then we say at the beginning of this brief article that our Lord Jesus Christ died in vain.

The mistaken theory arises from the passage of Scripture, “dust thou art and unto dust shall thou return.” Now we would emphasise the fact that all mankind (apart from accident) from the time of creation up to the present, succumb to a natural death by a process of natural decay.

If approximately, two thousand years ago our Lord was nailed to the cross to save us from natural death, then it is obvious that He has miserably failed, for countless millions have died since His sacrifice and returned unto dust. Assuming that “unto dust shall thou return” was the sentence upon Adam and all in his loins, then we are faced with the difficulties of Enoch and Elijah who did not see death; also those who are alive at Christ’s return who do not see corruption.

If confusion and contradiction arises it is not because the Word is at fault but rather because reason and harmony does not develop from wrong premises. Natural death had nothing at all to do with the sentence upon Adam, but rather is that which is common to man along with all the other animal creation.

If we ask ourselves for what was the sentence upon Adam, the answer is transgression of law, otherwise, sin. “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Here is the commandment without which sin would have been an impossibility, a command which resulted in the writing of the quotation, “by one man Sin entered into the world and Death by Sin.” This quotation in no way denies the fact that death would otherwise have resulted from the constitution of the human body which God had created from the earth. “The first man is of the earth, earthy;” “dust thou art.”

The vital point that is commonly overlooked is that Adam should have died “in the day” he transgressed, “Death by sin,” but a merciful and loving God provided a substitute in the sacrificial Lamb, which was slain because of sin. This was the death that came by sin, a violent death by the shedding of blood, and one which exactly prefigured the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on account of Adam’s sin. Is it not obvious what the sentence was upon Adam? There is no doubt that it was “death by sin,” a violent judicial death.

Is it imperative in order to declare or acknowledge God’s justice that Adam must have paid the price of sin? If so, Adam would have died the day he sinned and man upon the earth would have ceased to exist. Has not God, out of the multitude of His tender mercies, provided a way of forgiveness of sin? If so, did not the same apply to Adam?

On the other hand, assuming that Adam suffered the penalty by his natural death after 950 years, why was it necessary for Christ to pay it also?

If natural death was the wages of Adam’s sin, then it is impossible for him to be forgiven the penalty, because he has already paid it.

We are informed that “death is the wages of sin,” yes, and this death is a violent one. “Without the shedding of blood is no remission.” Jesus was the Lamb of God that took away The Sin of the world - one sin, Adam’s sin, to which mankind is related upon enlightenment as being in Adam, by reason of being in his loins at the transgression.

Upon this enlightenment, unless one takes the opportunity of God’s provided means of redemption in Christ Jesus, by symbolically dying to sin (which Christ did literally) in the water of baptism, then he belongs to sin and will be resurrected to suffer sin’s wages – the Second Death.

In many countries, by law, a sentence of violent death is imposed for the crime of murder. If the accused person is found guilty of this crime, and during the previous weeks waiting period before the sentence is



carried out, natural death occurs, can it rightly said that the accused has paid the penalty for the crime he committed? Would he not have died naturally irrespective of the crime? Was the sentence carried out by his death? If so, it would, be impossible for an innocent person to pay the penalty by naturally dying.

“Sin is the transgression of the law,” and death by sin. Did this murderer who died naturally die for his sin? It is very evident that he did not; death by natural causes is neither a sentence nor a penalty but rather the result of being created corruptible.

This is applicable to Adam; he was in a similar responsible position to the murderer, the only difference being that Adam, by the mercy of God, obtained a reprieve from the conditions of the sentence – a lamb being provided as a substitute. This lamb foreshadowed Jesus Christ - the “Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world,” the Lamb “slain from the foundation of the world,” for “without the shedding of blood is no remission.

Surely the word “slain” implies a violent death, a death which was brought into the world by Adam’s sin, the death which Jesus suffered so that Adam and all his posterity might have both natural life and the opportunity of eternal life.

By His death He has destroyed him “that had the power of death that is the devil.” Can we construe this passage to mean natural death? This death still persists, but rather Death by Sin, Adam’s sin, has been rendered powerless by the price He paid for our redemption.

