

The Christadelphian Lamp

“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” - Ps. cxix., 105.

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“Christ had no sins of His own to expiate. He is, both by the prophets and the apostles, declared to be sinless. His expiation therefore was only for His house. Some writers say that the high priest made three distinct offerings on that day, one for Himself; the second for the other priests, upon the bullock; and the third for all Israel, upon the scape-goat.

The prayers of holy men mentioned in the Bible, are remarkable for their full and frequent confession of sins; both their own and those of their nation, but in all that we read concerning the prayers of Christ, nothing of the kind appears. The obvious reason is that He had nothing to confess.

“For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

Habakkuk 2:14.

A TREATISE ON THE TWO SONS OF GOD.

(Continued from March, Page 8)

THE GREAT DAY OF ATONEMENT.

CHAPTER II. - The Great Day of Atonement. - The Tabernacle of Witness. - The Sanctuary. – The Candlestick, the Table, and the Shew Bread. – The Second Veil. - The Holy of Holies. - Burnt Sacrifice. - The High Priest’s Offering. - The Two Goats.

AMONG the advantages, specified by Paul, which the Jews had over the Gentiles were, “the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises.” These gifts enabled the intelligent and faithful of that generation, contemporary with the preaching of Christ and His Apostles, to apprehend with greater facility the meaning of Christ’s mission. They had, as Paul says in another place, “the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law.” The devoutly studious would, after these lessons in outline, so to speak, more readily fill in the rest of the picture, while the Gentiles must needs be taught the very first forms and figures of the truth.

Multifarious as were the Jewish rites, the whole system rested on several principal ordinances, the most striking probably of all was the national sin-offering, on the tenth day of their seventh month. The lines of this shadow must be distinct even to the minds of those students of Moses who never saw the ceremonies of that great day of blood. But to such as had witnessed the offerings, the solemn pomp, and joy of that day, and then recognised, as did those three thousand Jews on the day of Pentecost, that in Jesus all was fulfilled, the remembrance of the shadowy rite must have returned with an effect not easy to describe by words.

One grand mistake was rectified on that day. The Jews had esteemed the offerings of the Day of Atonement sufficient for the accomplishment of the object to which they only pointed, namely, the forgiveness of sin. The great obstacle, therefore, in the way of their receiving a crucified Messiah made it nationally well-nigh impossible for them to accept Jesus.

In the eye of the nation every part of the decree from Sinai was perfect; it was no type or herald of better things; but complete and final. The result was that the harshest ideas were formed of remission of sins by human sacrifice, and, above all, by such a sacrifice consisting of God’s well-beloved Son.

This particular trait of Jewish thought seems to be continued to the present day by the followers of Socinus, to whom nothing appears more objectionable than the slaying of a good son to put away the trespass of all those who by “one offence were made sinners.” And it is remarkable that none have been under so much necessity to depart from the universally acknowledged canon of Scripture as they. Like as with the Jews, prophecy must be mutilated, and much of the New Testament, if not all, as with the Jews, is rejected.

The one idea that remains is God. He, as a kind Father, naturally inspires brotherly kindness among His children; and out of this thought flow excellent lessons of morality. Beyond this, nothing is safe or desirable. The idea of an after existence, in or out of the body, of any forms of worship, of approaching God through His Son as a mediator; all these things are discarded, or at least held lightly, as matters of theological speculation, attended with little or no profit.

But with respect to the things enacted aforetime, we find pleasure in regarding them as written for our learning.

THE TABERNACLE OF WITNESS.

This construction of boards, curtains, and skins, is the first place of abode occupied by the Eternal Spirit among men. Here Jehovah may be said to have walked and dwelt upon the earth. His residence, however, was only temporary, and, as we gather from other portions of the Word, typical of an eternal dwelling among the glorified sons of Adam. “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.” Rev. xxi. 3.

Viewing the tabernacle as the dwelling place of the Almighty, it seems to resemble an ordinary house, being furnished with food, drink, light and other things, in which those permitted to abide with Him were also allowed to share. This idea seems to bring God near to man, to create a kind of equality and friendship: that sort of equality and friendship which subsists betwixt a father and his children. It is

productive of love rather than of fear; of affection and trust rather than of awe and dread. This is the spirit of the relationship seen betwixt Jesus and His Father when Jesus was on earth; it is also exactly the spirit of that relationship which He so beautifully illustrated in His parables. If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give good things unto them that ask Him?

It was the Jewish nation, says Dean Stanhope, that God intended the tabernacle for, as an emblem of the whole world; the outward representing the earth and sea, the inward heaven; the former as sensible and familiar; the latter invisible and as yet inaccessible to us. Whence some have thought the title, "a worldly sanctuary," to have been given to it here.

THE SANCTUARY.

This is the name given by Paul to the holy place, or first enclosure. The veil which divided this compartment from the other the apostle styles "the second veil," because there was another veil which formed the entrance from the court to the Holy. The priests went regularly into this for the performance of worship; but beyond the second veil none but the high priest were permitted to pass, and only he once a year, that is, on the great Day of Atonement.

It is not, however, to be understood that the high priest entered the holiest of all only once on that day; his duties required him to go in several times. The once refers not to the number of times he went in, but to the one day on which he was to enter. He first entered with a censer of burning coals, and his hands full of sweet incense: the incense he placed upon the fire so that when the cloud of smoke rose up it covered the mercy-seat. He then took some of the blood of the bullock slain outside, and sprinkled it seven times before the mercy-seat, besides putting some of it upon the mercy-seat. He then went out to kill the goat, and afterwards came in again to do likewise with his blood. Lev. xvi. 12 - 15.

Paul says this "was a figure for the time then present." We naturally ask, "A figure of what?" And the answer will come just as readily as the question." "A figure of Christ's house." Moses and his house were typical of Christ and His house, "whose house are we if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end."

It is to be observed that the things which constituted this great "figure" were no figure at all before they were sanctified. When the workmen had finished them, and all was ready, no worship could be performed until the whole had been judicially cleansed. After this ceremony the whole was legally clean, whereas before, it was legally unclean. These types were no more such, no more fit for divine use before cleansing, than mankind at large are fit to be styled Christ's house, not having been purged with His blood. The important conclusion which follows from these things is, that all the shadows of Moses' house foretold, that He who was the substance thereof was to be "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners."

THE CANDLESTICK, THE TABLE, AND THE SHEW BREAD.

These are the principal things which belonged to the Sanctuary. Looking upon the tabernacle as a house, the articles enumerated by Paul are consistent with that idea.

There can be but one idea attached to a candlestick, namely, that of giving light. Not that God needed any light in His dwelling; but that those who were to approach Him, and to dwell with Him could only do so by means of light, and that of His own ordaining. It may be profitably observed that the oil burnt was "pure olive."

The greatest care is taken as to the purity and perfection of all that entered into that house, which Paul has taught us to look upon as "a shadow of good things to come." Jesus declared Himself to be the true Light. He is also represented as standing in the midst of the Seven Churches of Asia, symbolized by seven candlesticks. And those who walk in His steps are said to walk in the light.

The table set with unleavened bread is suggestive of regular meals. Ordinary bread is said to be the staff of life; and the teaching of Paul clearly shews that this Mosaic shew bread was figurative of a perpetual subsistence, or feast upon "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." It is also indicative of the presence of God, being called the bread of presence.

Christ answers to this unleavened bread; in whom there was no leaven of sin; and in whom the Father was ever present by His Spirit. The Father dwelt both in shadow and substance, in a clean, or holy place. "I and my Father are one: I in Him, and He in me." Under Moses, all must be cleansed before they were allowed to be partakers; under Christ, all must be made "clean through the word" before they are allowed

to be partakers of Him in a spiritual or figurative sense. This idea of cleanness cannot be too strongly insisted upon, for we find it runs through every detail of the typical economy.

THE SECOND VEIL.

We have inspired authority for the belief that the veil was a type of Christ's body, that is to say, His flesh. Once a year the high priest removed the veil in order to carry fire, incense, and blood up to the mercy-seat, to present them before Jehovah. But after this the veil returned again to its original position, shrouding the glory of God.

All this, Paul declares, was intended by the Holy Spirit to signify that "the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing." As a confirmation of the truth of this, when the body of Christ was pierced with the Roman spear and torn with the nails, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom."

The way of approach to the Divine presence was not merely by passing from one side of the curtain to the other, it was by blood. Without blood there was no admission, therefore the blood was accounted to be the way. Aaron carried the blood of the bullock and the goat in a basin to sprinkle it upon and before the ark. But when this was done the victims were dead. Upon this circumstance the apostle makes an important observation. He points out that, in drawing nigh to God "by the blood of Jesus," we approached "by a newly slain yet living way."

Here is the superiority of the substance to the shadow. The typical victim by which Israel, after the flesh, entered the Holy of Holies was dead; the victim by which Israel, after the spirit, entered the holiest of all, was living. If, however, a rigidly exact counterpart were looked for it would make Christ no better than the Mosaic way. Moreover, the high priest took the blood of the victim into the Holy of Holies, but Jesus did not take His blood there; He entered by means of His own blood.

Doctor Thomas has said in his writings that, "save the drops which bedewed the soil of Palestine, Jesus took with Him His blood to heaven." This mistake the Doctor afterwards saw. Such a position is equivalent to asserting that Jesus entered heaven a perishable man, and it serves to shew the enormous error into which literal fulfilment of every part of a type sometimes leads.

This remark will apply with equal force to that interpretation of the veil which professes to find in the material body of Jesus the anti-type of one, if not more, of the elements of which the veil was composed. It has been affirmed that as scarlet is used in scripture to signify sin, and that as there was scarlet used in the veil, so there must of necessity be sin in the material body of Jesus.

But it will be seen by reference to our pages for the month of January* that if this were really the case it would involve some strange and absurd conclusions. The veil was not made of scarlet only. It was a mixed fabric of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen.

See a letter signed John Glover

In another place it is said that fine linen represents the righteousness of saints. If sin, as the anti-type of scarlet, were an element in the flesh of Jesus, then righteousness, which is the anti-type of fine linen, must be an element in His flesh, by the same rule. But how could this be? For it has been said that His "flesh was full of sin;" in which case there would be no righteousness in it, whereas, if the former, that is, the scarlet, be contended for, it would necessitate the presence of the other, which would make Jesus a compound of both, and therefore not the same in flesh as His brethren. It is clear that such a method, which is a literal method, of reading the figurative things, lands us in a position nothing short of ridiculous.

It has been reasonably conjectured that the blue and purple of the Mosaic veil had typical reference to the cleansing power, and to the royalty of Him who is the substance. But neither the cleansing power nor the royalty could be said to be literally present as part of Christ's body. Though men are spoken of as washed and cleansed through His blood, nobody imagines that this is literally the fact. The blood of Jesus being legally clean has power, when scripturally applied, to purge those who are legally unclean. It is not a question of flesh, as we have elsewhere said, it is a question of law.

We speak of royal blood; but this signifies no difference at all in the quality of the blood; all the difference that exists lies in its legal value. While legally or lawfully royal, it is precisely the same as the blood of the meanest slave with regard to its constitution; it is simply human blood made regal by law.

The blood of a Jew is constitutionally identical with that of a Gentile; but in the eye of Divine law the Jews were a royal nation, a holy people. Jesus was a Jew, and His blood was just the same, constitutionally as the blood of any other Jew, or of any Gentile. But by Heaven's decree it was blood royal. With respect to sin, however, no mere decree could make that sinless which is constituted sinful by

unchanging law. It was therefore needful for God Himself to be the Father of the Redeemer to bring Him into the world free from the effect of Adam's guilt, so that He might be at once the Just and the Justifier.

Is it not then more reasonable to say that the Christ stood related to sin; stood related to cleansing; stood related to royalty; than it is to say that sin was in Him; which would also make it necessary to say that cleansing and royalty were in Him too? Though "undefiled and separated from sinners," He held the same relation to the defiled and to sinners that we behold in a sin-offering; but if we push this connection farther, then, we make Him an offering of sin for sin, instead of a spotless sacrifice for the transgressions of His people.

THE HOLY OF HOLIES.

The Holiest of all is the name given to this chamber by Paul. The whole court or principal enclosure was holy; but the superlative, or highest degree, was attained by passing through this and the first chamber of the Mosaic Tent into the small room furnished with the golden censer, the Ark of the Covenant, the golden pot, Aaron's rod, the tables of the covenant, and the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat.

When the apostle was drawing a general comparison between these things and Christ he could not "speak particularly" of each. He does not, however, thereby prohibit us from considering them by the aid of the scriptures.

Commentators in general have seized upon the fact that Jesus is said to have been our forerunner in entering within the veil to shew that God intends us to enter into heaven. The inference is by no means devoid of plausibility. A forerunner is one who goes before those who are intended to follow, and as Jesus has ascended into heaven it is concluded that His disciples are to go there too.

