

# The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No.81

## August 1986

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## Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Reader Friends, warm Greetings in the name of Jesus.

We thank all who have communicated with us during the past month and those who have contributed in any way to this work.

A letter from Bro. Bill and Sis. Maureen Hold of Queensland Australia informs us that his mother (Sis. Hold senior) is recovering well from her operation and they all send Greetings and Love to all brethren and sisters in Christ, and so does Bro. John Carter of Wick Scotland, also our Sis. May Lockett whom I visited on July 7th, finding her in good spirits though feeling her advanced years, she is now 97.

It has been an eventful month in world affairs: Israel has made two air attacks on alleged P.L.O. training centres in Lebanon as a reprisal for their attempt at a costal landing on Israel.

In this issue we have another instalment of Bro. Brady's article on "Baptism - a mislaid meaning." An article from the "Spectator" magazine has been sent in by Sis. Helen Brady concerning the Arab Israel conflict and an answer to it by Bro. Phil Parry, Elon Salmon has picked out of the Old Testament only those references that suit his purpose which is a claim for equal rights for Arabs and Jews to the Promised Land.

We send our best wishes for the welfare of you all and Sincere love in the Master's Service.

Harvey and Evelyn Linggood.

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## Deeds Not Words

They do the least that talk the most  
Whose good designs are all; their boast;  
Let words be few

They do the most Whose lives possess  
The sterling stamp of righteousness  
For deeds are true.

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continued from July -

## **Baptism - A Mislaid Meaning,**

Christadelphians have gone so far in literary dishonesty as to interfere with what has been written. Examples of this are the portions excised from "The Slain Lamb," as it was originally published. The Declaration used to contain the statement: "Baptism is the means of the present (legal) union with Christ." The bracketed legal, vital in its context, is now omitted. Another example is the suppression of a work highly valued even now by some: "Phanerosis," by Dr. Thomas. Writing about this C.C.Walker said; "Though in the main very excellent, it contained certain misstatements and errors... and we could not conscientiously go on reproducing these, knowing that Dr. Thomas would not wish us to do so were he in the land of the living." As it is unlikely that C.C.Walker had a private line to the grave his knowledge of what the Doctor would have wished seems to have been assumption. Another editor Jas. M. Brown of "The Herald," from Australia, comments very reasonably, "Regardless of whether Dr. Thomas was correct or not, to the student of Truth his errors are just as important as his correct exposition. Those who have proved their inability to correct the pamphlet "Anastasis," which is found to be, not an exposition of Anastasis at all, but rather an exposition of a Latin term which is not found in the Bible; these are certainly unable to deal with "Phanerosis."

In view of what we have to say later the time must be fast approaching when Elpis Israel will require what may be termed a 'face-lifting' operation.

Returning now to John Carter's reply to the "Advocate" brethren. On p. 246 he quotes J.J.Andrew's statement: "The Edenic law is subsequently termed the Law of Sin and Death, and the Abrahamic is called the Law of the Spirit of life." In our view this is perfectly true and excellently expressed; these are two laws operating over humanity and by means of which God is separating the wheat from the tares and determining the eternal destiny of both. It depends on which of these two laws we are under when our probation ends whether we rise incorruptible or come forth for judgment and the second death. But this will not do for John Carter. He says: "This application of Paul's words not only attaches a meaning to 'law' he did not intend, but it also perverts his meaning." Doubtless John Carter is highly regarded as an exponent of Scripture, but he surely displays a certain arrogance in thus laying down what an Apostle did or did not intend. He is entitled as we all are to advance his interpretation, but having regard to the shifts he has used to defend it he might well be a little more diffident in doing so.

He tells us: "Clearly by the law of sin he means the impulses towards sin which mark human nature." If Paul meant this how was he able to say he had been made free from the law of sin? He had not been made free from his impulses, or from his supposed defiled flesh. The suggestion is too ridiculous for words.

It is a very remarkable thing that we have only to turn back a year or two to find him printing an article entitled "Made a curse for us" in which W.F.Barling attaches precisely the meaning to these two laws which he says Paul did not intend. This is what Barling wrote: "Thus while by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, both the Jew and Gentile were made free from the law of sin and death pronounced in Eden, the Jew in addition needed emancipation from the curse of death which the Law of Moses placed upon him as distinct from the Gentile."

The question arises, was W.F.Barling here perverting Paul's meaning, and if so why did John Carter print it? Or has John Carter been forced, by the logic of his own false premise that natural corruptibility is the Adamic condemnation, not only to propose an utterly inadmissible distortion of Scripture, but also to give the lie direct to the most prominent Christadelphians, starting with Dr. Thomas and in diminishing order down to the last-named?