God’s plan of redemption is revealed in wisdom, mercy, and love; He is not willing that any should, perish; God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

What was the sentence upon Adam? The shortest and simplest answer to this question is that which Christ suffered. Was His death natural? Did He return to dust? Unless the precious blood of Christ had been poured out on Calvary, mankind would have ceased to be, owing to the death (by violence) of our first parents, for “the wages of sin is death,” and “without the shedding of blood is no remission.”

During the period of His manifestation Jesus was able to say, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, 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.” By this statement, is it not very evident that the condemnation mentioned cannot be natural death, for this is the experience of all and therefore an impossibility for one to pass from, apart from the return of Christ?

Death, that is, The Death, is the climax of condemnation both final and eternal, a death which many will be raised to suffer who have already naturally died, in short, the Second Death. This is The Death which became operative upon mankind by one man, Adam, because of Sin, a death in harmony with the statement of Jesus (John 5:24), which Adam and all mankind by God’s Grace can pass from by participating in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus by faith. After confirming this faith in the waters of baptism it can be said, “there is therefore now No Condemnation to them which are in Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, 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”. (Romans 8:1,2).

The force of this law of sin and death which was established by Adam’s transgression became operative upon himself and all his enlightened posterity. “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” and is the correct answer to the question at the head of this short article, but by the mercy of God, a Lamb was provided in the stead of Adam, which literally suffered the force of this law of sin and death, Adam suffering it symbolically, or by his conscience.

The mind is the man; the members and organs of the physical constitution being but the implements of action which are decided by the brain.

When the lamb died, Adam, by his conscience, would die also; henceforth not to live unto himself but unto Him, by faith, of whom the Lamb prefigured, even the only begotten Son of God.

Likewise Paul, who could say, “for I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.” (Galatians 2:19); “likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 2 (Romans 6:11).

Brother T. Gettliffe.

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### **Matthew chapter 20 verses 29 to 34**

“And as they were departing from Jericho a large crowd followed Him. And it came about that when two blind men sitting at the roadside heard that Jesus was walking by they cried out saying, ‘Have pity on us, Lord, Son of David!’ But the crowd told them to be quiet, but they kept calling out all the more, saying, ‘Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!’ And Jesus stopped and called them, and he said, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, that our eyes might be opened.’ So Jesus, moved with compassion, touched their eyes and instantly their eyes regained their sight, and they followed him

What would you ask the Lord to do for you?

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#### **Note from Brother Russell,**

Dear all, it was in September 1988 that I received a letter asking if I would take over as editor of the Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter and my first reaction was to say No!

Never in my life had I had any experience of what was required of an editor and surely there were others who would do it better, so why me? Besides, I didn’t know very much about the Nazarene Fellowship; I had been receiving their Circular Letters for only a short time and had only met three members (one family) in person. So it had to be a matter of prayer whether or not I should accept the invitation. Then when I did accept, I realised I had a fully equipped office at home and being a Christadelphian previously I felt I had a good background knowledge and it was because they (the Christadelphians) didn’t want me anymore that I was now in a position to take on a new role in life. I had been a Sunday School teacher for forty years and I had given many talks at Bible classes most of which were well received and it was usual to follow the talks with questions and answers and general discussion. So it seemed a good opportunity to progress with a group of Christians I had come to love.

That was when I was sixty years of age and thought I would retire after only a few years. But now after thirty-four most enjoyable years, and seeing my family grow with grandchildren and great-grandchildren and being well blessed with good health it is time to slow-down. At ninety-four years old I am still well blessed and very thankful for it but I am having to live at a very much slower pace.

What of the future? I hope to be able to help Julian, our new editor, for some time yet and perhaps write a few short articles from time to time but how long for is in God’s hands and I am thankful that it is so.

Please help and support our new editor and perhaps some good discussions would be of interest. I have known Julian for many years and he is very good in discussing the scriptures.

May God’s blessings be with you all. With love in Jesus Christ; I am sure He will be coming to reign in righteousness over the whole earth soon.

Your brother in Jesus Christ, Russell