But the apostle drew his comparison from the custom of Aaron entering within the veil. Here it is to be remarked that no countenance is given to the supposition that the people of Israel were to go in after him. It would not therefore follow that though Christ was gone into heaven that we are to follow Him in person. The Israelites followed their high priest into the holiest with their prayers: we also follow our High Priest in like manner into the presence of God in heaven; while in person, as was the case with Israel, we remain without.

Locality is of little importance. God has not informed us that He has designed to benefit man by changing his abode, but by changing his state. Paul looked forward with joy not to a transfer from earth to heaven, but to the putting off of the mortal and to the putting on of the immortal body. If the figures under the old economy were typical of place, no advantage would accrue to us; but as types of state they are indeed a shadow of good things. To lift man from earth to sky would not necessarily change his physical structure, but to exalt him from corruption to incorruption, in any locality known to us, would be an inestimable blessing. Man has no reasonable grounds to desire a better place than the earth; all his longings point to a change of nature. We therefore regard the figures of the Jewish economy as typical of state, not of place.

BURNT SACRIFICE.

This name was given to a particular kind of offering because the animal presented was to be wholly consumed without reserve. Calmet says that the Jews appear to have had three sorts of sacrifices: - 1st. The burnt offering. 2nd. The sacrifice for sin, or sacrifice of expiation for the purification of a person who had fallen under an offence against the law. 3rd. The peace offering, or sacrifice of thanksgiving, by which devout thanks were returned to God for benefits received.

Burnt sacrifices are the most ancient of all, being spoken of by heathen as well as Jewish writers. The Greek historian Zenophon says that burnt oxen were offered to Jupiter, and horses were burnt in sacrifice to the Sun.

There have been various opinions as to the precise intention of burnt offerings, some supposing them to do honour to the Almighty as the preserver of all; others to expiate evil thoughts; but we may safely say with Dr. Jennings, that they all had a typical significance, directing the faith of Old Testament believers to that only true atoning sacrifice which the Son of God was to offer in due time.

The book of Leviticus is chiefly occupied in describing the service and sacrifices of the Tabernacle, and from that it derives its name. The first chapter opens with Jehovah's directions to Moses concerning burnt sacrifice; "Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd and of the flock. If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish, he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord."

The animal victim can, of course, have no will in the matter. But the offerer must see that the beast was every way suitable, and it must be offered in a perfectly voluntary manner. If there were any blemish in the beast, or if the person who brought it to the priest for sacrifice, were at all reluctant or hesitant, then there was no atoning power attached to the offering. These considerations are of great moment when we look forward from the shadow to the substance.

The Almighty had strictly appointed certain kinds of animals for sacrifice, specifying that each was to be clean and perfect of its kind. Any departure from this injunction on the part of the Jews was a capital offence. But the Gentiles, who imitated the Jews in their sacrifices, took of all kinds, clean or unclean, just as they considered them to be of value to themselves, inferring, as Dean Spencer remarks, that what they prized most would be most acceptable to their deities.

To sacrifice to God an unclean thing was the same as to go into His presence in a sinful state, after He had graciously provided the means to wash and be clean. Is it not grievous in the highest degree to think of men deliberately doing this every day in the name of Christ, whom they delight to believe was as unclean as those He came to save?

When the priest had carefully examined the beast at the door of the tabernacle, the person who brought it was directed to lay his hand on its head, by which act, says Veysie, he acknowledged his own guilt, and prayed that it might be punished in the victim upon which his hand was laid. And accordingly we find in the rabbinical writers a set form of prayer, which, according to them, was always used on this occasion. In this form the delinquent acknowledged his offence, and professes his repentance, and concludes with a petition that the victim upon which he laid his hand might be his expiation.

THE HIGH PRIEST'S OFFERING.

This was the beginning of the great work of yearly expiation made on the tenth day of the seventh month of the Jewish calendar. On this day the high priest was dressed, not in his grand robes of office, with his ephod, breastplate, chains, and bells, but in his garments of white linen. These were typical of the perfect righteousness of the world's Great High Priest, Jesus the Christ, and also more in harmony with the solemn ceremonies of repentance than the full dress worn on other occasions. They are described by Moses as "the holy linen coat, the linen breeches, the linen girdle, and the linen mitre."

The unblemished bullock was now slain, and some of the life-blood caught in a bowl in the hand of the high priest. He also took his censer full of burning coals from off the altar before the Lord, and his hand full of sweet incense. He passes within the veil, and "for a little while" is hid from all without. He is there concealed making expiation for himself and all his house; which seems to include the whole tribe of Levi.

The Divine glory resting inside this otherwise dark chamber; its singular and majestic furniture; the shadowing wings of the cherubim upon the lid of the ark, the golden jar, containing a little of the manna that fell day by day for forty years; Aaron's rod that budded; the two tables which Moses brought down from Sinai inscribed with the finger of God; the high priest in his snow white dress with beard falling to the waist, holding in one hand the smoking censer, in the other the bowl of steaming blood; the thousands of Israel all standing without in breathless silence, with their white tents circling around for miles, make a picture of solemn and imposing grandeur.

Having sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat he emerges from the Divine presence, passes through the holy place, in which is no man beside him, and immediately presents himself cleansed and accepted of God, in the sight of all Israel.

Besides the sins of his household, the high priest was obliged to atone for his own sins. This was one of the imperfections of the Mosaic system, not that the system was imperfect, but that it was inefficient to accomplish the object attained by the Christian High Priest; it was imperfect in the sense that all shadows are imperfect in comparison with the corresponding substances.

But Christ had no sins of His own to expiate. He is, both by the prophets and the apostles, declared to be sinless. His expiation therefore was only for His house. Some writers say that the high priest made three distinct confessions on that day, one for himself; the second for the other priests, upon the bullock; and the third for all Israel, on the scape goat.

The prayers of holy men mentioned in the Bible, are remarkable for their full and frequent confession of sins; both their own and those of their nation, but in all that we read concerning the prayers of Christ, nothing of the kind appears. The obvious reason is that He had nothing to confess, nothing to deplore concerning Himself.

THE TWO GOATS.

These were two parts of one offering. They were both presented before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. The ceremony of casting lots was then gone through, and the goat on which the Lord's lot fell was offered for a sin-offering. When he had killed the goat Aaron took the blood in a bowl and went again into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled it upon and before the mercy-seat seven times, in sign of that perfect sprinkling of the heart by faith with the blood of Jesus.

The carcasses of the goat and bullock were afterwards conveyed outside the camp and utterly burnt. This part of the ceremony Paul intimates was typical of the sufferings of Jesus without the gate of Jerusalem. With the blood of these sacrifices Aaron made an atonement for the tabernacle, the altar, and the holy place. This was done in consequence of the uncleanness, the iniquities, and transgressions of the children of Israel during the past year. It was not to foreshadow the uncleanness, the iniquities, and the transgressions of Jesus; as some, desirous to find proof of His uncleanness - to find proof that His iniquities were more than the hairs of His head - have strangely imagined.

We are then informed, that when he had made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he brought the live goat, and Aaron laid both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confessed over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and sent him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness. And the goat bore upon him all the iniquities into a land not inhabited, or as it also signifies, a land of separation.

This part of the work was of most striking significance. Although the goat bore the sins of the whole nation on his head, he was allowed to escape alive. Death followed at once on the first goat which foreshadowed the death of the Great Sin Bearer; and also like the scape goat He took away the sins of the people into "a land of separation," that is, the grave, which effectually separates the living from the dead; from which, in agreement with the typical goat, he escaped alive.

Exactly where the scape goat was sent is not known. The Jews affirm that this was called the wilderness of Izak, ten miles from Jerusalem. They also state that, at the end of each mile, a tent was fixed, and meat and drink were provided for the man who conducted the goat, for fear he should faint. At the end of the journey the goat was led to the top of a rock and let go to carry the sins of the nation away out of sight.

[To be continued]

BROTHER JOHN D. COFFMAN'S EPISTLE.

Adeline, Ogle County, Illinois, United States of America, Feb. 2nd, 1874.

DEAR BRO. TURNEY - Great and important events having taken place in England among the brotherhood induces me to address you, and although personally unacquainted, we are nevertheless connected by that fellowship which all believers of the truth who walk worthy of their high calling have, one with another. I perceive that you are branded as a heretic. I have seen no just reason for so grave a charge, if we can act on the supposition that you know and can demonstrate your own position. There is a candour and honesty in your course that is very charming to those who love the truth for its own sake. A disposition to accept what is Scriptural irrespective of what the Dr. might term "preconceived Babel speculations." There is also an absence of that spirit now so prevalent, which is expressed in the observation made by Pilate, "What I have written, I have written." This, in our estimation, is good evidence of that true nobility which should characterize the sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. What more noble than to say I was wrong, I did not understand the subject though honest in my belief; from this time forward I know better, and thank God for it.

Of the much-discussed question on your side of the water, it appears to me that such a controversy as is now going on will, in the end, result in good. Agitation as you know, prevents stagnation. The position on the subject of the Christ held by a goodly few in this country, is at last assailed in the columns of the Christadelphian and as we have no hope that our side of the argument would be permitted to see the light through its pages, we turn to you and ask to be heard through the medium of the "Lamp," believing that you will not shrink from the divine testimonies, knowing that truth has nothing to fear and no favours to ask of error in a fair field and on equal terms.

A most pertinent enquiry on this subject is that of the heading of an article by Bro. J. J. Andrew, in the January number of the *Christadelphian*, "Why was Jesus begotten of the Father?" and well worthy of the consideration of the brethren. Without attempting to answer it at length, we merely remark that the reason to our limited knowledge to be this; That He might be the literal Son of God, as every begotten Son is of his own Father, and that this result could have been attained in no other way. The answer given in a laboured argument is condensed into a few lines on page 20, and is substantially as follows: - That a human being might be produced, "who though really a man, was nevertheless of a higher mental type than other men." Anticipating a possible reply to this assertion from an objector, he goes on to say that "this end could not have been accomplished without any departure from the ordinary mode of begetting," that is, if God had chosen so to do (p.21).

This is pure speculation for which no scripture proof is given. It amounts to mere-manism of the worst type. It destroys all the force of the oft-repeated testimony that Jesus was the ONLY begotten Son of God; and here it is well to note, that those who are on that side of the question have taken upon themselves to put a meaning on the word begotten which does not belong to it, and which practically destroys its force. If anything is plainly declared in the Scriptures it is that Jesus - of all God's sons - is the ONLY begotten one. Those who reject this testimony by destroying the significance and vitality of the qualifying word begotten, do so without the slightest authority, and lay themselves open to the charge of wresting the Scriptures.

The question has been asked whether this great fact, isolated in the history of the world (the preternatural begetting of Jesus), has no value, and I repeat the question.

It is generally admitted by those who reject the doctrine of the immortality of the soul that mind is the result of cerebral organization; when, then, we have it affirmed that Jesus "derived His nature from an earthly mother, and His mentality from His heavenly Father," we get confused. Is it possible that "mentality" is an abstraction or essence apart from flesh? or is it what we have hitherto supposed it to be, the product of the brain evolved from day to day? We are glad, however, to see it admitted that Jesus derived something from his preternatural begetting (however small), and yet our joy is somewhat marred when we find the writer acknowledging that the same result might have been accomplished by the ordinary mode of begetting!!

On page 13 is the following assertion: - "In regard to the substance of His nature when born there was no difference between Him and the rest of mankind, and hence He could be called a "man." John viii. 40. This is only a title of the testimony. He is declared to be both a "man" and Jehovah. Luke ii. 11; John i. 23, 30. A "man," the fellow and equal of Jehovah. Zech. xiii. 7; Phil. ii. 6. A "man," who existed before John, although born six months after him. John i. 30; Luke i. 26. A "man," who "came down from heaven." John iii. 13. A "man," who had glory with the Father before the world was. John xvii. 5. Who "proceeded forth and came from God." John viii. 42. A "man," who was before Abraham. (58th verse), who though born in Bethlehem, yet had "goings forth from the days of eternity." Micah. v. 2. Verily this was no mere man. If the term "man" be used in the above scriptural sense, there can be no objection to its frequent repetition, but unfortunately this is not the case. Flesh is all that is seen in the "Man Jesus Christ" by those who are so anxious to invalidate the legitimate effects of His begetting; and in their efforts to demonstrate this idea, they necessarily destroy the force of the divine wisdom contained in the above scriptural affirmations; hence the following assertion: "Nowhere does the Bible say that the nature of Jesus was partly spirit, etc." The reply to this may be made in the words of the writer himself, "though the Bible does not positively assert these things, it contains assertions which establish them beyond doubt." Paul does not say in so many words, that the dead come forth to judgment in earthly bodies, yet he teaches a great truth which involves and includes this lesser detail. So in regard to the assertions made by angels, prophets, and apostles, and even by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Their testimony - some of which is quoted above - is affirmable of Him only in view of the fact that He was the begotten Son of God, and amounts to a demonstration of the fact that He partook of His Father's substance or nature, unless we can say that the Seed of David of itself "came down from heaven," and had glory with the Father "before the world was," being the "fellow" and "equal" of the Deity, who had "goings forth from the days of eternity." If, I say, these things can be affirmed of mere flesh, then no doubt the begetting of Jesus by the Father resulted in a mere man, who though perhaps of superior mental power, yet was in no way superior to His brethren as regards nature. But who, of those who reverence the testimony, will dare assert this?