An even more astounding example of fast and loose adaptation of facts to suit his arguments is in his use of the passage which he quotes on p, 295 (Oct. 1953) to prove that Dr. Thomas taught, like Christadelphians, that the only thing we inherit from Adam is a mortal and sinful nature. He writes: "Dr. Thomas says in Elpis Israel, 'Having attained the maturity of their nature men become accountable and

responsible creatures. At this crisis, they may be placed by the divine arrangement in a relation to his word, etc.” This certainly seemed to support the Christadelphian affirmation that the only thing which stands against men before God is the personal guilt resulting from the weakness of our supposed sinful nature. We knew or felt fairly sure from what we remembered that Dr. Thomas had an infinitely better understanding than this, and we turned up what he actually wrote in *Elpis Israel*. We found that John Carter had selected his passage with some care, from p. 117, commencing in the middle of a paragraph and finishing before the end of it, and that the sentences both before and after the portion he has picked out are in exact accord with the view John Carter is combating and express the truth which he denies.

Here is the context of the passage he has quoted showing that Dr. Thomas recognised the legal aspect of Adamic condemnation. He wrote: “But men are not only made, or constituted, sinners by the disobedience of Adam, but they become sinners even as he by actual transgression”. Then follows the extract quoted by the Editor, which is, of course, an enlargement upon the last phrase, dealing with actual transgression, and this is followed by the conclusion, again containing the two aspects which, for obvious reasons, John Carter does not quote. “Thus men are sinners in a twofold sense, first by natural birth, and next by transgression.

Thus contrary to what the editor affirms, the Doctor clearly taught the same two aspects as the Advocate as all honest expositors must recognise. If as he says, it is only for our personal sins (i.e. actual transgressions) that baptism is required, why did Dr. Thomas introduce first the fact that men are constituted sinners by the disobedience of Adam? The answer is because he had a better understanding of the matter than those who falsely claim to follow him and who prostitute his writings in a vain effort to conceal the cracks in their facade.

On the opposite page (116) to that from which John Carter’s extract is taken, Dr. Thomas lays down the foundation of his argument in a statement which utterly confounds what John Carter said on pp. 245-9 and 295-6 and which convicts him personally of the most flagrant dishonesty in claiming that Dr. Thomas supports it. Here are his words: “By the constitution of the economy into which they were introduced by the will of the flesh, they were constituted transgressors (note that) before they were able to discern between right and wrong.”

The character in “*Alice in Wonderland*” who said: “When I use a word it means what I choose it to mean - neither more nor less,” was a model of literary propriety beside John Carter, who can make his authorities prove just what he chooses - neither more nor less - irrespective of what they actually say. Surely in all conscience the time has come for Christadelphians to honestly confess that they have long since ceased to accept the Doctor in these matters and to discontinue to call themselves by the name he invented. Or perhaps they will choose rather to expurgate or suppress *Elpis Israel* as they have done other works of his.

So far we have confined the issue to a comparison between what the early Christadelphians held to be the significance of baptism and what they say today. It is affirmed that the only thing which stands between man and God is the fact of our personal sins; that baptism is for the purpose of getting forgiveness of these, and then, provided our good works outweigh our evil at the day of Judgment, Adamic condemnation will be removed by the change to immortality.

It is truly amazing that such a view can be seriously put forward today by Christadelphians as the Gospel; as we have shown it is in complete conflict with Dr. Thomas, who recognised that man’s need of salvation arises quite irrespective of either his sinfulness or his righteousness. One might expect - and forgive - such half-baked nonsense in an ignorant missionary, but in a community who regard the Bible as inspired it is unforgivable. Have Christadelphians never heard the word ‘alienation’? Has justification by faith no more a meaning for them? If baptism is, as John Carter says, necessary solely on account of our personal sins, what are we to make of the fact that Christ submitted to it? If it is as he says: “for the remission of sins - always,” why were those who had been baptised by John the Baptist for repentance and remission of sins baptised again? Why did Jesus say to Nicodemus: “Ye must be born again”?

The answer to these questions can only be found by recognising that the reign of sin is a matter of law, not physical nature, and that the ceremony of baptism marks the liberation of a person from a state of legal condemnation. So long as he is in that state, which Paul terms “bondage to sin”, he is without hope; his deeds whether good or bad, matter not one iota. He is neither guilty nor not guilty, but in a legal position in which he will ultimately perish. The primary purpose of baptism is to bring him scripturally to life so that his probation may begin.

