

## FROM EDEN TO GETHSEMANE

We admire the spirit of the Editor of "The Fraternal Visitor" in the outset of his treatment of "The Sacrifice of Christ," and sincerely acquiesce in his denunciation of self-sufficient and arrogant dogmatism; and we think he justifies himself in attributing such to the zeal of those who are opposed in religious conviction. Thus he does his critics the justice of being as sincere Godward as he. We also endorse every rule he lays down by which all of us should be guided in the prosecution of truth; besides, there is much in the article, the merit of which we cannot, meantime, see our way to do it the justice it deserves.

While therefore we grant all this, we are convinced that the Editor violates the very rules he has framed; draws deductions which are but those of his own fallible mind; and by repeated misrepresentation, which cannot otherwise than create prejudice in untrained minds, he thus creates obstacles against the faith he labours to destroy. We are, therefore satisfied that the Editor is not equal to the task he has undertaken, and we trust that he and his friends will do us the justice of scrutinising this defence as impartially as we have done his, the object being to know the will of God. Without further apology therefore we pass on to an examination of the Editor's treatment of "Adamic Condemnation."

Here he shows that "Judgment came, not merely upon Adam, but unto all men to condemnation." Regarding this point he receives a correspondence from Mr Grant, Editor of "Glad Tidings," complaining of his not being explicit enough as to whether Adam's offspring are "Condemned in him" or whether they merely suffer the consequences of being the off-spring of one who violated Divine Law. Does the Editor make himself explicit? Emphatically so, and then he reverses it. He says, "Resort to the original does not appear to help us except to disclose a kind of alliterative emphasis in Paul's words." Then he defines the terms *Krima*, and *Katakrima*. The first he shows correctly to be "Judgment," though more frequently applied to adverse judgment; whereas the second is more emphatically adverse Judgment, literally "Down Judgment," and he adds, "The translation does not seem capable of being improved." Could language be more explicit? Let us then, examine his reply to Mr Grant (and those who follow up Christadelphian thought on this question must understand that Mr Grant blankly denounces the idea of man's being individually doomed to death because of Adam's sin. See "Fraternal Visitor" July 1889, pages 210,211). Notice the reply; "It does seem a hard thing that judgment to condemnation should come upon all men because of Adam's sin." Here then, the editor is in a fix and he must resort to some means of meeting Mr Grant halfway. Observe then his modification of Paul's words he has just immediately informed us "cannot be improved." In order to remove this "hard thing" between himself and Mr Grant, he now says; "The suggestion whereby we sought to remove the difficulty is the fact that all men do evil." But this is a direct reversal of Paul's words; an attempted improvement of what he has just told us "cannot be improved." We do not covet this licence and so far as this part of his exposition is concerned, the question still remains. This double-dealing is altogether unsatisfactory, not only for the honest reader but for the very theory the Editor advocates.

Moreover did not the Editor foresee that in spite of the fact that he is exhausting his literary powers to involve Jesus "as much under the curse as His brethren," he has already given his case away? If it were a "hard thing" for man to be under condemnation because of Adam's sin, so much so that, to be at one with Mr Grant he was forced to remove the difficulty by saying man is under condemnation "because he does evil," did it not occur to the editor that his cursing of Jesus would be an equally "hard thing" on Jesus? How then does the Editor remove the difficulty in His case seeing He did no evil? Remove the difficulty! Did Paul remove the difficulty to formulate a theory of "no condemnation"? Nay, verily, read the latter half of the verse the editor omits (Romans 5:18) and Paul will be found there, as always, pointing to One whom God appointed to remove the difficulty. How did this One accomplish it? By passing through the jaws of all-devouring death for doomed man (Galatians 3:13). We pronounce the Editor's removal of the difficulty therefore a miserable failure.

But is this the only objection we have to the editor's "removal of the difficulty"? He modifies Paul's statement of man's condemnation because of Adam's sin to individual "evil-doing." But observe how he forces this evil-doing on man. He says;

“we are not born with desires to disobey for disobedience’s sake, but with desires which possess a strength out of proportion to our power of self-control.”

This eclipses Blatchford’s “Not guilty,” and furnishes Atheism with a powerful weapon against the justice of God. To hold man guilty of evil-doing as the result of his being born with desires which possess a strength out of proportion to our power of self-control is an abuse of reason which sinks the advocate far below the line of sound judgment, it cripples all energy, paralyses all effort; it blasphemes the goodness of God, impugns His wisdom and turns His mercy into gall; it changes the creature of His hand to a prone puppet, who is lashed for his inevitable movements. The impression magnetizes the man into the very obliquity he deplures, and invokes the tears and lamentations of a hypocrite; but by analytical examination it is shown to be the strongest of all delusions. Before we analyse this philosophy, let us recapitulate. First, we have man under condemnation because of Adam’s sin. But at this point the Editor found himself skating on thin ice and to come into line with Mr Grant he, ignoring the latter half of Paul’s statement, pronounced this a “hard thing,” and altered Paul’s statement by declaring man to be under condemnation because he “does evil.” Next, this evil-doing is declared to be the result of being born “with desires which possess a strength out of proportion to our power of self-control.” Reader, does this commend itself to your Judgment? Will it weigh in the balance? “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tried above that ye are able to bear, but will with the trial make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Whether in your opinion is the Editor or Paul the more vindictive of the justice of God? To-day if ye will hear His voice, make your eternal choice. We do not wish to be severe on the Editor: our aim is duty before God.