It will be well to remember that it was these identical sayings which so enraged the fleshly-minded Jews, who rejected their Saviour and Redeemer; therefore let us take heed that we be not found fighting the Deity in precisely the same spirit that actuated them; rather let us receive with child-like faith those "hard sayings" which so confound the wisdom of the flesh. Let us cultivate the spirit displayed by John

the Baptist who - (though the greatest man born of woman) - declared he was not worthy to unloose the shoes' latchet of that Mighty One (Jehovah) whose way he was sent to prepare.

With the foregoing testimonies as a divine basis or foundation which no man can set aside, we are prepared to meet the only passage adduced of any plausibility to prove that Jesus did not partake of His Father's nature, viz., Heb. ii. 17. And we shall find that the passage alluded to, does not by any means prove what it is attempted to prove by it. It is assumed that Paul referred to nature when he says, "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren;" and this is undoubtedly correct, so far as the "all things" of His brethren are concerned. According to the FLESH, He was in "all things" made like unto His brethren, hence, He was "of the Seed of David;" but does this preclude another and greater truth, viz., that He was also the Son of God by begetting? We know He was tempted in all points like as we are, for in Him were included the "all points" of His brethren; hence He suffered the pangs of hunger and thirst, wept tears of sympathy for His friend Lazarus, displayed righteous indignation in rebuking the unrighteous Scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers, and so forth. But does this fact prevent or debar Him from partaking of something higher and "mightier" than mere flesh? Cannot the greater include the less; this being so, does it necessarily follow that He could not be made in "all things" like unto His brethren, if He partook of the nature of Jehovah His father, which His brethren do not? In view of the many testimonies quoted, it is impossible to answer no, with any respect for the record God has given us of His Son; and surely, if Paul is authority on this subject, we should hear ALL he has to say; and if he intended to teach what he is made to teach by those who quote the said passage under consideration, he never would in his other writings, and even in this same epistle, declare that which is entirely subversive of the idea. Thus to the Colossians he writes of Jesus: - "For by Him were all things created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible . . . and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." To the Hebrews: "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the works of thine hands" (i. 10).

These testimonies faithfully received, will abundantly show that Paul's estimate of Jesus was far above that of those who quote Heb. ii. 17, for the purpose above stated, and in order to a correct appreciation of his argument, they must be continued in connection with this passage; and indeed apart from this they demand our utmost consideration in view of the fact, that upon a knowledge of the Son of God, is predicated the bestowal of eternal life. John xii. 3.

John D. Coffman

This very interesting letter reached us in the land of images and Mary worship, on the 23rd February. We cordially acknowledge "that fellowship" in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, which the writer, though personally unknown to us, remarks, all believers of the truth who walk worthy of their high calling, have one with another. Our fraternal correspondent, like hundreds of others, unassisted by anything save his own judgment and a knowledge of the Word perceives that, "though branded as a heretic" there is "no just reason for so grave a charge" to be preferred against us. We cannot proceed to notice the details of this letter, so tendering our warmest thanks to the writer and the "goodly few" with him for the frank and kindly expressions with respect to our motives and manner of proceeding in the advocacy of the Truth of God. We humbly trust that the spirit with which the Word has animated us for 15 years - solely a desire to increase in knowledge and wisdom - may, throughout our short future, be more and more operative to the edification of the brethren, the enlightenment of others, and to the honour of the God of Truth. To this end we say, Brethren, Pray for us.

With our correspondent, we fully believe that "such a controversy as is now going on, will in the end, result in good;" and all we have to say is that the denial, which in another place has been given to the expression of such ideas as this letter contains, shall not be repeated by The Christadelphian Lamp. The only aim of this instrument is to give light; and it was firmly resolved from the first to admit, as far as circumstances would allow, everything that comes to hand which, as far as we can judge, has the development and confirmation of truth for its object. Our desire is to learn and to teach without any regard whatever as to who are our teachers, or as to who are taught by our means. God forbid that one should ever "shrink from the Divine testimonies, knowing that truth (as writes our Brother C.) has nothing to fear and no favours to ask of error in a fair field and on equal terms."

"Why was Jesus begotten of the Father?" is, indeed, a question "well worthy of the consideration of the brethren." "The reason" given by our correspondent appears to us to be the true one, viz., "That He might be the literal Son of God; the literal manifestation of God, as every begotten son is of his own father; and that this result could have been attained in no other way." Far be it from us to take a limited view of the power of God; but if "this result" could have been attained so as to demonstrate to mankind

the justice of God, if it could have been attained by human generation, may we not properly say that God would not have employed a miracle? That is, He would not have acted outside the scope of ordinary means. This, with all the true consequences that follow it, is the glorious truth propounded for the redemption of the begotten sons of Adam. Our wisdom is to discuss these consequences.

The idea that Jesus was a Son begotten by God precludes the other idea, to establish which we have seen so much vain and violent struggling. The proposition that one son cannot have two real fathers, is surely self-evidently true. From the demeanour of Joseph towards Mary, it seems plain enough that he harboured no contrary notion.

Thus was Jesus greater by inheritance than all that preceded, and shall ever continue to be greater also than all that shall come after Him, whether they be angels or men. By birthright Jesus is above all. His Father gave Him the privilege in human nature in order that He should be mighty to save all who, in that nature, were lost in Adam. It is lamentably true that many efforts have been made to evade the force of the oft-repeated testimony that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. But why not confess at once (as Bro. Ellis remarks), with Peter, that Jesus was the Son of the living God, and render to each the thanks, the glory, and the honour due unto their Name.

Our correspondent observes with regard to Jesus: "He is declared to be both a "man" and Jehovah (Luke ii. 11., John i. 23, 30, a "man," the fellow and equal of Jehovah. Zech. xiii. 7. Phil. ii. 6)." The texts cited in proof deserve to be given in full, and appear to call for some remark. The first is Luke ii. 11, which reads thus: "For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." It is well known that believers in the doctrine of the Trinity hold Jesus to be "very God," that is, absolutely the one God with whom there is no variableness or shadow of a turning. The proposition of our correspondent appears to us to be too easily susceptible of this construction, which the proof texts do not, in our judgment, warrant. The matter may perhaps be sifted by the following interrogatory: - Was Jehovah, the Invisible God, born in the city of David? We do not apprehend that any other than a negative answer would be given to this question. Who then was born there? The verse itself replies, "Christ the Lord." Here we make a further enquiry. What is meant by Christ the Lord? Most of our readers know that Christ is a Greek word used by the sacred writers as equivalent to the Hebrews word Messiah; and that the meaning is 'an anointed one.' When employed in the scriptures concerning Jesus it is usually preceded by the definite article, thereby is pointed out that fact that Jesus is the Anointed one, or the Christ, and so distinguished from all the Christs or anointed ones who preceded Him, and likewise all who may be after Him. The distinction betwixt the Anointed One and The Anointer must not be confounded. The Eternal Creative Spirit is The Anointer, the babe begotten of the Spirit is the Anointed. This Anointed, the apostle Peter saith, was made by God both Lord and Christ. The royal as well as the sacerdotal power were united in the one person; this has never appeared before in Israel.

The next text is John i. 23, "He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight; the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." We are referred to Isa. xl. 3. And the original of that passage certainly suggests something more than can be very readily gathered from John. John merely mentions the Lord; but Isaiah speaks both in the plural as well as in the singular number. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our Elohim." The last word signifies plurality, but not trinity. The only solution of this appears to us to be as follows: - The Eternal Anointing Spirit, by whom Jesus was begotten, was the Jehovah: because God's Spirit is equal to Himself, and the Anointed, or begotten Son, together with the Anointing Spirit, formed the plurality, or Elohim.

Verse 30 of John, 1st chapter, "This is He of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for He was before me." The former part of this passage offers no difficulty. We easily recognise the preference, or superiority of rank that Jesus had to John. But the last words are not so plain. Certain of the learned have translated the words *hoti prootos mou een*, "for He was greater than I." The meaning of *prootos* is, 'the first,' 'earliest,' 'foremost,' 'principal,' 'chief.' But used as a comparative it signifies, 'before,' 'sooner.' It appears certainly to be used as a comparative in the verse under consideration; and if so, the sense seems to be that Jesus was some way before John in regard to time. For our part we are at present unable to read the passage satisfactorily in any other than the following manner. John having called our attention to the Jehovah Spirit mentioned by the prophet; having his eye still fixed as it were on the same Spirit as the Origin of Jesus, says, He was before me. The "man," strictly speaking, was flesh and blood. John did not wish to say that the flesh and blood was before him; but identifying the man with his origin he might say, He was before me. There was no flesh and blood until it was created; it, therefore, cannot be said to have been or to have existed before John, inasmuch as it was not formed till six months after him. But that (or He) which formed it, viz., the Holy Spirit, and which is

by Jesus so often spoken of as one with Himself; dwelling in Him, and He in Him: that, John could truly say, was chronologically before him.

Our attention is next directed to Zech. xiii. 7: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." The words "fellow" and "equal" imply the existence of two persons. One may be the "fellow" and "equal" of another; but he cannot be the "fellow" and "equal" of himself. The original word in this passage is found only in Leviticus. There it occurs frequently, and always so as to signify a fellow-citizen, or one upon the same level in society.

Now, the question is, what are we to understand by this "fellow" and "equal"? Are we to understand this equality to be absolute in all respects, or to be relative? Great obstacles at once present themselves against the idea of absolute equality; for as regards knowledge, Jesus testified that some things were not known to the Son, but to the Father only. The contents of the seven apocalyptic seals were once unknown to Jesus. The whole infancy of the Son also is another evidence against the idea of unqualified equality with the Father, and finally, the term Father is a declaration against such a supposition, because it is a relative term.

But against relative equality there seems no objection. It appears, indeed, to be the only consistent reading of the relationship betwixt Jesus and His Father. He is taught of His Father; He is protected by His Father from His enemies; He prays to His Father; He says, "My Father is greater than I." Nevertheless, the fact that He and His Father were one was no contradiction to these things. They were one just as brethren are one, being joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. To be one, it is not needful to be one in power, in knowledge, or in substance. There is abundant scope for oneness without including these. The idea that Jesus was a partaker of the divine nature in the days of His flesh, as held by the English and Romish Churches appears to us to be at conflict with the Scripture which declares He took not on Him the nature of angels. These remarks on the text in Zechariah seem to render it unnecessary to comment on Philippians ii. 6.

John iii. 13 (still noticing our correspondent's texts), "And no man hath ascended up to heaven but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven." The last clause of this verse is reckoned spurious by some, and said not to be found in the Vatican Manuscript. If we take the words, "He that came down from heaven" to mean that the literal man Jesus came down from heaven as a man before He was born of the virgin, do we not make even more of the text than those who profess that Jesus was God's co-eternal Son? But if we refuse concurrence in these views, it yet remains to put some reasonable and spiritual sense upon the words. The plain language of Matthew, who reports the conversation between Mary and the angel Gabriel, makes it impossible for us to assent to the ordinary view which represents Jesus as a person distinct from the Father, and dwelling with the Father countless ages before His birth. We cannot believe there was a Son before that Son was conceived and brought forth, and as Jesus and no other was the Son, neither can we see how Jesus lived before He was born except in His mother's womb. God is uniformly spoken of in the Scriptures as dwelling in heaven, and as He was the Father of Jesus it seems harmonious to speak of Jesus coming from heaven, that is, from His Father. Thus, Jesus may be said to have "proceeded forth and come from God." John viii. 42.

Furthermore, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Jno, xvii. 5. This is a difficult text. If we are correct in rejecting the pre-existence of Jesus, the interpretation suggested here is this: Jesus now prays His Father to honour Him in reality with that glory which He had with Him as a purpose before the world was. This would be speaking, as the scriptures often do speak, of things that be not as though they were.

The last passage of the list of proofs before us is Micah v. 2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." The idea of existence without beginning and without end can properly apply to none but Him who was before all things. It is not applicable to any created being. Were we to regard Jesus pre-existent as the highest angel, even then the timeless attribute of the Increate would be improperly bestowed upon Him. The language of the prophet seems to us intended to shew to Israel that their Messiah would not be of human origin; would be born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, but of God; in a word, that His beginning, or paternity would not date from this or that epoch, but would descend from "the days of eternity." In this view of the Son of God one can say with our correspondent, Verily this was no ordinary man. He was allied to, or took hold of something stronger and mightier than flesh and blood. We fully acquiesce in the remark that the foregoing testimonies are affirmable only of Jesus in view of the fact that He "was the only begotten Son of God.