We can here prove and illustrate this now by showing that John Carter is wrong in his facts in saying “Baptism is into Christ for the remission of sins – always.” For example we can turn up a number of Scripture references to baptism where no mention is made of remission of sins. Instances are Mark 16:15 -16, Acts 16:55, Romans 6:5-6, Galatians 5:27, I Peter 5:20-21. Its absence in these cases does not, of course, prove contrary but it certainly proves John Carter’s assertion false. What should carry more weight for Christadelphians are the facts of Dr. Thomas’s own baptism. It is fairly generally known that he was originally a Campbellite and was baptised by Walter Scott, but later he came to realise that because of his defective understanding, that baptism was invalid. It is instructive to turn up and read what he has to say on the point. On page 152 of “His Life” we read: “We have heretofore supposed that if a man believed that Jesus was the Son of God, that he died for sins, was buried, and rose again, according to the Scriptures, and was sorry for sin, and ceased to do evil, and was baptised, etc., for the remission of sins, he was in Christ.” This definition of the requisites of acceptable faith and of baptism covers all that Christadelphians regard as involved in the baptismal rite. Dr. Thomas had been duly baptised “for the remission of sins.” Yet here is the marvel and the problem which John Carter has set himself - “Dr. Thomas came to the conclusion that he was an un-baptised man.” Why?.

Ernest Brady  
To be continued next month,

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**The following is the text of an article entitled**

## **“Biblical Claims for Israel”**

**- which appeared in the “SPECTATOR” dated 18th January 1986 by Elon Salmon, to which Bro. Phil Parry replies. The writer claims that scripture gives Arabs a place in the Promised Land.**

Shimon Peres, who arrives next Tuesday on a visit to Britain, last October made a very useful political gesture at the UN when he called on Jordan to end the state of war with Israel and negotiate directly for peace. Since unpredictability touches the good no less than the bad, it is not beyond imagining that this year negotiations of a sort might actually begin. But agreeing to negotiate is one thing; following the course of negotiations is another. And that leads inexorably to the heart of the matter: the West Bank and Gaza.

I recall standing in Kiryat Araba against the inflamed backdrop of a Judean sunset, and challenging a bearded stalwart of the place who wore the badge of his persuasion — the knitted kippa. ‘By what right,’ I said to him, ‘do you claim sole possession here over people who have lived and worked on this land for centuries before you?’ In reply he raised his index finger to point at the sky, and fixing me with an implacable gaze, said ‘Hashem!’ (in Hebrew, ‘The Name’). Five days later Israel tanks rumbled across the border into Lebanon: Israel’s longest and most tragic war had begun. The gesture and the expression of certainty which attended it revisit me now as they did throughout the Lebanon war and its aftermath, a war which was launched ostensibly to remove the threat of the PLO from Israel’s northern border but in reality to determine the future of the West Bank. And the promise ‘Hashem’ made to Abraham and his seed is today the chief if not the sole reason tendered by those who, like the man in Kiryat Araba, believe that Israel must retain the West Bank in perpetuity, even at the cost of peace.

Nothing is so inimical to rational compromise or to creative thinking as dogma. And of all dogmas religious dogma is the deadliest because it excludes the possibility of error by deferment to a supreme divine authority to which we have no access and hence no possibility of appeal. However, that very inaccessibility to the source - "the divine animus" - which makes religious dogma inviolable to its adherents, also opens it to various interpretations, and in that spirit we should examine the claims and counter-claims to the so-called 'Land of Israel'.

In the book of Genesis lies the foundation of the Jewish claim to the land whose boundaries are, at this stage, only vaguely outlined. The Lord commands Abram: '...Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make thee a great nation, and I will bless thee...' (12:1,2). Abram duly follows the command. Later the covenant is made and the promise given. At God's behest Abram takes on a new name, Abraham... for a father of many nations have I made thee' (Genesis 17:5). God says further: 'And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God' (Genesis 17:8). Isaac has not yet been born. But Abraham's seed had already borne fruit: Ishmael, his son by Hagar, Sarah's Egyptian handmaiden. And Ishmael is not rejected by God. On the contrary, he is blessed. When Abraham dies 'full of Years' he is buried by Isaac and Ishmael together. If Isaac and Jacob (about whom more later) are accepted as patriarchs of the Jewish people, Ishmael by the same token, is accepted as father of the Arab people, for which reason the Arabs revere Abraham no less than do the Jews. Moreover, after Sarah's death, Abraham takes another wife Keturah - a wife, not a concubine - who 'bears him' a string of sons at least one of whom, Midian, is associated with the Arabs by biblical scholars and rabbis.

'And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.' (Genesis 25:5). That's Abraham's doing, not God's. In God's promise of the Land to Abraham and his seed, Ishmael is not excluded. Furthermore, why is it stressed that Abraham is to be 'father of many nations' if it is not the divine purpose that there should be more than one nation in the Promised Land? Isaac's wife, Rebekah, conceives. The Lord tells her: 'Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other; and the elder shall serve the younger' (Genesis xxv 25). The elder is Esau, who later marries Mahalath, Ishmael's daughter, thus reasserting the bond between the Hebraic and Arabic branches of the family.