What death did Adam incur? In regard to the threat, “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,” the Editor says; “This means nothing else than what we call death.” But instead of a “Thus saith the Lord,” he submits as his strongest proof a mere dictionary definition, and as he observes that Adam did not expire for many years he next declares “Therefore the death was a spiritual and moral one.” Here again we are left a variety of choice. We ask therefore was it simple spiritual or moral death? If simple death then Jesus, in order to man’s redemption required to submit only to simple death, but as it was not possible to ransom man and escape the “flaming sword” we are very sceptical of the dictionary definition. Do not all the sacrifices, the only means of approach to God from Eden to Gethsemane, strongly predicate legal death; i.e., death by execution? Before we sift this question we would transcribe the late J.J.Andrew’s mind on the matter; in his pamphlet, “The Blood of the Covenant,” page 6, he says;

“By disobeying, they had incurred immediate death which would necessarily be death by slaying.”

Again on page 7,

“The slaying of the animals was an object-lesson in sacrifice. To teach them what? That as they had by sin incurred a violent death, a violent death was necessary to take away sin.”

Again, page 8,

“Adam was sentenced with death on the day that he sinned; but God, by an exercise of mercy, provided an animal on which was inflicted the literal death incurred by Adam. What effect had this upon Adam? He died symbolically in the death of the animal slain; but to be of any service in the absolution of death, it required to be supplemented by sacrifice of a higher order.”

Could substitution be more explicitly stated?

Lastly, page 37,

“The penalty unto sin is violent death; therefore the taking away of sin requires a violent death. Moreover it must be a violent death inflicted by God on one who is himself perfectly righteous, and these conditions can be found in Christ alone.”

This is the essence of our faith and we ask if it requires the pen of an abstruse disputer to harmonize this with the message of God? John expressly declares Jesus to be “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). Why slay Jesus if simple death merely were incurred? Paul’s testimony is “Christ

our Passover is slain for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). Shall we close our hearts to this gracious ransom God has provided which averts the blotting out of Adam and the prospective human race? What then does God require of man? Simply that he leave the service of his old master and cleave unto the Lord. But while it is true that God hath provided for, and called to the great supper, the poor, the halt, the maimed yea, many who beg to be excused - to benefit any one it is imperative there shall be an individual response. God has made an individual recognition of this fact an indispensable preliminary to our acceptance with Him. The natural existence of Adam’s sons is therefore due to this special act of mercy of the loving Father. What then is their position? They are alienated until they individually lay hold on eternal life. “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life (*zoe*) in yourselves” (John 6:44-58). Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world; but in Christ ye who were far off, are made nigh. How? In the blood of Christ (Ephesians 2;32). All are therefore under an obligation of recognizing, by symbol, that death by execution stands in the avenue of approach to God (Romans 6). If the Editor will point out one human soul, except Jesus, who could approach God ignoring this we will accept his dictionary definition.

Abel recognized this fact, but not Cain, and it is distinctly said, “God had no respect to Cain and his offering.” And we read “Cain’s countenance fell and he slew his brother.” Wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brother’s righteous (1 John 3:12). Jesus, referring to this says, “He abode not in the truth.” He must have taken a “dictionary definition” of the death unto sin. Hence no recognition by faith in the spilling of life in reciprocation of gratitude to God for His gracious ransom. Let us all avoid the way of Cain (Jude 1:11).

Before we leave the precincts of Eden we would, in the words of another, present his view of the striking scene:

“When the parents of our race, recent from their fall and conscience-smitten by the Divine rebuke, were driven from their blissful seat and filled with dismay at the threatening of death, a threatening piercing through their guilty souls, but of the nature and effects of which they could form none but the vaguest ideas. But when directed by stern authority to apply some instrument of death to the lamb which with endearing innocence had sported around them, they heard the agonising groan, beheld the appalling sight of streaming blood, the struggling agonies and life’s last throes, they gazed upon the breathless body and were told, “This is death” how stricken must they have been with horror such as no description could ever paint! When further they had to go through that other process of the sacrifice, the putting off of their own devised covering and the putting on of the robes of God, their hands reluctant, their hearts broken and all their souls crushed down by the piercing consciousness that these revolting things were the fruit of their sin.”

We think this sublime and ask, Had God delight in sacrifice? Nay. “To obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken, than the fat of rams.”

Let us then in guilty silence “Behold the Lamb of God” in dark Gethsemane and Calvary, that meek and purest Lamb that was slain for us. Was His mind torn with the racking consciousness of the Editor’s charge against Him, viz., that “He was as much under the curse as His brethren”? No such remorse nor the slightest tincture of it had place in the breast of the Holy Jesus. Separate was He, and undefiled. He suffered in such a manner as a being absolutely Holy could suffer. The echoes of that bitter and piercing cry, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” reverberate through all the chaos and din of war and in this far-off clime melt the adamant heart with the conviction that Jesus endured that accursed death for man. Shall we therefore speculate about a dictionary definition or allow any to bewitch us that we should not obey the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified before us? (Galatians 3:1).

What then is the Divine method by which the sinner can become related to that death? Every human soul must pass through that death in symbol before he can approach God. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death? Are we then still under sin? God forbid. How shall we who have died unto sin live any longer under that dominion, knowing that our old man (previous slavery) is crucified with Him, that the body of sin (sin’s previous ownership in us) might be rendered powerless (*katargethe*) that, henceforth, we should not serve sin (our old master and slave owner) (Romans 6)? This language defies man to refute the fact that the death unto sin is an accursed death which Jesus endured instead of man, just as Abraham offered the lamb in the stead of his son (Genesis 22:13).