But there is another conclusion which the letter before us appears to arrive at, which to our mind, however, does not seem to be sufficiently established for unwavering faith, by the aforementioned, nor indeed, so far as our research has extended, by any other portion of the inspired word. Our correspondent

and his friends look upon the testimonies before referred to as “a demonstration of the fact that He (Jesus) partook of His Father’s substance or nature.” It would be more satisfactory to have defined the intended import of the word nature as here used. Our observations may miss the mark unless the universal sense of that word be meant. The use of the term substance in the case appears to signify nature in a physical sense; or, in other words, bodily nature. And we rather gather from a subsequent statement in the letter that something of the kind is intended.

In justly animadverting upon the support which some have sought in Heb. ii. 17, for the notion that Jesus was really the son of Adam because born of Mary, thereby implying a denial that He had God for His Father, our correspondent observes that “He partook of the nature of Jehovah His Father.” We believe Dr. Thomas has laid frequent emphasis on the fact that Jesus did not partake of the Divine nature before His death. If by “the nature of Jehovah” the Divine nature is meant, we are unable to perceive that proof has been adduced.

We beg to remark that the first part of Hebrews ii.17, read by itself, does not give Paul’s meaning; it is the conclusion to which he comes from a previous and also a subsequent statement. The fact of the verse beginning with the word “Wherefore” shows that to be so. “Wherefore” or, on what account, does Paul conclude that “in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren?” The answer to this question is, first, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in all things pertaining to God, to make a reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted. Secondly, in order to attain this end, God “took not on Him the nature of angels” – that is to say, God did not employ His own nature – “but He took on Him the seed of Abraham” (verse 16).

Our correspondent is undoubtedly correct in pointing out that the “all things” are to be considered with qualification. Begettal by the will of the flesh, common to all His brethren, was not included in the “all things” wherein Jesus was made like unto them. There were other dissimilarities which we need not particularise. Into the “all things” some are vainly trying to press human paternity, in face of the most positive statements that Jesus was not born of the will of man, but of the Holy Spirit. It is with unfeigned satisfaction we learn that the writer of this letter and many of his friends have no sympathy for such a doctrine.

We would submit the foregoing considerations to the judgment of our American brethren, in that excellent spirit which characterises their letter to us, trusting that the interchange of thought may result in a further development of the Truth to our mutual approval and the honour of the Most High. Amen.

EDITOR.

IS IT SCRIPTURAL TO TAKE AN OATH?

HAVING observed that several of our brethren have been called upon to swear before “the powers that be,” and have appeared to be under a conscientious doubt whether they ought to take an oath, we thought it advisable to look into the matter and present the conclusion arrived at.

In the Old Testament we frequently read of the taking of oaths. The first instance is in Genesis xxi. 23, 24, where Abimelech requests Abraham to swear unto him by God, “And Abraham said, I will swear.”

Bruce states that a kind of oath now used among the Arabs or shepherds was in use in the days of Abraham. “Cursed be those men of my people, or others, that ever shall lift up their hand against you, either in the desert or the tell (the part of Egypt which is cultivated). As long as you are in this country, or between this and Cosseir, my son shall serve you with heart and hand: one night of pain that your medicines freed me from, would not be repaid, if I was to follow you on foot to Messir, that is, Cairo.”

The great people among them came and, after joining hands, repeated a kind of prayer of about two minutes long, by which they declared themselves and their children accursed, if even they lifted their hands against me in the tell, or field, in the desert, or on the river, or in case that I, or mine should fly to them for refuge, if they did not protect us at the risk of their lives, their families, and their fortunes, or as they emphatically expressed it to the death of the last male child among them.

There can be no doubt that the Almighty approved of oaths, under certain circumstances, both before and during the times of the Law of Moses. Several laws are written for their regulation. Among others, that long passage in the thirtieth chapter of Numbers, verses 2 to 16, is very plain, “If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond, he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth.”

At the thirteenth verse of the sixth of Deuteronomy we read these words: "Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God, and shalt serve Him, and shalt swear by His name." While this prohibited the Jew from taking an oath in the name of any other god, it certainly warranted him to swear by the God of Israel.

It is not needful to adduce further testimony to prove that, prior to the establishment of Christianity, it was strictly proper, and even commanded by God Himself, to swear on certain occasions. What of the future? Seeing that God approved an oath under Moses' government, which was typical of Christ's, will He disapprove of oaths under Christ's government? By the prophet Isaiah Jehovah has plainly declared His intention to create new heavens and a new earth wherein righteousness shall dwell; and, speaking of that time He says, "he who blesseth himself in the earth, shall bless himself in the God of truth, and he that sweareth in the earth, shall swear by the God of truth," Isaiah Ixv. 16, 17. The prophet Jeremiah also, speaking of Israel's return and the contemporary blessedness of the nations, says, "And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness," chap. iv. 2.

The Scriptures referred to are conclusive enough with respect to the propriety of using oaths in the past and in the future; we have now to see whether there is any command direct or indirect to forbid absolutely their use in the present, that is to say, during what is commonly called the Christian dispensation.

But first we may notice several examples or instances of God Himself employing oaths. "And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord " etc., Gen. xxii. 16. "And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi: for he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." When the Israelites murmured in the wilderness, "the Lord spoke unto Moses and Aaron saying, Say unto them as truly as I live, saith the Lord, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you," Num. xiv. 26, 28. On account of the misconduct of Eli's sons and the connivance of their father, God said, "therefore have I sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice and offering for ever."

Sometimes Jehovah swears by His attributes. "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David," Ps. lxxxix. 35. He has sworn also in anger as in Psalm xcvi. 11: "Unto whom I swear in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest."

Paul gives the reason, in Hebrews vi. 13, why God swears: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by Himself." "It should seem that Jehovah, in taking oaths, sometimes upon Himself, His life, His great name. His attributes, condescends to the custom of men, as Paul implies in the sixteenth verse, "For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife." In God's dealings with men swearing does not appear to be necessary on His part; He seems to employ that form of assurance rather for the more full satisfaction of man.

Next, we find Jesus taking oath before the high priest. After keeping silence in face of certain absurd and false charges, the high priest said unto him, "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the son of God." Jesus said unto him, "Thou hast said." On this passage Dr. Hammond remarks, "It was the custom of the Jews thus to adjure a person, wishing execrations upon him if he did not speak and answer truly. This was considered as imposing the obligation of an oath upon the person adjured; and therefore Christ, though before He had held His peace, yet being now adjured, thought Himself bound to answer."

But it may be alleged that Jesus did this in conformity to the law of Moses, under which he lived, and therefore it can have no force if intended to favour the use of the oath under the Christian system.

However it is also true that the commandment given by Jesus, "Swear not at all," was under the Mosaic Law too; if therefore we construe this command in an absolute sense, we at once make Jesus a breaker of his own counsel.

The apostle Paul was a converted Jew; he forsook Judaism and embraced Christianity; yet we find him swearing in his epistles. For example, in second Corinthians, first chapter, twenty-third verse: "Moreover, I call God for a record upon my soul," etc. Again he calls God to witness: "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not," chap. xi. 31. Also in his epistle to the Galatians, chap. i. verse 20: "Now, the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not." If it were altogether unlawful for Christians to swear under any circumstances whatever, it seems impossible to justify Paul. But, inasmuch as we cannot allow that these oaths used by Paul in his epistles are unscriptural and immoral, one must admit, as it appears to us, the propriety of taking oaths on certain occasions.

An oath cannot be immoral in itself, or we may be quite sure that it would not be allowed by God. But it was not only allowed, but enjoined; it is used by God Himself, by Jesus, and by Paul. The

prohibitions, therefore, in the scriptures against swearing ought not to be construed so as to contradict these plain and numerous examples.

There are many passages of scripture which, though they appear to be worded in unqualified terms, are far from possessing an absolute meaning, as their proper connection clearly shows; and such seems to be the case with regard to the command of Christ not to swear.

“Our Saviour’s design,” writes Dr. Clagett, “in these words cannot be better understood than by considering what these corrupt principles were concerning swearing, which had crept in among the Jews. And, first, as their own authors tell us, it was generally held among them that they ought not to swear by the name of God in light and trivial cases, but they believed it was no sin to swear upon any occasion by a creature that was a remarkable object of God’s favour and providence, as by heaven, or by earth, or by Jerusalem, or by the head, which are the instances here noted by our Saviour.”

“Secondly, some of them, and the Pharisees especially, taught that the guilt of perjury was not incurred when a falsehood was attested by an oath of this kind. Hence our Saviour’s words being spoken to persons who well understood the doctrines and practices of their countrymen in this matter, enjoined that they should not swear by the creatures of God in any of those cases in which it was unlawful to swear by the Almighty Himself, that is, in their usual communications with each other.”

“But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.” This implies a reference, not to taking an oath before a priest, or a magistrate, but to regular communication and discourse. The Jews, like many Christians, so-called, were in the habit of swearing by various things in their daily conversation and dealings. All such swearing Christ strictly forbids. The following comment by Sharp sets the matter in a clear light:

“As if he had said, This is the rule I would have you constantly to observe in your commerce and dealings with men, and in your whole conversation. When you have occasion to affirm a thing, affirm it steadily without an oath; when you have occasion to deny a thing, say it is not so without an oath.”

We conclude these observations by a brief notice of James v. 12: “But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.” This admonition has a close resemblance to that of Jesus in Matthew, already considered. James mentions heaven and the earth. While his general prohibition of swearing in ordinary communications is quite as applicable to the Gentile as to the Jewish Christian, it is plain to be seen, from the allusion to heaven and earth, that, like Jesus, he had the Jewish habit more particularly in view. On this text we give two notes:

“And let me particularly warn you, that no examples, no provocations whatever, draw you into the vice of common swearing, and invoking the name of God on light and needless occasions.” (Pyle.)

“Our Saviour’s words interpret those of the apostle by necessary consequence. For if He intended only to prohibit common swearing in conversation, James, we may be sure, intended no more than his Master did; especially in words that are evidently copied from his Master’s. If they are without dependence on what comes before and after, we have no other rule to explain them by. And if they are connected with it, the connection leads us to the same sense.”

“In the 8th verse he exhorts to patience under afflictions. In the 9th he cautions against one common mark in wanting it, envying the more prosperous. Then, after setting before them examples of patience in the 10th and 11th he proceeds in the 12th to warn them of another fault, which impatience too frequently produces.” (Seeker.)

But after all, if any feel conscientious scruples they are not compelled by English law to take an oath; still, if they were compelled, it does not appear to us that they would commit an offence against God.

EDITOR.

CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM.

THE Circumcision and Baptism of Jesus have been brought forward as proofs that He, like ourselves, was under sentence of death on account of the disobedience of the first man. Both these ordinances, we are told, had reference to the law of sin and death, and Jesus, by submitting Himself, or being submitted to them, thereby acknowledged that so it was. The fallacy of this position has been already combated to some extent, and in this article further arguments will be adduced in proof, that it is altogether out of harmony with the inspired record concerning the Son of God.