Here then is another clue to a preordained co-existence of the two people in the same land.

But the relationship is an unhappy one. A prophecy fulfilled? A friend of mine, himself a learned rabbi, asserts that one of Judaism's distinguishing features is the concept that a man is in partnership with God in the continuous process of creation. If so, it certainly is not beyond the competence of the seed of Jacob to redress this preordained but unjust supremacy over the seed of Esau. And if not now, then when? Jacob, who gave the name Israel to the Jewish people, is the most complex of all the three Hebraic patriarchs and arguably the least attractive. He is full of contradictions: devious, cunning, compassionate, trusting, cowardly, courageous, but, above all, tenacious of purpose. No wonder Isaac prefers Esau who, like himself, is uncomplicated. Esau is guileless, physically brave, passionate, forgiving, all of which makes Jacob's treachery against him the more unforgivable. But if Jacob's precedence over his elder brother Esau is preordained by God, why does he have to attain it through deceit and trickery? Could it be that in making that come to pass God is pointing at the injustice in the reversal of the primogeniture, with a hint that it might be redressed some time in the future? The first detailed description of the Promised Land is given to Moses by God in Numbers 34. No scholar today could determine with acceptable accuracy the northern borders, except that today's Eilat does not seem to be included in it. There is no such problem with the western and eastern borders. These are the 'great sea' (Mediterranean) and the River Jordan respectively. The land east of the Jordan, which the Herut Party even today claims as part of the Jewish Patrimony, was acquired during the grand expansion of the Davidic and Solomonic commonwealths. There is no mistake about the Jordan being the eastern border of God's Promised Land, for He forbids Moses to cross it as punishment for his earlier brief lapse in faith: "This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither' (Joshua 34:5). Note the reaffirmation of the promise to Abraham and Isaac and their seed, in which are included Ishmael and Esau, and a host of other sons of Abraham by his second wife, Keturah. What does all this

mean in terms of political reality? A lot, if you are one of those who take the Bible as the authority on the territorial aspect of the Arab-Israel dispute. For a start, the slogan 'Jordan is Palestine' becomes irrelevant, because the real issue is legitimate co-claimants to the title deed of the land west of the Jordan.

More importantly, there are clearly no specific areas in that land designated by God to either of the two nations. Therefore all subsequent rights of tenancy to this day, in any part of the land in question, derive not from divine purpose but from normal human intercourse, mainly war. Lastly, peace between Israel and her neighbours depends on settling the dispute over that part of the country; there's no getting away from it. Subject to satisfactory guarantees of security, should Israel give up the West Bank and Gaza in return for peace? To my mind the answer is emphatically 'Yes.' I will go further and say that Israel should concentrate on making the necessary arrangements to ensure national security - not an impossible task - dismantle the settlements, and pull out even before peace comes. Because I believe that under Israel's control, these territories with their 1,200,000 Palestinians will ultimately corrupt and destroy the Jewish State and everything it stands for. On the nature of Israel's relationship with the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza will depend the nature of Israel herself; whether she will be a creative, decent and caring society, the kind of society Israelis would be proud of and happy in, and such as Jews in the diaspora would want to join, or a benighted and oppressive society, very much like some of Israel's neighbours. In the context of my argument, the logic of political reality flows from how you understand God's promise to Abraham and his seed; if you accept the legitimacy of shared ownership by the heirs of Abraham who are still around as the Bible leads one to accept, then the West Bank and Gaza are no more than handy chunks of real estate you happen to hold and can use to strike the best bargain. As such, they are negotiable; the terms have to be right. If they are negotiable subject to the best terms available, why not deal with whoever offers the best terms - at least hear the offer? And in a situation where diplomatic gestures account for a great deal, why not the PLO?

The PLO are not just a bunch of terrorists. Israel's readiness to deal with them need not entail a recognition of their claims and aspirations. But it does entail a sincere intent of withdrawing from the territories at the end of the day. Imagine the consequences of such a move on Israel's part: the PLO is split even further with the 'acceptable' part confined to a representation in the West Bank and Gaza; the ball is firmly in the Arabs court; on what grounds could any Arab country calling itself 'moderate' refuse to make peace with Israel? Who in the world could call Israel 'intransigent' after that? At last Jews would find out whether the Arabs are implacably dedicated to Israel's destruction and nothing other than that would satisfy them. At last Jews would find out whether there is real anti-Semitism behind the world's criticism of Israel, or whether they are prone to paranoia. Unfortunately, most Jews in Israel and in the diaspora, don't seem to want to find out.