What about natural death which has hitherto perplexed the minds of our friends and forced them to the most outrageous conclusions against Jesus? If you claim the natural death of the believer to be any part of the wages of sin you rob Christ of His redemptive work; make a mockery of God's purchase, and at once introduce fraud into the scheme of redemption by charging twice for the same thing. God paid man's debt to sin once for all when He delivered up His own Son (John 3:16). There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1-3). God is not the God of the dead. We shall not all sleep, but if the theory we are combating were true, those who are alive and remain (1 Thessalonians 4:17) could not escape death. The purpose of Jehovah is definitely stated, i.e., that He has ordained to glorify His people together (Daniel 12:13; Malachi 3:17; Ephesians 1:10; Hebrews 11:39,40). It is therefore imperative that He appoint unto men once to die (Hebrews 9:27; Psalm 116:15; Romans 14:7,8). Was not Adam a man? On the hypothesis of his obedience therefore, who is prepared to say that God was under any obligation there and then to immortalize Adam instead of laying him to rest until His Own appointed time? Go thou thy way, till the end be, thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

We have analysed the theory of Adam's constitution being death-proof and the evidence points the opposite way. Let the qualified objector examine the statement *Εστι σωμα ψυχικου*. Again, "the first man, *ἐκ γης χοικος*" (1 Corinthians 15:44- 47). The believer is therefore in the same relation legally, morally and physically as Adam was prior to rebellion. It is wholly a question of law, relation, character and possession, while the physical condition in either case remains the same. Every creation of God is good (1 Timothy 4:4). Nothing is unclean of itself (Romans 14:14). Call no man unclean.

We would now review the Editor's second chapter. His reference to Trinitarianism requires no comment, but why should he now occupy three pages reiterating and emphasizing the fact that "Jesus was a man, real human flesh and blood"? Do his brethren for whom he writes require to be established on this fact? or does not this very eagerness to establish this truth betray hopeless confusion in the Editor's own mind regarding the faith he now labours to destroy? Do we deny these Scriptures? Yea, are they not as precious to us as they are to the Editor for his very soul? He says:-

"The Scriptures lend no countenance to the idea of two kinds of human flesh. If this fact were well established in the mind it would prevent the misapprehension into which some have fallen that the life of Jesus differed from the life of other men. Very loose talk has been indulged in to the effect that Jesus was possessed of an unforfeited or free life, in contrast to the life of other men which is said to be forfeited. This is language foreign to Scripture."

We are pleased the Editor has expressed himself so fully as it enables us at once to prescribe for his perplexity. Our first duty therefore is to investigate the genealogy of this phantom; this supposed other kind of human flesh with which the Editor is scaring the people from the path of life. Let us see whether it is not this confusion regarding the real human flesh which forces the very Editor to indulge in this "very loose talk," so much so that it forces him to involve Jesus "as much under the curse as His brethren." With the Editor "free life and real human flesh" are irreconcilable opposites, but he must be informed that his inability to harmonize the two by no means nullifies the fact, much less his groundless imputation of another kind of human flesh. Is the Editor's conclusion valid? Was not Adam, prior to rebellion, real human flesh? Was he not therefore free? If therefore Adam was real human flesh and free, it is a baseless libel to charge us guilty of changing the flesh of Jesus by our pointing out that He was free! Oh, but it is supposed Adam's flesh was changed after rebellion and that his posterity, Jesus included, partook of his changed flesh. The Editor has this assumption yet to prove, instead of making it a foregone conclusion. This is what logicians call "begging the question."

First then we assure the Editor that we fervently believe in one kind of human flesh. Paul says "There is one kind of flesh of men." It is therefore our eternal conviction that Jesus appeared in this one kind. Paul also informed the Athenians that "God hath made of one blood all nations." Whether therefore they be Jews, Irish or Laplanders, they are all one in this respect. There was however a class who denied that Jesus was flesh, regarding whom it is not our present business; but the word of God is absolutely silent regarding this supposed other kind. We must therefore direct our research elsewhere.

For ages it has been taught and believed that the physical condition of our first parents was somewhat between the Angelic and the human, capable in itself of living on. (Even some of our Christadelphian friends

tell us that, if Adam had been pierced he would have felt no pain. Pity the Elohim knew not this and saved them from putting him into the deep sleep to undergo his operation). But when they rebelled it is supposed that their physical constitution was lowered from the original standard; became vile, and full of sin. It was this supposed physical change which forced the Old Lady to invent "The Immaculate Conception." Our friends acquiesce in the assumption, but part company in the Immaculate Conception and choose the opposite extreme of cursing Jesus on account of His partaking of this supposed changed flesh while the truth of God, like the water of life, winds its silver streak between these two bleak mountains of confusion till it looses itself in the Glassy Sea. We annihilate the assumption and both the Immaculate Conception and the cursing of Jesus vanish in the Great Unseen.

The above philosophism permeates Christadelphian literature. Dr Thomas profusely taught "that sin became a fixed principle in the flesh of man and that the Christ-Deity veiled Himself in flesh defiled by sin." The works of R.Roberts are saturated with it, that "it ran in the blood." The works of J.J.Andrew are brimful and running over "that a change took place in Adam's physical constitution and that his posterity has inherited his nature after that change was effected." The Editor follows suit and makes that assumption his criterion and, like his teachers, declares that "regarding physical condition Jesus was as much under the curse as His brethren." These facts disclose to the Editor what Nathan's parable did to David - "Thou art the man." The Editor is therefore guilty of the crime he condemns, viz., A propagator of this theory of another kind, or changed human flesh.