A strange disposition has been manifested by some in these days, to establish an equality between the Son of God and the mere sons and daughters of Adam, which not only degrades and dishonours the former, in making God's Holy One a defiled being, but renders the redemption of the latter an impossibility, according to the immutable laws of the Creator. From much that has appeared since this controversy on the nature of the Christ began, it might really be supposed that the object of the writers was to prove that Jesus had a man and not God for His Father, so constantly is the fact of His heavenly origin kept out of sight. In the anxiety to establish His descent from Adam His relationship to God is ignored or forgotten. Our opponents might just as well maintain, like the Socinians, that Jesus was the son of Joseph. That He was "made of a woman," "made under the law" a flesh and blood man, mortal and corruptible, we admit, for so the scriptures teach. But while admitting all these facts, we deny the soundness of the inferences drawn from them. That the nature of Jesus, at His first appearing, was mortal and corruptible, does not prove that He was under condemnation for Adam's sin, for the first man was in the same condition before he committed the act of disobedience, which brought death into the world. That is to say, though of a nature capable of death, he was not necessarily destined to die, neither because he was corruptible was he thereby necessarily destined to return to the dust out of which he was taken. His continuance in life or deprivation of life, depended entirely on his obedience or disobedience to the law under which he was placed. It follows that in the sense just explained, mortality and corruptibility were in the world before sin entered, and that the nature possessed of these qualities was pronounced by its Creator to be "very good." Let this consideration not be forgotten, but allowed to have due weight in the investigation of the things concerning the Christ. The Lord Jesus, on the other hand, was destined to die, not because of sin inherited from Adam, but because He was the appointed sin offering for us, and brought into the world for that special purpose. And though corruptible, yet being God's Holy One, He was not permitted to see corruption. Acts 11. 27. His mission into this world, as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin thereof, necessitated that His nature should be the nature of the seed of Abraham, and not the nature of Angels, but as the appointed sacrifice for sin, it was necessary also that He should be holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. His blood which was shed, was that precious blood, which could alone wash away sin and redeem mankind from their lost state in Adam. Had He been otherwise constituted, or His blood the blood of a transgressor, it would have been the reverse of precious, and His sacrifice of Himself would have been as inefficacious as that of the bulls and goats under the law of Moses, which, says the Apostle Paul, could never take away sin, and, moreover Jesus instead of redeeming others, would have needed a redeemer Himself. While it is quite true that Jesus stood related to sin and death it was in the sense of bearing away the one and triumphing over the other. Being "made under the law," He must needs be circumcised and this circumcision made Him a debtor to do the whole law. Gal v. 2. Add to this He did, so that the law could not condemn Him as a transgressor. If, as alleged, He had "infringed" the law, His circumcision would thereby have been uncircumcision, and His sacrifice would have profited nothing. Jesus was circumcised, not because He needed justification, but because He was placed under a law which required obedience to that particular rite. At the first institution, circumcision was a sign or token of the covenant which God made with Abraham concerning the everlasting possession of the land of Canaan, and in his (Abraham's) case, it was a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, being uncircumcised. Rom. iv. 11. Undoubtedly it pointed to the future cutting off of the Messiah, as the confirmer of the covenant, without which the land promised could not be inherited, either by Abraham or by his circumcised descendants. And it pointed also to the putting off of sins by those who should hereafter become the subjects of the circumcision made without hands. Col. ii. 11. But this putting off of sins had reference to personal transgressions, and not to the sin committed in the Garden of Eden, and, moreover, it did not deliver those who conformed to the ordinance from their condemnation to death in Adam. Jesus had no sins to put off, He was without sin and consequently had no need to submit to any ceremony for the remission of sins either actual or inherited, so far as He was Himself personally concerned. The statement put forward, that because circumcision was a rite practised on infants and could not therefore be for individual sin, but must have been on account of the condemnation inherited from Adam, is entirely devoid of any scriptural foundation whatever. It is simply the opinion of the writer who, having unfortunately committed himself to a false theory, labours hard to persuade his readers that he is in the right. Surely, if Jesus could be delivered from His supposed condemnation to death in Adam by circumcision, He needed not afterwards to be immersed in the waters of the Jordan for the same purpose!

Circumcision which is outward in the flesh profits nothing apart from circumcision of the heart. This is apostolic teaching, and quite a sufficient refutation of the notion that "it must have been on account of the condemnation inherited from Adam." It amounts indeed to sacramentalism; for if condemnation

inherited from Adam could be got rid of by an outward ceremony, then circumcised infants ought not to have died.

But circumcision is not justification. Abraham obtained justification by faith long before he was circumcised, and his circumcised posterity can only attain to justification in the same way. And, inasmuch as Abraham's circumcision contributed nothing to his justification, neither will it contribute anything to the justification of his literal descendants. The mark in their flesh only shows their descent from Abraham, the father of the faithful, and their relation to the covenant God made with him, the promised blessings in connection with which they can only realize by manifesting a like faith to his.

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

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

John's Baptism was the "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins," and at the same time he made a public proclamation to the people, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand;" or more literally rendered, the words are, repent, for the Royal Majesty of the Heavens has approached. Jno. iii. 2. "John verily baptized with the Baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Acts xix 4. "That He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." Jno. i. 31. These are the words of Paul and John, and they define the nature and intention of the Baptism then practised. From all which it is clear that John's Baptism had reference to repentance on account of personal transgressions and not to defilement inherited from Adam, and also show that it was made the occasion of announcing to the nation of Israel that their long expected Messiah was then in their midst. The confession made by those who were baptized was a confession of sins actually committed, and not a confession of being under sentence of death for Adam's sin. In submitting to it the sinless Jesus, who had nothing to confess, nor any defilement from which to be cleansed, rendered an act of obedience to an existing institution, and thereby typified His own death, burial, and resurrection. The conclusion therefore is, that the Baptism of Jesus did not prove Him to be "physically unclean," any more than His circumcision proved Him to be "unclean," but that both ceremonies were typical of events concerning Himself in the relationship already mentioned. The question, "Was it not the existence of sin in the world that gave rise to such ceremonies?" seems very unnecessary, and admits only of one answer. Of course if sin had not entered into the world no expiatory sacrifices or offerings would have been required, and consequently no ceremonies enjoined which were in any way typical of them. But, while admitting this, we entirely fail to see how it furnishes any proof that He who was destined to cleanse the world from sin must Himself be unclean in order to effect that object. In our judgment it proves the very opposite, and necessitates the coming of such a Redeemer as the Scriptures describe Jesus to be, that is to say, one who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

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

the death-stricken race of Adam. This, then, is the reason why Jesus was not freed from all ceremonies which owed their origin to the existence of sin.

Again, it is asked, "Why was washing necessary to the Priests under the law?" Because they were transgressors of that law, and therefore required to be made ceremonially clean before they could minister before the Lord, or typify Him who was without spot, and blameless. Such being the nature and character of Jesus, He did not require His flesh to be washed before being anointed as a Priest nor did His compliance with the ordinance of Baptism furnish any evidence that His flesh was unclean on account of Adam's sin, as already explained. In conclusion, we remark that it does not follow because "orthodox commentators" are wrong on some points, as, for instance the eternal Sonship of Christ, they are, therefore, untrustworthy on all, and not to be regarded. However much they may be sneered at by those who deem themselves so much wiser than their fellows, "orthodox commentators" have, by their knowledge of languages and powers of reasoning, shed a good deal of light on many parts of Scripture, and the Bible student, whose only object is truth, will gladly avail himself of their researches, and accept light from any quarter. But for the labours of such the probability is that the English reader would be to this day destitute of a copy of the Scriptures in his mother tongue.

Moreover, disparaging remarks about "orthodox commentators" come with a particularly bad grace from those who do not scruple to quote from their writings when they find anything that harmonizes with their own views, in which latter case it is considered their opinions may be very appropriately made use of "O consistency, thou art a jewel!" In the absence of a "Thus saith the Lord," or an "It is written," which affirms that Jesus was under condemnation to death in Adam, we must continue to stand fast in our present position, and decline to take a backward step to the apostacy. Mere inferences and assumptions will not do. We rejoice in the additional light which we have obtained concerning the Lord's Anointed One, and remain as unconvinced by the arguments of our opponents as we are unmoved by their denunciations.

S. G. HAYES. 89, North Sherwood Street Nottingham, March 10th, 1874.

RE-IMMERSION

To the elect strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, the apostle Peter wrote, "Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is within you with meekness and reverence."

The majority of our readers have been the subjects of the process indicated by the word which introduces these remarks. Many have yielded to a second immersion because in their previous immersion among the different bodies to whom they belonged there was no knowledge or belief in that which Christ commanded men to seek first, namely, The Kingdom of God; and also because they held erroneous and un-scriptural views upon the nature of man, which individually amounted to a denial of the plain New Testament doctrine that eternal life is a conditional gift from God at the resurrection of the dead.

When enlightened on these things, not a few who had been baptised in the faith of them, were re-baptised on account of certain incorrect ideas pertaining to the things of the Name, and judgment in the mortal state after resurrection.

The more intelligent part of our community submitted again to the baptismal rite, and certain who now bid very high for power showed some reluctance, if not obtuseness, but yielded afterwards.

All this arose from the study of the later writings of Dr. Thomas, who set the doctrine of judgment in a clear and scriptural light. But the Doctor did not inform his readers whether, in consequence of this fresh light, he himself had been re-immersed. On the other hand, we can say with confidence that, when appealed to by some as to the need for that step on their part - though previously ignorant of, if not opposed to, the newly found truth - he gave his opinion in the negative.

We are not aware that this re-immersion caused any rupture in the body but there was some division on the subject, of the judgment.

But the greatest movement experienced by our community arose out of the recently received, and openly acknowledged doctrine that Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh was not in the same relationship to sin as all the posterity of Adam. This has already been the cause of a large portion of our body being re-immersed. This re-immersion went on, and still continues in spite of loud warnings of "suicide," and still louder threatenings of wrath. Nothing could, or can yet be seen in all this but "dishonesty" and

“malignity” on the part of some, while the general movement is regarded as a wholesale march “back to Babylon” and all her abominations.

It has been often asked, and as often answered, What are the grounds for this re-baptism. But it seems good at this time to give an answer once for all.

First. We formerly believed that the Redeemer was by His birth in human flesh sold under sin, or in other words, was condemned to death like every descendant of Adam, and was therefore “by nature a child of wrath, even as others.”

Secondly. As it is our practice to preach what we believe, we always preached this doctrine; and it will be found here and there, in the pamphlets which bear our signature.

But the reader will always observe on referring to those passages that we have fallen into the too general mistake of asserting the thing without proving it; and that when we have quoted a text - but that is seldom - in support of the assertion, that text will be found to fail of the intended purpose. It is therefore with some regret - and we had almost said amusement - that we see our opponents hurling these passages at our head, for they are as harmless as snow-flakes.

Certainly it would be unwarrantable to descend into the waters of baptism on the attainment of every previously unknown scriptural truth; but we believe it needful to the putting on of Christ to have a clear rudimental knowledge of Himself and of His kingdom.

If we hold it necessary to abandon the popular doctrines of heaven and the soul to render immersion valid, is it not equally necessary to renounce a doctrine which virtually ranks the Lord Jesus Christ among sinners? In all matters we would wish to let conscience have her way, and being enlightened by the word of Christ, to go where she leads. Having, as Peter saith, a good conscience, that whereas some speak evil of us, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse our good conversation in Christ.

EDITOR.

DISCOVERY OF THE TRUE MOUNT SINAI. - Dr. Beke, the English traveller, reports from the Gulf of Akabah that he has found the true Mount Sinai, one day’s journey north-east of Akabah. It is called by the Arabs Jebel el Nur, or Mountain of Light. Its height is 5,000 feet

REVELATION X.

O, mighty Angel of the Lord!
The wielder of His two-edged sword,
O, Prince of Peace!
Lift up thy hand to heaven and swear,
By Him whose power thou dost bear,
That time shall cease!

Thy souls beneath the Altar cry,
For vengeance on the enemy,
Who still prevails
To keep them in captivity,
Thy prisoners of hope to be,
When nature fails.

Answer in accents still and clear,
The Spirit’s question to the seer,
Can these bones live?
Send forth the winds of vital breath,
To raise them from the dust of death;
Their sins forgive!

Cause them to stand before thy face,
Partakers of the Father’s grace,
Which thou dost bring;

That, as thy Majesty Divine,
They may “the glory” ever shine
Of Israel’s King’

Reveal thy Sons of Spirit birth,
As “Son of man” to conquer earth,
And reign supreme!
When subject nations own thy sway,
And every law and word obey,
From New Jerusalem!

O, Great Redeemer! Zion waits
To enter in thy Aion gates!
Thy Righteousness!
O call her children to thy throne,
And let the Father’s will be done;
Come forth and bless!

D. B.

JERUSALEM.

**By JERUSHALEME, a converted Jew, who for his Christianity has been disinherited
by his father, and driven into exile: now at Malta.**

Ancient of cities! admir’d of the nations!
Best of Jehovah! His chosen delight;
Well may we mourn thee with sad lamentations,
Fallen thy greatness, and faded thy light.
And the rainbow of promise that gleamed on thy brow,
Is hid by the cloud that hangs o’er thee now.

Land of the Prophet! whose mystic revealings
Dimly enlighten all tribes but thine own!
Thine are the records of wonderful dealings,
Lost or unmark’d by thy children alone:
And strangers and aliens, whilst thou art forlorn,
Rejoice in birth-right to which thou art born.
Land of the minstrel! so sadly foreboding
Woe after woe on thy children and thee;
Linked with the joy, and its sweetness corroding,
Just as the blight-worm is linked to the tree.
Yet the poet e’en now, when he touches his lyre,
Must wake at thine altar the spark of his fire.

Land of the Martyr! whose seed sown in weakness
Is whitening the earth with a harvest of grace;
Thine was the worship all gorgeous with splendour,
Trumpets, and cymbals, and anthems of praise:
‘Twas in thy wide cradle Messiah was lain,
And in thee for the sins of the people was slain.

Where is the outcast that shared in thy glory?
Where is the lost one so favoured of yore?
Driven from thy temple, its stones lie unbuilt,
Banished thy vineyards, they blossom no more!
And the soil that enamell’d with verdure thy lawns,
Now, he is an exile, bears briars and thorns.

Vainly the infidel plants on thy border
Corn for his garner, or grapes for his cup;
Dew from the Lord is withheld that must water,
Blights are around thee that wither it up:
And the land in her Sabbath is waiting the day
When the dew shall return and the desert look gay.