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## **REPLY TO "BIBLICAL CLAIMS FOR ISRAEL"**

In 'The Spectator' dated 18th January 1986 Elon Salmon argues that Scripture gives Arabs a place in the Promised Land. The following is a reply by Bro. Phil Parry to the article: -

It was interesting to read Elon Salmon's comments on the position of Israel and the Arabs in relation to the claims of both to a place in the Promised Land on the basis of Scripture. Like many other people, Elon Salmon puts a limitation on what is involved in the term "Promised Land," as though it had been handed down by Title-deed from generation to generation from the time of Abraham. Therefore if scripture is to be his argument or basis for Israel and Arab claims, we will readily deal with it on that basis, in consequence of which he will find scripture gives no claim to either on the basis of genealogy and fleshly descent from Abraham, He will find also as we proceed, that Apostate Christianity has not only lost its way, but also the original message of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, by substituting it for something in the skies, which God did not promise Abraham. When the term "Promised Land" is expressed it must be established:

- A). Who owns the Land? and
- B). To whom was it promised?

When we are considering claims in this context, we must accept that the Bible record shows and reveals the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as the Creator of the Heavens and the earth, and it is this Creator who has revealed Himself through holy men who as prophets spake as they were moved by His Holy Spirit and whose words in turn were recorded in the scriptures of the Hebrew prophets. David the king of Israel who prophesied of things to come especially the Kingdom of God on earth, confirmed by the Holy Spirit Power that, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein... Psalm 24:11. This and Genesis chapter 1 v. 1 answers question 'A'

"Who owns the Promised Land?" Question 'B' "To whom was it promised"? The answer to this will unfold as we proceed on the basis of scripture. It may even surprise many to be told that the land into which God invited Abraham after his departure from Ur of the Chaldees was given firstly to Abraham's seed, which the apostle Paul declares was Jesus Christ, the promised seed of the woman spoken of in Genesis 3:15. This fact concerning Jesus can be established by reading Genesis 12:7 where it promises in addition the possession of the land, the blessing of all nations who become Abraham's seed through Jesus Christ. This is confirmed in Paul's epistle to the Galatians chapter 3 and speaking by the Spirit of Revelation received from the risen Christ himself Galatians 3:12. It is very obvious that if Saul of Tarsus could have claimed inheritance in the Promised Land through the Law he would have done so, being a strict Pharisee in the Jews religion and as touching righteousness which was in the Law, blameless. But on his way to "Damascus he was enlightened to the true position, and later by further revelation he was in a position to prove what the promises to Abraham and his seed really meant and how blind and deaf he had been to the testimony of the martyr Stephen by the Spirit of God, concerning Abraham and the children of Israel. Acts chapter 7.

It should be noticed that Stephen makes no mention of Ishmael in his discourse but he does stress a most important fact which should not be missed. This is in Acts 7:5, "And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." How can Abrahams seed after the flesh, whether through Ishmael or Jacob, inherit or claim a land which never belonged to him? It was not Abraham's to give and beside this, he was promised the land for an everlasting possession which to Abraham was a physical impossibility as he himself knew. Nevertheless he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, which faith he demonstrated in the offering up of Isaac, accounting that God was able to raise him from the dead that the promise of God in Isaac should be fulfilled. The fact of Abraham's possession of the land for ever prompted the words of Jesus to the sect of the Jews who did not believe in the resurrection from the dead, Luke 20:37-38, "Now, that the dead are raised (qualified as those in verse 37), even Moses showed at the burning bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all mentioned live unto him." This was Christ's reckoning and judgment of those accounted worthy, before actual resurrection, to obtain that world in which he and Abraham were involved as heirs of the same promise, even Paul realised this when he said in Romans 4:13, "For the promise that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham or his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." We have established from scripture that the promise was to the seed of Abraham first, Galatians 3:16-17 and 4:1-7, through the free woman Sarai who was barren and of a great age. This required the intervention of God and belief and faith on the part of Abraham and his wife which incidentally they had already shown in departing from Ur of the Chaldees not knowing whither they were going - save that he, Abram, looked for a city which hath foundations (eternal: not temporal), whose builder and maker is God - wherefore God is not ashamed to be called, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, for he hath prepared for them a city," Hebrews 11:10-16.

Elon Salmon argues on behalf of the Arabs from the viewpoint of fleshly descent even as do the Jews after the flesh, who boast in the Mosaic Law, and natural descent from Abraham as being rightful claim to possession of the land, but Paul refutes the latter's claim. Galatians 3:18,19 - "For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: "but God gave it to Abraham "by promise," (Four hundred and thirty years before the law). Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of

transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.” In any case Stephen said of those who crucified the seed that should come, “Who have received the law by the disposition of angels and have not kept it.” Acts 7:53. Furthermore in Galatians chapter 4 Paul shows that there were two covenants - the one confirmed in Christ to Abraham, and the other from Mount Sinai in Arabia, and in the same rank with the present Jerusalem and is in bondage also with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free which is the mother of us all (in Christ). For it is written, “Rejoice thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.” Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh (Ishmael), persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? “Cast out the bond-woman and her son: (take note Elon Salmon) for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, in Christ brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.” Is not Paul contending that to be under the Law of Moses was to be still in bondage and alienation to Sin, that the ritualistic sacrifices under the law could never give redemption or release from bondage, because there was a reminder of this fact every year through the office and duty of the High Priest? The Law of Moses and its observance in the letter could never make the promise to Abraham effective, nor could it make them heirs of the promise which necessitated everlasting life. The law of Moses embodied a code of conduct whereby the descendants of Abraham were permitted to dwell in the land (first promised to Jesus, God’s Heir) as a unique people who if obedient to the Divine statutes and ordinances would possess it as a temporary home until the time ordained of God for possession by the heirs with Abraham of the same promise. Under this Divine but temporary order of things there was scope for those individuals who grasped the spiritual aspects through the same faith. As Jesus said to those who were claiming Abraham as their father with undue credit, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.” Why did Abraham rejoice? Because he knew the promise would not be valid until confirmed in the blood of Christ the only means of redemption and everlasting life, this was assured to Abraham in a most significant way as a reading of Genesis chapter 15 will show. Abraham believed God and understood the fact of redemption in Christ unto eternal life, so did Isaac and Jacob but not Ishmael, - as for Esau he despised it for one morsel of bread - life from the dead was not in the blessing of Abraham as far as he was concerned. Hebrews 12:16 and 17. Elon Salmon’s argument is based solely on fleshly descent from Abraham of Ishmael and Isaac, and if this is the strength of his case then God would not have put a difference “between the two by saying, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called,” nevertheless, none of the seed individually were excluded from being heirs to the promise through the same faith of Abraham. Romans chapter 4. If Elon Salmon and others of like sentiments read this chapter 4, they would probably gain a greater appreciation of the Jewish and Arab position which at present is in fact as Paul stated in Galatians chapter 4, in the same rank as each other, the Arabs because they were never under Moses as a separate nation, and the Jews because they rejected the Mosaic covenant, and their Messiah whom they were instructed to hearken unto as the Prophet of the Lord like unto Moses, or be cut off. Acts 5:17-26. This is that great Prophet - the Messiah, Jesus Christ of whom God said to Abraham by covenant, “Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.” Genesis 15:18. Elon Salmon states, “In God’s promise of the Land to Abraham and his seed, Ishmael is not excluded. Furthermore, why is it stressed that Abraham and his seed, Ishmael is not excluded. Furthermore, why is it stressed that Abraham is to be “father of many nations” if it is not the divine purpose that there should be more than one nation in the Promised Land”? I think we have shown, or rather Paul has, that the promise is only to those who are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 5. “So then we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” Galatians 4:31. This disposes of any claim through physical descent. As to more than one nation in the Promised Lane, Paul explains there will be many nations represented when the rightful heirs are in possession. See Romans 4:11-17. Also in Revelation chapter 7 in addition to the 144,000 of the twelve tribes of Israel, John beheld a great multitude that no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. These are all Abraham’s seed through faith and adoption into the family of God and through the merits of Christ’s redeeming blood, risen or changed at his return, in incorruptible nature to receive an inheritance incorruptible - a Kingdom which cannot be moved - The Kingdom of God of which king David prophesied in Psalm 72, a Theocratic rule in which people dwell together under One God; One King over all the earth and his Name One. The king spoken of is Jesus Christ of whom the angel Gabriel stated, “The Lord God shall

give unto him the throne of David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and of his kingdom there shall, be no end". This is what Psalm 72 teaches, "Dominion from sea to sea and from the river of Egypt unto the ends of the earth... They that dwell in the wilderness (Arabs?) shall bow down before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring; presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him..." "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth... His name shall endure for ever; men shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call him blessed."

This is the result of God's king judging or ruling in righteousness. I fail to see how Elon Salmon can reason that Jew and Arab can dwell together in the Promised Land peaceably, when they have diverse governments, diverse religion, yet both professing allegiance to the same God and claiming Abraham as their father yet rejecting Jesus of Nazareth the Messiah of Israel, whose mission was to confirm the promises made to the fathers by His sacrificial death and to speak the words of God unto them, Hebrews 1:1-14 and Romans 5:8-12. Can two walk together except they be agreed? How then can Elon Salmon expect the State of Israel (which is not a Theocracy but a government with opposing factors similar to the west, and not averse to war in defence of its policies) to tolerate an Arab regime totally opposed to them and their claim to Palestine on the strength of their physical lineage from Abraham and Jacob and the twelve Patriarchs?