In this connection the Editor calls forth the term mortal to his aid, but as this term is not universally understood, we ask for the sake of his readers if the term mortal predicates another kind of flesh? If so, define the term corruptible and explain the physical difference. The leaders of the people cause them to err. Why not be candid and say there is no physical difference, but differently related to law? Suppose the editor commits murder while his friend and well-wisher A.L.W. avoids this calamity; the sentence is just but has this sentence produced another kind of flesh? Has the Editor's flesh become in any way different from that of his friend A.L.W? Let all avoid this delusion. A mighty change has undoubtedly taken place but not in the physical; it is in the Editor's altered relation to law. Reconciliation to God consists not in the putting away of any physical defect but in the answer of a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21). We therefore challenge the editor to point out to his readers, in unambiguous terms where Jesus stood in a relation cursed by law.

How then is the term free life used amongst us? In spite of the editor's abuse to make it another kind he confirms us the more of his own confusion. Logicians call this blunder "the fallacy of accident." The accidental circumstances of free or not free cannot alter the nature of a thing. Life in the abstract is all one. Not only man but animated creation possess one *Ruach*. Did not Adam derive his life direct from God? Was he not therefore free? But rebelled and forfeited his life to the law. Jesus also derived His life direct from God. Did He ever rebel? Nay. In this respect He was rich, but for our sakes he became poor that we through His poverty might become rich.

But the Editor says forfeited and free life is "language foreign to Scripture." We shall prove both out of the mouth of the Lord Jesus: "What shall it profit a man if he gain he whole world and should forfeit the life of himself (ζημιωθή τήν ψυχήν αυτού) ?" Is there a living soul who will deny this? Does the Editor's assertion commend itself? This forfeiture of life is therefore a phrase of the Lord Jesus. Is the Editor any more reliable in is denial of "free"? In regard to the redemption money (Exodus 30:11-16; Matthew 17:27). Jesus, alluding to Himself, informed Peter "Then are the sons free, exempt ἐλεύθέρωσή)." The reader's duty is therefore to choose between the words of the Lord Jesus and those of the Editor. Paul says:-

"The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free" (Romans 8:2). If his law was in Jesus is it not very loose talk to say He was at the same time "as much under the curse as His brethren"?

We would now examine the Editor's handling of Romans 8:3. Despite his admission that it should be "sin's flesh," he afterwards confounds it. We have no dispute as to the term "likeness" indicating different flesh, the distinction Paul eternally settles is in the possessive case - different ownership. Now the grammar of the sentence requiring the term 'likeness' demands a distinction between Jesus, the Son of God, and the sons of sin, otherwise the term is superfluous. God sent His own Son, His own property, His own flesh, in the likeness of sin's sons, sin's property, sin's flesh. The distinction is therefore in the ownership, not in the physical constitution. Well then, as the Editor admits, sin here is personified and spoken of as a ruler and

possessor. It will not do therefore to confound the ownership and say, as the editor says, that Jesus was sin's flesh when this very Scripture opens by declaring Jesus to be God's. But the Editor has another object to subserve, viz., to involve Jesus as much under the curse as His brethren and he must give colour to it even at the expense of grammar. Then he says:

“we would hesitate to say that the flesh of Jesus was sinful, because Jesus never sinned.”

Will the Editor therefore inform his readers on what grounds he involves Jesus under the curse? We would hesitate to say the flesh of Judas was sinful because it is absurd. It is character that becomes sinful not flesh.

“Was Jesus under the Adamic curse?” While the Editor still holds the affirmative to his question he now objects to it in its present form. We object to the unscriptural absurdity in any form. Could anyone under the curse redeem himself, to say nothing of others left to wriggle through without payment? The Editor points to his moral relation. But by morality or works of law shall no flesh be justified. Why? Because there was no law given to make alive (ζωοποιῆσαι), the first requisite before anyone is in a position to observe law. Jesus must therefore come in this alive condition. How could this be? God as His Father and His subsequent morality enabled Him to retain that condition. This scripture alone might convince the Editor that he claims for morality a power it does not possess: “I was cast upon Thee from the womb. Thou art my God from my mother's belly.” Is Jesus capable of morality at this moment? Will the Editor say this is not an alive condition? This morality argument swamps its advocates under the Divine rebuke for ignoring the fact that this alive condition is the free gift of God, attainable only through Christ. Paul emphatically denounces the idea, “If righteousness come by law, then Christ died in vain.” If therefore language is to be relied upon the editor's theory of involving Jesus under the curse is doomed. Jesus must therefore come in this alive condition and His subsequent morality enabled Him to retain it. This is precisely wherein Adam failed.

Well then the editor sees that it is too glaring to state in an honest, indicative proposition “That Jesus was under the Adamic curse” and he must now clothe it in modified verbose. It is interesting to observe the editor's skill in touching up this time-honoured blunder until he arrays Jesus in a garb as unbecoming as the former. He now tells us that “as regards physical condition, Jesus was as much under the curse as His brethren, but as regards His moral relation to the Father He was under no curse whatever.” This paralyses the law of contradiction. This leap from the concrete physical condition to the abstract moral relation enables the editor to violate the fundamental laws of thought by which the unthinking are talked over. God's message is absolutely silent regarding an abstract Christ. Did Jesus sacrifice His moral relation for us? This had nullified His power over the grave. Well then if you curse His physical condition will it improve matters? Would not a cursed sacrifice pollute the table of the Lord? (Malachi 1:12,13; Hebrews 10:29). Did Jesus say “This is my cursed body which is given for you”? O Editor, abandon that cursed calumny and accept Jesus as the Gift of God, and Price of our redemption. Has it not yet dawned on you that all this “very loose talk” against the Holy One of God is the result of changing the flesh of Adam after rebellion and introducing, contrary to God's word, another kind of human flesh. This assumption forces the most outrageous deduction ever drawn from Holy Writ. There is one kind of flesh of men (1 Corinthians 15:39). Change not the flesh of Adam therefore and you will be rescued from this unscriptural cursing of Jesus and saved from the sham gloss of an abstract Christ. Then there will be no double-dealing when you say “as regards His moral relation to the Father He was under no curse whatever.” He was not in the position of guilty man, who is outside the Garden of Eden and can approach the Father only with a petition for forgiveness. His relation to the Father was not that of one alienated from Him as was Adam and all his descendants. He was from the beginning Holy (Luke 1:35), “a beloved Son in whom the Father was well pleased.” When Jesus, as an entire person is taken as the nominative of each of these propositions, the truth of God shines forth in meridian splendour; but make the editor's abstract moral relation the nominative and the sham gloss and subtle double-dealing appears in all the unwashed nakedness of its birth.