'Twas not for him thou wast placed in the sunlight,
Gilding thy temples and painting thy flowers,
Lebanon's cedars have languished before him,
Carmel and Sharon look sere in their bowels,
And sower and reaper but labour in vain,
And wealth may not purchase that splendour again.

Sadly the wanderer mourns thee in absence;
Waking or sleeping - his home is in thee,
Feeds on the water and bread of affliction-
A proverb, reproach, and a bye-word is he!
Poor child! and the stranger that looks on thee now,
Reads the price of his sin in the brand on thy brow.

Weary of wandering and worn with oppression;
Owned of no country, and favoured by few!
Who shows thee kindness to lighten thine exile?
Or yields to thy sorrow the sympathy due?
In the hour of affliction mankind is thy foe,
And no brother hast thou but the brother in woe!

Who could but weep to behold thee degraded?
Beauteous for station, the joy of the earth!
If I forget thee in my exaltation,
Yea, if I hold thee not chief in my mirth,
Then may my right hand its cunning forget,
And my tongue in the silence of sorrow be set.
Lift up thine eyes to this burthened horizon;
Child of the promises, what dost thou see?
Bright golden streaks, growing wider and brighter,
Break through the darkness and gleam upon thee;
And the shaking of nations, in Nature's last groan,
Is paving the way of thy King to His throne.

He comes, Oh, Jerusalem! wake from thy slumbers,
And shake off the dust that encumbers thy strength!
The dust of defilement long years have rolled on thee;
The day of redemption dawns on thee at length,
Thy temple shall rise from its ruins more bright,
And the nations around thee shall walk in thy light.

He comes! Oh thou daughters of mourning and sadness,
Awake, and put on thee thy bridal array!
He comes to restore thee to glory and gladness -
Rejoice in the message He brings thee to-day;
In a moment of wrath thou wert hidden from me,
But with love everlasting have I loved thee!

Jewish Chronicle.

SUBSTITUTION.

BRO. Smith, of Edinburgh, referring to my recent tour in Scotland, after telling how successfully he had defeated me on every occasion, says, "the whole theory is substitution." The mere utterance of the word seems sufficient refutation to Bro. Smith. This may be taken as a sample of what he is delighted to call nonplussing, defeating, and being beaten.

Substitution means the placing of one person in the position of another. Such as a just one for an unjust, a living one for a dead, one who knew no sin for one who had sinned, etc. Perhaps Bro. Smith would favour us with a definition of the principle involved in these quotations, as he objects to the word substitution.

THE FATHER AND THE SON.

"They have never clearly realised the Father, and knowing not the Father, how can they know the Son." Father and Son express the relative position of two personalities. The Son is not the Father, and the Father is not the Son. The Son is the descendant of the Father, and the Father is the progenitor of the Son. I thought Bro. Smith knew this, but his expression of surprise implies ignorance. Adam was the son or descendant of the Almighty by creation from the dust of the ground, Jesus was the Son or descendant of the Father through the Spirit or power of the Highest operating upon the substance of Mary. "They are not able to see that the relation to God is a moral relation first, and a physical afterwards."

Here I confess myself beat and nonplussed, etc., if Bro Smith means to say that Jesus had no physical relationship to the Father, before He had a moral. Indeed, moral relationship is impossible apart from a physical. To know a Father of this kind is impossible. Natural or physical first, and then moral or spiritual is the order of the Father revealed in the scriptures. The charge of being proud boasters etc., may safely be allowed to pass off as so much waste steam. It bulks well in a bad case. "When brought publicly before the brethren, he was not able to repel the darts of the truth." This is not true, I never fought against the truth, but against certain opinions held by Charles Smith and others, who confound these opinions with the truth, and foolishly suppose that all who oppose them oppose the truth. I set forth what I believed to be the truth privately and publically, and did not require the brethren to bring me before them. Bro. Smith knows that the public discussions we had were brought about by myself, and in both instances I took the initiative and would be delighted to do so again, anywhere and under any circumstances, because I am satisfied that what Bro. Smith calls the truth is not the truth according to the scriptures, but according to certain philosophic theories of no substitution, and Jesus being the moral Son of God and the physical son of Adam etc.

I accept as sincere his sorrow and yearning after me, and cherish that same feelings towards him. But he says, "I hate his false way." Here his meaning is obscure. That he hates the doctrine is manifest; but that I have taken false ways in seeking to propagate it is a groundless assertion that he must be prepared to prove. That I made no mention of my notable defeat in Glasgow is not to be wondered at. Who ever recorded his own defeat? Bro. Smith will see a reference to that defeat in the Lamp for March. If he will now with his pen furnish us with the grounds upon which he claims the victory over me, I shall endeavour to publish it in the Lamp and elsewhere as much as possible.

WILLIAM ELLIS.

REFERENCE TABLET, No. 3, BY W. **(Continued from March, Page 22)**

CONCERNING PRIESTHOOD.

1. Whether Jesus commenced to act as Priest upon earth or in heaven appears to be an unsettled question with some. While this is being decided, let us not forget that wherever Jesus offered, He offered Himself without spot. Heb. ix. 14, 1 Peter i. 19.
2. Jesus was undoubtedly anointed Prophet, Priest, and King, while on earth; but He did not officiate as Priest, any more than as King, while upon earth; for He did not belong to the tribe of Levi, and therefore could not act as Priest upon earth while the Mosaic Law was in force. Heb. viii. 1, 2.

3. There is a contrast (which ought not to be overlooked) as well as a parallel betwixt the Aaronic and the Melchisedec Priesthood made by Paul, as may be seen on carefully reading the 5th, 7th, 8th, and 9th chapters of his letter to the Hebrews. We will give that contrast in some of its most essential particulars.

<p>1. Paul says many things in his letter to the Hebrews concerning the Aaronic Priesthood which would be readily understood, seeing they were addressed to Jews who had been well instructed in the Law.</p> <p>3. Eleazar, Aaron's son, and those who followed were of the tribe of Levi, and Priests of the order of Aaron, and were not suffered to continue by reason of death. Heb. vii. 23.</p> <p>5. Aaron was made Priest after the law of a carnal commandment. - Heb. vii. 16.</p> <p>7. The Aaronic Priesthood in a sense were holy, but they were not absolutely "harmless or undefiled," and certainly not "separate from sinners," and, as a consequence, had to offer first, for their own sins, and secondly, for the people's. Heb. vii. 26, 27.</p> <p>9. Aaron took the lives of the victims, the blood of which ran down to the bottom of the altar, some of the blood he sprinkled upon the mercy seat. - Lev. xvi. 14, 15.</p> <p>11. The Aaronic Priesthood could not officiate without an altar and victim.</p> <p>13. The Mosaic mercy-seat was the lid of the Ark, in which was the pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded.</p> <p>15. Aaron entered the Holiest once every year with the blood of others. Lev. Xvi. 11-15. Heb. ix. 7.</p> <p>17. The Aaronic Priest took the blood without the victim, for the victim was dead.</p> <p>19. Aaron took the blood into the presence of God to represent the victim as having been slain, for the Mosaic Law could not give life. Gal. iii. 21.</p> <p>21. Levi, the father of the Aaronic Priesthood, was blessed by and paid tithes to Melchisedec when in the loins of his father Abraham. Heb. vii. 9,10.</p> <p>23. Without all contradiction the less, i.e. the Aaronic Priesthood is blessed by the greater. Heb. vii. 7.</p>	<p>2. Paul says he had many things to say about Melchisedec which were hard to be uttered, because they (the Hebrews) were dull of hearing, so much so, that, when for the time they ought to have been teachers, they had need to be taught even the first principles of the oracles of God. Heb. v. 11, 12.</p> <p>4. Jesus, God's Son, was of the tribe of Judah, and a Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and abideth a Priest continually. Heb. vii. 3.</p> <p>6. Jesus was made Priest after the law of an endless life. Heb. vii. 16.</p> <p>8. Jesus was absolutely holy, harmless, undented, and separate from sinners, and therefore had not to offer first for His own sins, but for the people's only. Heb. vii. 26, 27.</p> <p>10. Jesus laid down His Own life, the blood of which ran down to the bottom of the cross, and in its descent was sprinkled upon Himself as the true mercy-seat.</p> <p>12. Jesus is Altar and Victim, as well as Priest, all combined in His Own Person. - Heb. xiii. 10</p> <p>14. The Melchisedek mercy-seat has in Himself the True Bread of Life (Manna) and in Him, and Him only, is the bud and blossom of life.</p> <p>16. Jesus entered the Holiest (Heaven itself) once for all by (not with) His Own Blood. Heb. ix. 12.</p> <p>18. The Melchisedec Priest took the victim without the blood, for the victim was alive.</p> <p>20. Jesus, the Victim, entered into God's presence in person without the blood, for a law had been given Him, obedience to which had given Him life. Heb. ix. 24.</p> <p>22. Jesus did not proceed from Abraham's loins and, consequently was not blessed by, and did not pay tithes to Melchisedec.</p> <p>24. If Jesus had proceeded forth and come from Abraham's loins, then without all contradiction Melchisedec would be a greater Priest than Jesus.</p>
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ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. E., of Buffalo, sends the following questions for reply: -

1st - Was Abraham's sacrifice a type of Christ? and who acted as Priest in both cases?

2nd - In the types and shadows under the law the Priests anointed the Kings: who acted as Priest in the anointing of Jesus?

3rd - What is the difference between the God of Israel, as revealed in the Old Testament, and the New

4th - What is the anti-type of God dwelling in the Tabernacle, also in Solomon's Temple?

5th - Please explain John x. 30 to 33 verses, also xiv. 7, 11.

6th - When Paul declared to the Athenians the "Unknown God," of Whom did he speak?

Answer 1st - Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son no doubt typified that God would provide and sacrifice His Son on a future day, which Abraham saw and was glad. The Priest in both instances being God Himself. The subordinate in the first instance was Abraham, whose faith was counted to him for righteousness. The subordinates in the second were Caiaphas and Pilate, who from envy and ignorance caused Jesus to be slain, according to the purpose of the Almighty.

2nd - Under the law Kings existed by sufferance and were not invariably anointed by Priests. Samuel, who was Prophet, Priest, and King, anointed Saul and also David by the instructions of God, who reserved to Himself the exclusive right of nominating His representative over Israel His kingdom. Any one chosen by God to anoint a subordinate would do, but He Himself anointed Jesus of Nazareth as His Prophet, Priest, and King, over Israel and also all the nations of the earth.

3rd - There is no difference between the God of Israel under the Old Testament or Covenant and the New. The Old was a shadow, type, or image of the New, made by the only living and true God, to point out the means of obtaining eternal life which is to be enjoyed under the New. The Judges, rulers, or subordinate gods under the law were mortal, imperfect, and sinful men; but under the New they will be immortal, perfect, and sinless: hence the manifestation of the same perfect God in the New differs from that under the Old, but the being manifested is the same.

4th - The Tabernacle pitched in the wilderness typified the Perfect dwelling in the imperfect, such as now exists wherever the truth has been believed and obeyed since Jesus Christ was on the earth. Solomon's Temple represented a state of rest and peace such as can only exist under David's Son and Lord, after He has established His kingdom.

5th - The passages in John x. 30 to 33 and xiv. 7 to 11, teach that in certain aspects Jesus and the Father were one. In these verses it is manifest that Jesus referred to the giving of eternal life to His disciples or sheep. The right to raise the dead and give eternal life to any He pleased belonged exclusively to the Father. Jesus had already shewn that He could raise the dead, heal the sick, open the eyes of the blind, etc., and therefore He had proved He was in the possession of the power which belonged to God only. He said He was the Son of God, and as evidence that so it was, He referred to what He did, and added, "I and the Father are one." If you say one in flesh and blood it would imply that the Father could die. If you suppose one in power Jesus says, "My Father is greater than I." If you suggest one in personality you have Jesus praying to Himself and refusing to deliver Himself, and, after dying because He could not deliver Himself, He raised Himself up again.

He who saw Jesus saw the Father's Son who had all things delivered into His hands but did not see the personality of the Father. To confound the personality of Father and Son is to deprive one's self of the means of honouring the Son even as we ought to honour the Father who sent Him, and therefore to dishonour both and defeat the purpose of His life.

6th - When Paul addressed the Athenians, he declared to them the God who made the world; who made all nations of men out of one blood; who determined or arranged the times and conditions of their existence; and who is to rule the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ, whom He raised from the dead for that purpose.