I believe Elon Salmon is rather unfair in his criticism of Jacob, it was not Jacob's intention after receiving Esau's birthright, to deceive Isaac and it was Rebekah who was prepared to accept any consequences as a result. However, in reference to Elon's statement, "It certainly is not beyond the competence of the seed of Jacob to redress this preordained but unjust supremacy over the seed of Esau. And if not now when? But if Jacob's precedence over his elder brother Esau is preordained by God, why does he have to attain it through deceit and trickery? Perhaps Elon should have read Romans chapter 9 unless of course he has no interest in what a true servant of the Messiah has to say. In any case I was under the impression the redress he is concerned about was already fulfilled that is, if he is talking of Isaac's prophetic utterance to Esau in Genesis 27:40, for this was fulfilled in the reign of Jehoram, 11 Kings 8:20-22. As I said, a reading of Romans chapter 9 would show how the Creator of all things has the right to elect any person in accordance with His foreknowledge and grace for inheritance in His Kingdom yet to be established through Jesus Christ at his return to the earth, for all, Jews, Arabs and Gentiles owe their very existence to the sacrifice of Christ and are still legally dead until they have put on Christ through association with His death and resurrection by the Divinely appointed way.

Previous to King Saul, Israel's King was the God of Abraham, and when under "the influence of Samuel the Prophet of the Lord they desired a king to be over them like unto the surrounding nations Samuel was displeased, but God said unto him "Hearken unto them in their request for they have not rejected thee but they have rejected me that I should not reign over them." There followed a succession of kings after Saul until Zedekiah, when the corrupted kingdom of Israel came to an end and God declared, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it shall be no more until he come whose right it is and I will give it him." Ezekiel 21:27. Now this was a reference to the rightful heir Jesus Christ not wholly by reason of descent from David as pertaining to flesh, but because he was God's Son and heir to God's Kingdom which existed in Samuel's day before David was even king. Hence the question the disciples put to Jesus, "Lord wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Jesus at this time was the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead and He did not give them a negative reply regarding the Kingdom but that it was not for them to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power, and they were also assured by two angels as He was taken up from them into heaven, "This same Jesus shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go." Jesus himself wept over Jerusalem because of the rejection of those whom God had sent and He declared, "Your house is left unto you desolate, ye shall see me no more until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." What a process of re-education must take place before the inhabitants of Jerusalem make such a statement in respect of the rejected Messiah! When one sees Jerusalem now in the modern times as I saw some of it filmed for T.V. I thought within myself no wonder Elijah must first come and restore all things. When like Paul at Athens, I beheld their devotions and pious hypocrisy Jews and Gentiles exhibiting their so-called allegiance by what they wore and carried as representations, a mere outward

show that displayed nothing of what they actually believed from the heart, - the Jews probably crying and muttering at the wailing wall for a Messiah that has already been rejected, and the members of the Greek Orthodox Church causing further frustration and resentment in displaying their ecclesiastical man-invented robes and crosses. As said Isaiah the prophet of the Lord, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Is this the state of affairs Elon Salmon could tolerate, with Jew and Arab accepting equal claim to the Land of Promise? Does he believe like many other professing Christians and Jews and Arabs that the earth is a temporary and probationary dwelling – a mere jumping off platform at death to some heavenly abode in the skies for their immortal souls? This does not constitute the Gospel to Abraham which leaves no room for any other Prophet than the one that replaced Moses, Jesus Christ. Judaism and Mohammedanism has no claim to the Promised Land so, as Elon Salmon says, "Therefore all subsequent rights of tenancy to this day, in any part of the land in question, derive not from divine purpose but from normal human intercourse, mainly war". While the Promised Land is no doubt in a very perplexed state and is the very nucleus from which the blessing of all nations will commence in Abraham visually when God's King, is in Zion, Psalm 2, yet this distress of nations with perplexity is universal with men's hearts failing for fear and is a sign of the near return of Jesus. Luke 21:24-28.

Paul declared in the Acts of the Apostles ch. 17 v 51 "God hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead." This is a period when the true Israel of God will be established in the Promised Land on the principle of obedience and righteousness through the blessings in Abraham and his seed of promise Jesus Christ, and not as the present State of Israel after the flesh, who rely on the carnal weapons of war rather than trust in the living God. This was the downfall of Israel in the past and the reason for their being scattered into all parts of the world and where the idolatrous practices of the various nations became a snare unto them and they were no longer one nation in the Land promised to Abraham where they were assured of blessings if they kept God's covenant. The Psalmist speaks of this rejection of God's covenant of blessing, "There shall no strange God be in thee - I am the Lord thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. But my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up to their own hearts lust: and they walked in their own counsels. Oh that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord should have submitted themselves unto him: but their time should have endured for ever." Psalm 81. As Paul declared to the Roman converts to Christ, "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery - that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, "There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins". The whole reading of this Romans chapter 11 would be very beneficial, especially for those people who regard all Jews as the seed of Abraham by natural descent, irrespective of their having been cut off and scattered because of unbelief. If they abide not still in unbelief God is able to graft them in again to the true olive tree as it were, even as the true believers of the Gentiles have been grafted in to the true olive, through Christ.