The third chapter is also a strange mixture. Here the Editor admits that physically and morally, Jesus was absolutely sinless, and he reproves his own school for coining and applying to Jesus such unscriptural terms as “constitutional sinner,” etc., and points out that

“The apostles do not draw a theoretical distinction between Christ's character and Christ's constitution.”

This is all we contend for provided the logical issue be not confounded. From the Editor's own pen therefore we ask, if Jesus was physically and morally sinless was He not therefore free from every curse? What more of Jesus is left for the Editor to curse? But as he has hired himself to involve Jesus he must brush aside these contradictions and resort to some means by which to include Jesus. Does he succeed? Please pay attention. He says:-

“As regards physical condition, Jesus was as much under the curse as His brethren; but as regards moral relation, He was under no curse whatever.”

Here then the very Editor, before his theory of cursing Jesus will work out, is forced to draw “A theoretical distinction between Christ's character and Christ's constitution,” the very thing he declares “the Apostles did not do,” and for which he condemns his own brethren as he says this is the direct cause of their coining such unscriptural terms against Jesus. Is any special mental alertness necessary to detect this very loose talk? Paul says “No man, speaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jesus accursed.” The Editor says “He was as much under the curse as His brethren.” Reader, think for yourself.

Next:

“The will of God was not accomplished short of the Crucifixion.”

Precisely so, but we would point out, exclusively on the sinner's account. The Editor declares that;

“There was no stage before His death concerning which the Scripture warrants us in saying at this point He had established His title to eternal life.”

We would contrast that utterance with the words of the Lord Jesus, viz., “The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified” (John 12:24). But the Master shows that if this had taken place without His dying He would have remained alone.

“Verily I say unto thee, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

Glorious metaphor of Jesus! God is the Farmer. Jesus is His Grain of Wheat which He sowed in the earth before a crop could be raised. But that other lord is still sowing tares. Let us desist therefore from handing him out the seed by declaring Jesus to be under the curse and sin's possession. Let us discriminate between the wheat and the tares; between the Seed of God and the serpent's seed.

But we would point out to the editor that Hebrews 9:12 also declares that Jesus prior to His death had earned His title to immortality. The Editor shows that the Greek verb here is in the middle voice and is equal to “having got Him” eternal deliverance. This is accurate, but it is not enough. The English grammarian also terms this “a nominative absolute,” which proves beyond dispute that Jesus, prior to His death, had earned His title. It does not say that He entered the Holiest by His own blood and obtained, etc., but that He entered the Holiest by His own blood having obtained eternal deliverance. The tense of this nominative absolute shows that the obtaining preceded the entering - e.g. James, having obtained a revolver, shot the lion. The obtaining of the revolver precedes the shooting of the lion. So Jesus entered the Holiest by His own blood previously having obtained His title to Glorification, directly on account of which God anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows (Hebrews 1:9).

Adam, before he could live eternally, needed deliverance (not redemption) from the natural condition, but he failed to establish his title: the second, by obedience, established His title (John 12:24; Hebrews 1:9). The latter, before accepting His merited prize, in Divine Love voluntarily went through the jaws of all-devouring death for doomed man (John 10:18). Breathes not the man who will prove Jesus under the curse.

We now approach substitution against which the Editor feels it his duty to “argue as strongly as he may.” As this is our settled conviction - yea, the anchor of our soul by day and our song in the night - we trembled in terror of logical martyrdom; but instead what did we find? A theory of the Atonement which we ourselves consider the utmost possible reversal of fact. The Editor's argument is therefore reduced to an “Ignoratio Elenchi.” If God be represented as demanding of man the utmost satisfaction of justice without which He is

declared to be either unable or unwilling to forgive, and another pays to God that demand for man, we thoroughly agree with the Editor that this would reduce forgiveness to a mockery. But why did not the Editor put forth the order of redemption, even in the words of the late Dr Thomas, which order we scrupulously endorse? Did he, the Editor, imagine that by bolstering up a false theory and then exhibiting a magnificent display in scattering it to the four winds of Heaven, that therefore he had dispensed with substitution? Deduction from false premises may satiate the cravings of a biased mind but is lamentably deficient to nullify eternal fact. It is imperative therefore to re-cast the very premises and disentangle from this utter confusion the Divine order of redemption. In so doing we deem it unnecessary to alter even one word of the late Dr Thomas, viz.:-

“Redemption means to buy back, hence it is release for a ransom. All who become God’s servants are therefore released from a former Lord by purchase. The Purchaser is God, and the price or ransom is the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:18,19).