J. E. asks: "How do you reconcile Heb. vii. 27. With Ez xlv. 22.?"

Here it might be asked: "How can anyone confound or combine the two passages, and suppose they refer to the same person?" Heb. vii. 27, states that Jesus offered Himself up once a sacrifice; and because the apostle says the high priest offered daily first for his own sins and then for the errors of the people, it is inferred that Jesus offered for His own sins, i.e., for being a constitutional sinner. This, we contend, overlooks the part of the type which applies to Jesus. He had no personal sins to offer for, and, therefore, had only to offer for the errors of the people. When the high priest had offered for his own sins he was clean; Jesus and he were then on a par - the high priest purged from his own sins, and Jesus who never had

any of His own. The high priest, by offering for the errors of the people, perfected for a short period the offering for them; Jesus, by offering up Himself, perfected for ever those for whose errors He offered, and became the Propitiatory or Mercy-seat, or Mediator, for the sons of Adam for all time coming, beyond the time of His offering. To suppose that Jesus inherited sin by descent from Adam, and then to suppose that the inherited sin in Jesus, is equivalent to the actual transgression in the Aaronic high priest, is to suppose what is contrary to fact, for Jesus was not a descendant of Adam, like the high priest, and, therefore could not inherit his sin in that sense. The assumption that the prince referred to in Ez. xlv. 22 is the Christ is altogether gratuitous, and without any foundation excepting in the word Prince. The whole earth is the Messiah, the Prince's inheritance, and He is not dependent upon getting a small portion at the redistribution of the land, as shewn in verse 7 neither is he in danger of oppressing Israel, as hinted at in verse 8; nor does He or any of his associate immortal princes or priests, require the exhortation of verse 9. It seems more natural to conclude that the prince, along with his subordinate princes, belong to those who have been appointed over the house of Israel by the Messiah, the Chief Prince.

WILLIAM ELLIS.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CHRISTADELPHIAN LAMP."

Listowel, Ont., U.S.A., Feb. 5th, 1874.

Dear Bro. Turney, - We are just in receipt of the first three Nos. of the Lamp, from a perusal of which, and Bro. Handley's letter, we see that we have been grossly deceived by "the Editor's" report in his Christadelphian; but at this we are not surprised, in view of the misrepresentations of us and our teachings during the past four years.

Now, in regard to the general arguments of the question at issue, I cannot enter into them here as fully as I would wish, but would just say that I find on many of the points where you differ with R. R. we perfectly agree with you. We long since renounced the God-dishonouring idea of the polluted and sinful nature of Jesus, as taught by the Dr. and R. R. All the types teach that the flesh of Jesus was pure and spotless, as well as his character: he was holy, harmless, and undefiled, both mentally and physically; I can endorse all you have said on that matter most fully. Sinful flesh is a myth of their own creation. Flesh that had been sold or mortgaged to sin as the master is one thing, and sinful flesh is quite another thing.

We hold and teach that Adam sold himself and all in him, or all his posterity, to sin, and in this way condemnation to death, as the penalty, fell upon all men. Jesus, being one of the race, must of necessity be liable to pay that penalty, just as an heir to an estate is liable for all debts and encumbrances contracted by his predecessors. Now the life of Jesus in the days of His flesh was a flesh and blood life, which was never intended by the Deity to exist for ever. Jesus was mortal, and so was Adam before he fell. Redemption from that mortal constitution was just as necessary for Jesus as for you and me, and when the mortal life was exchanged for the immortal, and the corruptible was exchanged for the incorruptible, in the presence of the Father, then He entered into the holy place, and thus obtained eternal redemption for Himself, and He now holds it in reserve for all the members of His body.

Now, Bro. Turney, you need not try to get over this, for Paul most distinctly declares that He obtained this eternal redemption for Himself, as no Greek scholar will dispute; but pray do not quote that spurious addition "for us" any more, for Paul did not say so. The translators knew this, and did not dare to represent the "for us" as Paul's own, but put the words in italics to show they were added; but we see that was not honest, for they well knew, or ought to know, that the reflective voice referred to Himself, pure and simple. And why not? Did not Jesus require redemption from a nature that was liable to decay? And who can deny that Jesus' flesh and blood life was not thus liable?

But redemption from that state is very different from a redemption from a sinful and polluted physical nature, as R. Roberts and others would have it. On this point the Marturion will stand by you shoulder to shoulder. I am happy to learn from your writings that you have renounced that foolish speculation of the third day perfection, or the ascension of Jesus to the Father on the morning of his resurrection, so utterly contrary to all inspired testimony, and that you now advocate that same truth, for which advocacy we were denounced as "heretics, false teachers, thorns and briars," in the very same sheet where that truth had first been elaborated by its "Editor." I allude to the offering in the heaven itself, so we are agreed on that

matter. The only point of difference between us and you seems to be this: we teach that the flesh and blood life of Jesus had been forfeited by Adam to sin, and it was necessary that His flesh and blood life should be given up, and in thus giving it up He paid the debt and freed Himself and all His body, as a unit, from its claims. What is there in this to stumble at? It was no fault of His that Adam had incurred a debt, and that the law claimed payment of the heir. On the other hand, you seem to teach that Jesus was not a son of Adam, and, therefore, under no obligation to pay the debt on His own account, but only for the benefit of the rest of the family: here is where we differ. But we hope this may yet be adjusted, that we may fight ere long under one banner. - Yours in the hope of the Gospel. - W.H.Hacking, Editor of the Marturion.

We shall answer this letter in our next.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "CHRISTADELPHIAN LAMP."

DEAR BROTHER TURNEY - The following extract is selected from the Works of Professor Finney, an American Presbyterian Minister. But, I suppose, if it should fall across the path of R. R. or any of his followers, they will say that the doctrine is false because it emanated from one of the apostacy, and therefore those who believe it cannot be wide awake. I wonder if he is aware that the opinion he holds of the vii. chapter of Romans, that no writer is known to have held that view for centuries after it was written, and on good authority it has been supposed that Augustine was the first writer that exhibited this interpretation, and that he resorted to it in a controversy with Pelagius; therefore R. R., according to his own reasoning, cannot be wide awake: -

"Sinners often plead their sinful nature as a justification. This excuse is a good one if it is true. If it is true, as they pretend, that God has given them a nature which is itself sinful, and the necessary actings of their nature are sin, it is a good excuse for sin, and in the face of heaven and earth, and at the day of judgment, will be a good plea in justification. God must annihilate the reason of all the rational universe before they will ever blame you for sin if God made you sin, or if He gave you a nature that is itself sinful. How can your nature be sinful? What is sin? Sin is a transgression of the law. There is no other sin but this. Now, does the law say you must not have such a nature as you have? Nothing like it. The fact is, this doctrine overlooks the distinction between sin and the occasion of sin. The bodily appetites and constitutional susceptibilities of the body and mind when strongly excited, become the occasion of sin. So it was with Adam. No one will say that Adam had a sinful nature. But he had, by his constitution an appetite for food, and a desire for knowledge. These were not sinful, but were as God made them, and were necessary to fit him to live in this world as a subject of God's moral government; but being strongly excited, as you know led to prohibited indulgence, and this became the occasion of his sinning against God. They were innocent in themselves, but he yielded to them in a sinful manner, and that was his sin. When the sinner talks about his sinful nature, as a justification, he confounds these innocent appetites and susceptibilities, with sin itself. By so doing he in fact, charges God foolishly, and accuses Him of giving him a sinful nature when in fact his nature, in all its elements, is essential to moral agency, and God has made it as well as it could be made, and perfectly adapted to the circumstances in which he lives in this world. The truth is, man's nature is all right and is as well fitted to love and obey God, as to hate and disobey him. Sinner! the day is not far distant, when it will be known whether this is a good excuse or not. Then you will see whether you can face your Maker down in this way; and when He charges you with sin turn round and throw the blame upon Him. Do you inquire what influence Adam's sin has then had in producing the sin of his posterity? I answer it has subjected them to aggravated temptation, but has by no means rendered their nature in itself sinful." -

Yours in the one hope, W. CLEMENT.

WHY SAY YOU? - By W.

A SEQUEL TO “HOW SAY YOU?”

“Why say you” that Jesus was a descendant of Adam, and that He was condemned to death in him? If so, “Why say you” that the grave could not hold Jesus, but that it could and has held Adam for over 5000 years?

Was it because Jesus was not personally in that transgression? If so, “Why say you” that millions of Adam’s descendants who were not personally in that transgression will never see the light? If it is not possible for some who die in Adam (although not personal transgressors), to be raised from the dead. “Why say you” that Jesus could be a descendant of Adam and yet the grave had no power over Him? If it is necessary for a descendant of Adam, who wishes to attain to a resurrection from the dead, to be taken out of the first Adam, and consequently from under his transgression, “why say you” that Jesus must die with Adam’s transgression upon Him, and that He need not to have been removed from under that condemnation previous to His death, when He at the same time wished to be raised again from the dead.

If Jesus was the second Adam for the purpose of accomplishing, by obedience, what the first Adam failed to accomplish on account of his disobedience, “Why say you” He was made a partaker of the first Adam’s disobedience for the better fulfilment of all righteousness?

If it is necessary for Adam’s descendants to have all their sins remitted and to have no condemnation resting upon them, and afterwards to continue in a holy walk and conversation to the end of their lives in order to a resurrection, “Why say you” that Jesus, God’s well beloved Son in whom He was well pleased, was a descendant of Adam who ended his career with the condemnation full upon him.

If none of Adam’s descendants who die with only Adam’s condemnation upon them will ever rise again, “Why say you” that Jesus is a descendant of Adam, and yet profess to believe in His resurrection? If you say that Jesus is not a descendant of His Father because “the cardinal idea of descent is at least oneness of nature,” and Jesus was not of the nature of His Father, “Why say you” that redemption by sacrifice was necessary at all; seeing that God could not die and that no man in the same condemnation could redeem us, and yet at the same time hold that God found a ransom? If you say that Jesus got clear of Adam’s condemnation by dying, and so obtained life, “Why say you” that none of Adam’s other descendants can get clear of it in the same way? “Why say you” that they must get clear of it a long time before death, the longer the better, so that they may have time to serve God and keep His commandments?

“Why say you” that a descendant of Adam cannot acceptably serve God and keep His commandments until his sins are pardoned and all condemnation taken away, and yet at the same time that Jesus as a descendant of Adam could and did acceptably serve God the whole of His life with the condemnation not taken away. If Jesus could and did fulfil all righteousness while under condemnation in Adam, “Why say you” that none of Adam’s descendants, not even one, have it in their power to act righteously until their condemnation is removed?

If Jesus was the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep, and who came to seek and to save the lost sheep, “Why say you” that Jesus was one of the lost sheep, by saying His life was condemned in Adam? If the Kingdom of Israel and Judah is the Kingdom of God, “Why say you” that the one great qualification for Jesus to be God’s Heir to that Kingdom should be condemnation in Adam? and “Why say you,” at the same time, that for descendants of Adam to become heirs with Jesus there must be no condemnation attach to them as the first great qualification to joint-heirship? “Why say you” that disobedience to God’s law becomes a fixed principle called sin in the flesh of the disobedient, without, at the same time, admitting that obedience to God’s law becomes a fixed principle of righteousness in the flesh of the obedient?

“Why say you” that the sentence of death passed upon Adam was not death eternal in the absence of a Redeemer, and at the same time, “Why say you” that all who cannot or will not accept of God’s plan of redemption will sleep a perpetual sleep and not wake again? And “Why say you” that, if the sentence upon Adam was eternal death, Jesus ought to have died eternally; you can only say so by supposing first that Jesus was condemned in Adam, and by supposing, secondly, that Jesus died as a substitute for Adam, neither of which suppositions are true, for Jesus was neither a substitute for Adam nor yet condemned in Adam? “Why say you” that Jesus proceeded forth and came from Adam’s loins in the face of His own saying, that He proceeded forth and came from God His Father? Finally “Why say you” that those who scripturally teach that Jesus was begotten by God are sophists who use good words and fair speeches in order to deceive the simple? And “Why say you” that those who merely admit that Jesus was begotten by God, but that He proceedeth forth and came from Adam’s loins also, and thus make Him have two begetting Fathers, are, by sound logical argument, endeavouring to make wise the simple ?

EXTRACTS.

MATTHEW III. 4. - "And his meat was locusts and wild honey."

Some commentators are of the opinion that the food of John, in the wilderness, was not the real locusts, but the bud of the locust tree, a shrub common in Judea; there is, however, little doubt that this assertion is incorrect, as the insect was not only ceremonially clean by the Mosaic Law (Lev. xi. 22), but has been used as an article of food from the most remote antiquity. Some of the Ethiopian tribes, from this circumstance, received the appellation of Acridophagi (locust-eaters), and Pliny relates that they were in high esteem among the Parthians. According to Niebuhr, in Arabia they are caught and put into bags, or on strings, to dry. The Bedouins of Egypt roast them alive, and devour them with avidity. In Barbary they are boiled, and then dried on the roofs of the houses: Jackson, during a short stay there in 1799, saw dishes of them served up at the principal tables, and adds that they were considered a great delicacy. Hasselquist was informed that at Mecca, when there was a scarcity of corn, they ground locusts as a substitute in their hand mills, or pounded them in a stone mortar, and that they mixed the flour with water into a dough, with which they made their cakes. He likewise says that they frequently eat them in time of plenty, but then they boil them first, and afterwards stew them in butter. Bochart informs us that waggon-loads of these insects are brought to Fez, as an usual article of food. The ancient Africans used to smoke or salt and then fry them; and when thus prepared, according to Dr. D. Clarke, their taste resembles that of a river cray-fish. Dr. Shaw was in company with some French emigrants, who assured him that they were not only very palatable, but wholesome, it is probable that John either ate locusts fried with honey, or when there was a scarcity of locusts subsisted on honey alone, with which the rocks and trees of Judea abounded (Deut. xxxii. 13, and 1st Sam. xiv. 26). Honey and butter were a common fare (Isa. vii. 15); and D'Arvieux, while on a visit to the Grand Emir's camp in Arabia, often partook of the mixture, and says that it is not disagreeable even to a novice in the Eastern mode of living.