Some of the suggestions Elon Salmon makes for co-existence of Jews, Arabs, yea all Palestinians, may "be commendable if all concerned recognised and practiced the great principle involved in the first and second commandment, given to Israel which was to love God and their neighbour as themselves. Unfortunately this sort of humility and love is absent; the force of carnal warfare is all they know to secure their position. This is why I have spent my time maybe in vain, to show that God holds the Title Deeds to the Promised Land and they are not written with ink on paper, "but with the blood of Christ by the Hand of God, not in tables of stone but in fleshy tables of the heart, in the Spirit and not in the Letter. Therefore the solution is in Divine Hands and those who are genuinely of the Abrahamic faith, and are in-Christ, know that without faith it is impossible to please God, for he that cometh to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. We are told in the letter to the Hebrews of many who obtained a good report through such a faith, and they all, including Abraham, died in faith not having received the promise. God having provided some better thing for us than they without

us should not be made perfect. Hebrews chapter 11. From this last verse we should realise that those Jews who are entering the promised Land and those already there conforming to the State of Israel are there under their own volition and not as a result of God's invitation to be reconciled unto Him through Jesus Christ though some are indeed nominally Christians on a par with some who profess that name in other parts of the world. In my view they are not being gathered in readiness for the return of Christ, this would give them preference over Abraham Isaac and Jacob and their seed after the Spirit; those who believe they are now witnessing a Divine regathering of Israel to the Land of Promise may be due for a shock; God will gather them at the appointed time but it will be on the basis of the new covenant, not the old covenant which the Jews in general will only accept at the present time.

It may well happen that the State of Israel will collapse and I shall not be surprised, there are others also who think so, but I must give them more credit than the Arabs for the work of restoration and improvements they have made in the land, since being granted a mandate by Britain to consider it as a national home while in contrast the Arabs have hardly lifted a finger of effort in this direction but have been quite satisfied with the treasures of oil in the sand. Of course as there are such great numbers of Jews living in America creating wealth from all kinds of industry especially films, with no regard for morals themselves or in those who act the parts in them, the State of Israel can usually rely on America for supplies of arms through the influence of their fellow Jews. But the time is coming when the swords will have to be beaten into ploughshares and the spears into pruninghooks when nation will not lift up sword against nation neither will they lean war anymore. Isaiah chapter 2. This prophecy applies to Jews, Arabs, and all nations. This will come about through the one living mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, and not through wailing against a left-over wall of old Jerusalem, God said. "I will be sanctified in those that approach unto me and before all the people I will be glorified" - not through a wailing-wall but through the Messiah Jesus Christ who said, "I am the Way the Truth and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Jews, Arabs and all nations will have to learn and accept this when God's judgments are again active in the earth through His appointed King and those with him who are called, chosen, and faithful. As the prophet Isaiah declared, "For when thy judgments are in the earth the inhabitants thereof will learn righteousness, and the work of righteousness shall be peace and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." Thus the process will be complete as portrayed in Isaiah 49, a reading of which will prove that Abraham's God has not forsaken His Chosen seed nor the covenant He made with Abraham.

The solution for peace in Palestine and the world is certainly a Divine one, as Isaiah prophesied in chapters 11,12 and 52.

It was for the Hope of Israel, Paul was bound with a chain.

P. Parry.  
June 1986

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It is precisely because Jesus was free and His life unforfeited that He had in His own possession the price of our redemption. This is the true and only adequate explanation of the virgin birth. If Jesus' life had come from Adam via Joseph He would have been in the same poor, lost and helpless position as we. Receiving His life direct from the source and retaining His right to that life by perfect obedience, He alone of the human race had the wherewithal to redeem His brethren. Compare this with the Christadelphian teaching that His divine origin endowed Him with superior strength to overcome temptation and you may perceive how wide the gulf that separates us. It would debar Him completely from the common experience of humanity, rob Him of all honour and make the record of His bitter suffering a hollow deception."

A snippet from bro. E. Brady's writings.

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Oh the time of refreshing is coming,  
Precious promise contained in the Word,  
When the Saviour will dwell with His brethren,  
Joy and Peace shall His presence afford.

He'll remain with His father alone,  
Which was spoken by prophets and sages,  
Of the Gentiles concerning His will.  
Till the word of the Lord be fulfilled.

And if faithful to all His commands,  
He will give you a robe and a crown,  
He will welcome you into the Kingdom,  
When the time of refreshing has come

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