The poorest reasoner will now see that it is not God, but this other lord, this sin power, which demands the utmost farthing. What a lamentable deception it is therefore to deny substitution by grossly inverting the Divine order and falsely representing God as the creditor, when it is the Gracious God who condescends to pay the bankrupt sinner’s account! O Editor! It is not until the ungrateful sinner insults this Divine Goodness that God takes action against him in demanding it of him (Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:28,31). “Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Corinthians 5:11).

The Editor attempts to meet this by saying,

“The matter is scarcely bettered if the advocate should reply, ‘Oh yes, there is forgiveness with God because He has provided the One who pays the debt.’ If God has only paid Himself, and arranged for an apparent satisfaction of Divine Justice.”

We pronounce this idea unadulterated absurdity. The editor is truly combating a false theory which, like a curl of mist floats betwixt his mind and his pen and distorts the real contention to his eye, giving it an imaginary shape and colour while he continues vigorously beating the air and deluding himself that he is doing the work of the Lord. Do we teach that God gave Jesus to die to pay Himself? What are the facts? The death that He died, He died unto sin once (Romans 6). Does this accord with the Editor’s gross imputation of God paying Himself? Our eternal conviction is that it is God who gave Jesus to die unto sin and thereby rendered that government all it could demand from man. We are therefore as Dr Thomas says, released from that former Lord by God’s purchase. To put into our mouth the idea of “God paying Himself by an apparent satisfaction of justice,” is a most unscrupulous misrepresentation. Then the Editor asks,

“Is the debt paid?” And adds,

“If it is, it is not forgiven.”

No argument is more easily refuted than this. The blunder here consists in arguing on the assumption that the debt is paid to God. If this were so the Editor’s argument would be sound, but when it is proved that God is the Purchaser who gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16), and redeemed man from the government of sin, then God’s payment and His forgiveness gloriously harmonize in a manner hitherto undreamt of by the Editor. “Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other” (Psalm 85:10). We are bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20). Let us therefore compare this glorious scheme of redemption with the Editor’s theory of involving Jesus “under the curse, and sin’s possession.” Will this accord with the rectitude of the Government of God? Does God redeem man from sin by paying a price already sin’s possession? Here then is the secret of the Editor’s denial of substitution.

“Why did Christ die?” This question has hitherto been answered by our friends by a wearisome disquisition on “Diabolos Flesh,” which concluded that Jesus must be executed in order to be cleansed from His own physical sin, like all man-made creeds which require a periodical patch-up. The reason why God chose the death of Jesus is now considered an unfathomable mystery. The Editor says “It appears to us that God has not formally explained His reasons for the choice of this way rather than any other.” And he adds, “If this be so, the craving to fathom those reasons savours somewhat of presumption.” This philosophy would at once obstruct the narrow path and involve in intricacy the common salvation, and discourage the Holy aim

of knowing nothing amongst ourselves save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Has God not formally declared, Jesus, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man? Why? Because “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Was it possible therefore to save the sinner from death unless Christ died on account of our sins, according to the Scriptures? (1 Corinthians 15). Jesus prayed; “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” The Editor had soon dispensed with this. He says “If God had chosen to forgive sin without a sin-offering, it would involve no reflection upon His attributes.” Let us avoid this speculative presumption, this tampering with the immutability of the counsel of God and hear the Master;

“O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things before entering into his glory?”

Does He formally explain why? - “That remission of sin should be preached in His name” (Luke 24:25, 26). Let us therefore “crave to fathom those reasons.” Let us with all our getting, get understanding and so qualify ourselves “rightly to divide the word of truth.”

Then the Editor remarks that crucifixion is not natural death, and admits that “Jesus was not by nature related to this.” This is all we contend for, but when with his next breath he declares “This was made the avenue of His own deliverance,” etc., then confusion sets in. If this were the avenue of His own deliverance then He would be irrevocably related to it. The first proposition is truth; the second is a polished form of the old delusion “that He had to be executed to be cleansed from His own physical curse”! If crucifixion were the avenue of His own deliverance would sacrifice be the proper term to use? Thus the Sacrifice of Christ is robbed of all its glory.

But the Editor says “It is not affirmed anywhere that He died in our stead.” The Master Himself refutes this; “The Son of man came,... and to give His life a ransom in place of (anti) many.” No Greek professor will deny this. What then is the result? What the purpose? That we might live and not perish. Do the redeemed perish? Jesus says, “They shall never perish.” Do the unredeemed perish? God says, “They shall perish forever like their own dung.” The life of Jesus is therefore instead of ours, as the Master declares. The redemption of their souls is precious, and it ceaseth forever.

“He poureth out His soul unto death” (Isaiah 53). But the Editor says, “There could be no vindication of justice in it” and adds, “If there could, it would only avail for one man.” Jesus says, “It is a ransom for many.” The righteous Government of God is that, if one involved all, the other will extricate all who accept the sin-covering Name (Romans 5).

But a slur is attempted if a righteous one is punished. Had Jesus been forced to this against His own consent, the slur might work but Jesus, knowing it was imperative for the redemption of man, in Divine Love, voluntarily endured the chastisement of our peace. If therefore the chastisement of our peace was upon Him by whose stripes we are healed, does the Editor possess the logic that will refute substitution here? Make this “the avenue of His own deliverance from any curse,” and you blot the sacrifice of Christ. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life (for Himself?). O Editor! examine the words of Christ - “for his friends,” When Jesus disclosed this fact to His disciples, Peter, like the Editor, seeing no justice in it, rebuked the Master who replied, “Get thee behind me Satan: thou regardest not the things of God, but those of men” (Matthew 16:23). But when Peter grasped the fact that life could be purchased with neither silver nor gold, and that the blood of bulls and goats could not avail, he concluded that a Substitute could alone be provided by God. When he realised that the government of sin knew no forgiveness, it was then he beheld “the Lamb of God” (1 Peter 1:19), Who suffered for sin, the just for the unjust (1 Peter 3:18).

The Editor informs us that the life is in the blood. We have never disputed that fact, but we dispute that that fact involves Jesus under the curse. Adam’s life was in Mary’s blood, but we deny that that was the life of Jesus. Here is the pith of the whole dispute. Adam and Jesus were the direct sons of one Father. It is therefore gross absurdity to speak of one son being the father of the other Son. This is not a different kind of life as the Editor grossly imputes. It is the same kind, from the same fountain, but fresh from that fountain. The Almighty put the life of Adam into his blood when He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; but he forfeited that life by sin (Matthew 16:26; Romans 5). If therefore Jesus derived His life from Adam, all is blank. Before the Editor can involve Jesus under the curse he must first produce evidence that Joseph was the father of Jesus or prove one instance in animated nature of the female supplying the germ of life. Jesus says, “I proceeded forth and came from God. Why do ye not understand my speech?” We say the Editor would be

a wise man to give it up. Upon this Divine Germ of life was built up the Holy Child, Jesus (Luke 1:35). Though tried in all points like as we are, we are struck with wonder and admiration that by obedience to His Father's will; He defies every allurements which would, if yielded to, have ended in transgression and death. He utterly suppressed the will of the flesh in obedience to the will of Him who sent Him. The only Heir therefore of all things is Jesus. This right comes of His being God's Son, a claim denied of the highest angel. While therefore we behold Him serving we must not forget that He is Lord of all. Make this One the possession of sin and you present a future of blackness, darkness, oblivion; but when by the word of truth we accept Him as the Seed of God then at once is disclosed to us the root of the Tree of Life - "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Make these the words of One "as much under the curse as His brethren" and you outrage the Royalty of the Heavens. Truly the life is in the blood, and as truly did God give that life upon the altar to make an atonement for our souls, and as truly did Jesus pour out that soul unto death (Isaiah 53), a ransom (anti) in place of many (Matthew 20:28).

Has God not formally declared why He made His (Jesus') soul an offering for sin? Shall we analyse John 3:16? "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Why? What is His adverbial of reason? "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Will the Editor then point out any other way by which any human soul can be saved? O for The Nazarene Fellowship where alone all of us can be satiated in the embrace of Him whose banner over us is Love.

In chapter 5 the Editor resumes his refutation of a theory as repulsive to us as it is to him. No argument could therefore betray more lamentable confusion. Instead of refuting a theory which represents God as demanding a debt from man and another paying man's debt to God by which man could claim release from God, let the Editor attempt the refutation of our actual faith instead of this gross inversion of the Divine order. Our conviction is that it is the gracious God who condescends to pay the bankrupt sinner's account; that the lifeblood of His own Son is the ransom claimed by the government of sin for the release of Adam and his family; that an individual recognition of this fact by the symbol of Christ's death is an indispensable preliminary to our acceptance with God. Those who spurn this remain under the dominion of sin. We are therefore forced to reject the theory which involves Jesus under the curse and sin's possession, as this would reduce God's scheme of redemption to a fraudulent transaction by swindling the redemption of man by delivering up to sin One who, the Editor dogmatically declares, was already sin's possession. We know the secret of his denial of substitution and rejection of redemption by a price.

The Editor next puts forth the death of believers as the strongest refutation of Substitution. He says, "If Christ died in our stead then we ought to be exempt." We refute that proposition by inverting it. If Jesus did not die in the stead of Adam and the prospective human race, not one human soul ought to have lived. Do believers still die the death unto sin? This is the dying echo of the delusion of twenty years ago, viz., "That the believer still dies under Adamic condemnation." The believer died the death unto sin in symbol when baptised into the sacrificial death of Christ (Romans 6:4). There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ (Romans 8:1). God is not the God of the dead. They are not dead but asleep in Christ. The Editor's argument here is based on the assumption that if Adam had proved faithful, God was under an obligation there and then to glorify Adam. We challenge the Editor to prove from Scripture that Adam even though obedient would not have slept. We ask the Editor therefore to distinguish between natural death and the death unto sin. The late J.J. Andrew was far in advance of the Editor on this score. In his pamphlet "The Blood of the Covenant," page 31 he asks "Is their death necessary? And he answers,

"No, otherwise the last generation of those under the law of the spirit of life could not escape the grave. If, as taught by the Apostasy, the place of reward had always been ready...the faithful would never enter the grave and the unfaithful would not die until condemned by the Judge. But inasmuch as the place of reward is not fully prepared... and as the faithful are all to be glorified together... they simply fall asleep in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:18).

See also his remarks on Enoch, page 10. We are not therefore contending that Jesus died to prevent His people from falling asleep but that He died the death unto sin to exempt us that we might live. The existence of the human race to-day is the evidence. So Paul judged that

"if One died for all then all died, that those who live might not live unto themselves but unto him who died for them and rose again."

But the Editor, failing to discriminate between the accursed death unto sin and the natural death of believers, thinks natural death should open our eyes to the fact that when we read “for us,” it does not mean “instead of us,” as also implying, “That Jesus would not otherwise have died through the operation of His own mortality.” We have already proved that both Jesus and Paul declare that the life of Jesus was a ransom in place of ours (Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6). Not to prevent our falling asleep, but our perishing. But what authority has the Editor for the assumption “That Jesus would otherwise have died through the operation of His own mortality”? Scripture clearly confounds this idea; not that He possessed either a different kind of flesh or life as grossly imputed, but that the purpose of God in Him was mature. Except for the redemption of man there was no cause that He should die. It was not possible that His Holy One should see corruption (Psalm 16:10). He loved righteousness and hated iniquity. His just reward therefore was “length of days, that for evermore He should live.” “The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified” (John 12:24). “But except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone.” Those who involve Jesus under the curse are forced to ignore these gracious words.

Then we are told that a soldier dying for his country does not die instead of it. This is an anticlimax the most inglorious to which we have yet seen the Sacrifice of Christ reduced. Does a soldier purposely die for his country? Or does his death benefit his country one iota? What a simile! Let us compare notes. Was not Jesus sent of God purposely to die for man? (Acts 2:23; 3:18; 4:28). On the assumption therefore that Jesus had not died what about His country? Shall we trample in the dust the Spirit’s reply? “Ye know nothing at all nor deem it expedient that one man should die for the people.” Why? “That the whole nation perish not” (John 11:50).

But the Editor says “Substitution is clearly forbidden by the specific teaching of the Apostles.” We are eager to see that specific teaching. Where is it? The editor says “Peter, who tells us that Christ suffered for us makes clear that in doing so He left us an example that we should follow in His steps.” If this were the avenue of His own deliverance (which the Editor must first prove) then we grant that Substitution falls to the ground, but one little question will clear matters. Are the unredeemed permitted to follow in His steps? Now you see the confusion. Redemption is therefore imperative before we can take the first step. Shall we therefore ignore this prerequisite counsel of God by skipping redemption and rushing into the Holy of Holies without even wiping our boots? At this point even Mr Grant leaves the Editor far behind. He says “Every follower of Christ has his part to do; but he must first be put into a right relation before God.” Let us therefore prosecute the Divine philosophy of this redemption, this right relation. Let us see whether God has not bought us to Himself on His own Divine principle of substitution? What does this very Peter declare? “Christ hath also suffered for sins, the just for the unjust.” Why, Peter? “That He might bring us to God.” What then is our duty at this stage? Shall we continue in sin that this grace might abound? Nay, O man, it is only at this stage our part, our following in His steps begins. Does our following in His steps then procure for us, or contribute anything towards this previous redemption? O Editor! This would rob Christ of His redemptive work. What then is the benefit of our following in His steps? O Editor! It enables us to retain that liberty with which Christ hath made us free. We therefore submit that Peter could not more specifically declare substitution.

But the Editor says, “Clearly if Christ’s death was the out and out discharge of our debt for us, it should not be necessary for us to be joined with Him in that death.” The Editor’s fallacy here lurks in the double use of the term Death; but another little question will cure it. Do we require, as Christ required, to be subjected to literal crucifixion? Again you see the blunder. The Editor uses two totally distinct things as if they were identical and of equal legal value, viz., Christ’s literal crucifixion with Paul’s symbol of it, thus confounding the literal with the figurative. It is therefore a destructive argument to deny substitution by trying to make it appear that we go through identically what Christ went through, when on examination we find that the symbol is all that is required at our hands. Could more irrefutable testimony for substitution be produced? Will the editor then dare to follow in His steps until he recognize that Christ’s death is the out and out discharge of his debt? The New Wine would burst the Old Bottle.

Again he says, “If we are amenable to go to prison and another goes in our stead, we do not go with him.” Now the Editor has laboured all through to refute substitution or redemption by a price by forgiveness, deeming the two antagonistic; but we have proved that God is not the Creditor or Slave-owner as he supposed us to teach, therefore substitution and forgiveness are both from the One Divine source. As Mr Grant says, “God offers the reconciliation and provides the means.” On the Editor’s own theory of forgiveness therefore we would point out that when a criminal at a court of law is forgiven, neither does he go to prison. This weapon cuts equally well both ways because if it sever substitution it sweeps forgiveness with it. Moreover

the Editor does not put his forgiven criminal in prison till he dies, whereas the records declare that the sons of Adam are born in prison.

We now approach the editor's sixth and last chapter. With few exceptions it is the expression of our eternally settled conviction. We challenge the reader to examine our works and expose us to the world if we have not strenuously fought against the theory which represents the death of Christ as a payment to God to turn Him into a disposition of calmness, kindness and grace. We have striven to prove that the Adorable God is from eternity and in all the glorious constancy of His nature, gracious and merciful; that He requires no extraneous motive to induce Him to pity, to relieve our miserable world. We scrupulously maintain that the death of Christ is no ransom paid to God for man's deliverance but a ransom paid by God to the Government of sin for the release of man. We were sold under sin.

Now the Editor so far admits this. His words are - "The ransom is not a price paid to God, but a ransom which God pays for man." We must therefore reject the Editor's theory of involving Jesus under the curse and sin's possession. Also his making the accursed death the avenue of Christ's own deliverance. God did not redeem us with a confiscated coin. Well the Editor knows that such procedure could not preserve inviolate the Wisdom, Holiness and Justice of the Eternal Sovereign. Well he knows that such could not maintain in untarnished lustre His Rectorial Honour and show His Law to be supremely just and good. Hence all the Divine declarations regarding a ransom being paid are said to be figurative.

Did the Redeemed sing, "Thou wast slain for Thyself and hast figuratively redeemed us to God by Thy blood"? No such jarring, discordant notes shall be heard in that song. Remove the unscriptural theorising and even submit to the world that the very keynote of that song is substitution.

"I came to give my life a ransom (anti) in place of many" (Matthew 20:28). "I lay down my life for the sheep."

Andrew Wilson.