CRITICA BIBLICA, Vol. I., page 340. T. H. W.

CRITICISMS ON ISAIAH VII. 14.

Jones (in his "Development of Events"), stealing from the Rabbins, applies this verse to Hezekiah; but Hezekiah was then seven years old and the word (virgin) used by Isaiah in the original implies what we understand by a virgin throughout the whole Old Testament; so does the Greek word *παρθενος* which Matthew applied to the Virgin Mary. See Acts xxi. 9; 1 Cor. vii. 25-37; 2 Cor. xi. 2; Rev. xiv. 4.

The Christian Observer, July, 1802, p. 452.

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ECLECTIC.

REMARKS ON MATT. II. 23.

With respect to Christ being called a Nazarene, it was used by the Jews in contempt of Himself and of Galilee, in which Nazareth was; Galilee being despised by the Jews of Jerusalem, on account of the mixed multitude of heathen that lived in it. But the word Nazarene, from the Hebrew Nazar, which signifies a branch alludes to Is. xi. 1; and to other passages of the prophets in which Messiah or Christ is called the branch of Jehovah, and the man whose name is the branch. i.e. Messiah; which very word in other passages of Scripture implies a Saviour. Job vii. 20. By his dwelling at Nazareth, which comes from the same Hebrew word Nazar a branch (from its plants and woods), Christ came to be called a Nazarene; and his abode there shewed him to be the Branch predicted by the prophets; as Nazareth signifies the City of the Branch and this is according to the emblematical manner which prevails throughout the Scriptures.

- The Christian Observer, July, 1802, pp. 452, 453.

ECLECTIC

CRITICAL REMARKS ON EPHESIANS. V. 18.

By the late Dr. Powell.

A difficulty arises from the word *ασωτια*, here rendered 'excess'. Paul was not accustomed to write with so little meaning as appears in this translation. Many passages in his epistles are obscure, but the obscurity proceed from an abundance, not from a want of matter. His ideas seem sometimes to crowd upon him faster than he can express them with regularity or ease; but we find not in his writings any of

those wire-drawn discourses, in which a multitude of words is employed to conceal a deficiency of sense. It is, therefore, reasonable to believe that the word here used has a proper meaning, and it well becomes us to search for it. Its most usual acceptation, for waste, riot, or extravagance, does not agree with this passage. Some indeed of these faults often accompany the other, but they are not the principal reasons against it, nor has the observation thus understood any evident connection with what precedes or follows it.

But there is another use of the word, which, though less common, would naturally occur to the Apostle, and which makes his sentiment clear and important, and connected. Paul was a Roman citizen, and frequently borrowed both his notions and expressions from the laws of his country. Now, when a man's follies or vices were such as rendered him either wholly inattentive to his own affairs, or incapable of conducting them, the Roman laws treated him as an infant or an idiot, and the proctor appointed him a guardian, with full authority to manage all business for him, and without whose consent his actions had no legal efficacy. The Latin word by which the lawyers denoted a person of this character was 'prodigus'; and they who have written the Roman history in Greek, or have translated the Roman laws into that language, constantly use for the person $\alpha\sigma\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma$, and for the character $\alpha\sigma\omega\tau\iota\alpha$. Its full import, therefore, is such a mixture of wickedness and folly as makes a man unfit to conduct himself, and requires him to be put under the guidance and authority of another; and in this technical sense, which in the languages of people not accustomed to the same laws cannot be expressed by any single word, the term seems to be applied by the Apostle. An immoderate use of wine, he would say, destroys a man's understanding, degrades him from the rank of reasonable beings, and deprives him of the valuable privilege of self-government.

The Christian Observer, August, 1802, p. 488
ECLECTIC.

The title of first-born implies the pre-eminent title of Christ to the kingdom and the priesthood; "I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth" Ps. lxxxix. 27, is spoken of Solomon as a type of Christ; for Solomon was not David's first-born, though heir of his kingdom. So Christ is called "the first-born of every creature," i.e., the Lord of nil creation: the "first-begotten of the dead" i.e. the Lord and Judge, for Lazarus and others were raised before Him. So Paul "God hath spoken to us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things;" and again, "When He bringeth in the first begotten, into the world He saith let all the angels of God worship Him;" yet this first-begotten is His only Son (1 John iv 9). This shews that the term as applied to Christ means dominion and Lordship over the creatures; not priority of birth Christ being "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14)

- The Christian Observer, July, 1802, p. 452.

Boothroyd says on this verse, kings and rulers are called from their office "Sons of God" Ps. lxxxii. 6, and the first-born of these sons of God denotes the greatest, the chief. So Michaelis explains. This passage is strictly true of him who was both David's son and Lord. Compare Col. i. 15-18. Heb. i. 6. Rev. i. 5.

ECLECTIC

Star is used in the Scripture and in common language, for any meteor of a star-like appearance; as a "falling star" to which our Savior compares Satan upon the loss of his power. Star in Acts vii. 43, is used for the likeness of a star; and the Hebrew word for it implies any coruscation or glittering, as in Job xx. 25. In the year 1783, several such were seen moving over England to the S.E of Europe; and Zoroaster, the Persian, in the time of Daniel, predicted to the Magi, or Astrologers of Persia, the future appearance of a star which would notify the birth of a mysterious child, the almighty word which created the heavens, whom he commanded them to adore, offering him gifts with profound humility; and this is further confirmed by Abulfuragius, a well-known Arabian writer. The very word star $\alpha\sigma\tau\eta\rho$, is used by Homer for a shooting meteor. Iliad iv. line 75.

The Christian Observer, July, 1802, p. 452.

Zoroaster, the famous reformer of the Magian Sect, had in all probability been a servant to the prophet Daniel; and as he had adopted so many other things in his scheme from the Jewish religion, so there is the highest reason to think he would not fail to instruct his followers in such an interesting point as that of the Messiah's coming, the time and circumstances of which had been so particularly foretold by his

master. Dan. ix. 24-27. Accordingly the writers of the Universal History observe that “ Zoroaster is said by credible authors to have predicted the coming of the Messiah; and this not in dark and obscure terms, such as might have been applied to any other person, but in plain and express words, and such as could not be mistaken.” It seems a groundless conjecture to suppose that the Magi knew the signification of the star by some tradition of Balaam’s prophecy. Num xxiv. 17,

“It is much more probable,” as Doddridge has remarked, “that they learned it by (immediate) divine revelation,” which it is plain they were guided by in their return. Matt. ii. 12. -

Parkhurst Greek Lexicon, under Mayos.

These wise men (Matt. ii. 1) were Chaldean Magi. A conviction had long been spread throughout the east, that about the commencement of our era, a great and victorious prince, or the Messiah, was to be born. His birth was, in consequence of words of sacred Scripture (Num. xxiv. 17), connected with the appearance of a star. Calculations seem to have led the astrological astronomers of Mesopotamia to fix the time for the advent of this king in the latter days of Herod, and the place in the land of Judea. Accordingly, at the appointed time two planets, Jupiter and Saturn, were in conjunction under such circumstances as to appear one resplendent heavenly body, and to marshal the way for the Magi from their own homes to Jerusalem. Bethlehem, and the inn.

[to be continued].

INTELLIGENCE.

BIRMINGHAM. - 17 Wheeler Street, January 19th 1874. To the Presiding officers of the Meeting now held back of No. 16 Islington :- In accordance with the notice given, we, the undersigned, deputed by the Ecclesia, meeting at the Temperance Hall, to examine into the property and funds belonging to the same, on the 30th October last, with a view to a proper division of such property; and having fully gone into and estimated the same, beg to inform you that, upon receiving from you a list of the names of those formerly in fellowship with the ecclesia at the Temperance Hall, but who now constitute the said meeting as Islington, an appointment for that purpose, if such your desire, can be made at once and the matter finally arranged. Yours faithfully, Wm. Whitcomb, Secretary; Charles Smith, Treasurer.

To William Whitcomb and Charles Smith; Dear Brethren, we have received your communication addressed “to the presiding officers” of our meeting, and in answer I am instructed to say that we cannot recognize your authority in the matter upon which you have addressed us. The resolution by which you were appointed, and in virtue of which you presume to act, was passed at an avowedly private meeting of the friends of Bro. Roberts at a meeting from which a considerable number of members of the corporate body, then constituting the Birmingham Christadelphian Ecclesia, was purposely excluded. We have yet to learn that a private meeting of that description was either legally, morally, or scripturally justified in usurping the legislative functions of a general meeting, duly convened, and in coming to any decision whatever respecting property and funds which were only theirs jointly, with those whom they were precluding from having any voice in the disposal. We therefore cannot regard you as lawfully in possession of the powers you have thought proper to exercise, nor can we consent to accept from you what is not justly yours to give. In acquiescing in your allotment we should only be endorsing your unjust action, against which we do now as we have done before, enter our most emphatic protest, regarding as a blot on the fair fame of Bro. Roberts and his “private friends” (which only acknowledgment of the error can condone “He that doeth righteousness is righteous.”) We therefore unanimously decline to accept one farthing of the money you express your willingness to apportion to us, and we request you to read this letter before a general meeting of your body. On behalf of the Christadelphian Ecclesia, worshipping at 16, Islington, I am yours in hope of eternal life, F. S. JONES, Secretary.

Bro. Clement, of Mumbles, and Bro. Ellis of Nottingham, have lectured for us during the past month. **DEVONPORT.** - Bro. Dashper writes, “The Ecclesia at Devonport wishes to inform the brethren scattered abroad that their Meeting-room is at South Street Chapel. The brethren and sisters would be glad of a visit, either at present or during the summer months, from any of the brethren. The attendance at our Sunday evening Lectures is generally very good. Last Sunday, March 8th two individuals paid us a visit, and at the close of the service (which was an endeavour to justify God’s ways in the matter of future punishment, viz., destruction in opposition to eternal torments) expressed their approval of the doctrine advanced, stating that the doctrine preached by the “world’s ministers” was not found in the Word of God.

They have since sent us a tract, with the promise of another on "Future Punishment" when it comes from the printer's hands. May the truth fall into honest hearts, so that the Lord may find a people prepared for His coming.

GRANTHAM. - Bro. Joseph Wootton writes:- "The brethren in this place meet in the house of our Bro. Mr. Win. Edson, 3 South Elmer Street. We are sorry this has not been made known before for two sisters from Leicester, who paid us a visit a few weeks ago, were put to great inconvenience through not knowing our present meeting place. They got to the wrong room, the occupants of which chose not to inform them where we met; result was, they were wandering about the town, and only found us as we were breaking up. We had the pleasure of their company, however, the following Sunday.

GLASGOW. - Bro. Fleming writes in the name of the ecclesia meeting in St Enoch Hall, and says, We are rejoicing in the Truth, yet we feel we are in the night of sorrow - sorrowing to see so many holding so tenaciously to that fearful dogma that Jehovah's Lamb was unclean, though he was God's own well-beloved Son. And in spite of what He said to the Jews, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above." Just what they say to-day, He had all things common with man and therefore He could be tempted from within. Equivalent to saying he had a devil! They are making a great roaring in Glasgow at the present time and are shortly to have the great one from Birmingham to help them. I have no doubt we shall hear of their pointing at us and saying, see, these would be warriors on their march back to Babylon. But these things do not cause us to be cast down, no, we are persuaded that fear is keeping many in their ranks. They appear to forget that the fearful will be excluded as well as the abominable. I have no doubt you will rejoice with us when you hear that another has been added to our number. He put on the Saving Name on Feb. 15th, after being a long time among the Campbellites. His name is Robert Russell, and he was first brought to a knowledge of the Truth by our brother Kerr, of Coatbridge. He is rather advanced in years, but very energetic, and I think may do us good service.

LEICESTER. - 12, Horsefair St., March 13th. Dear Editor and Brother: I have the pleasure and satisfaction to ask you to record, in your next issue of the Lamp, the immersion of my wife, Lucy Elizabeth Weale, 32; who put on that only name whereby we can be saved in the way appointed, on the 27th day of February last. Our lectures at the Temperance Hall have been on the whole fairly attended since my last communication. On Feb. 8th, Bro. F. N. Turney, of Stourbridge, gave a lecture on "the promises made to the fathers of Israel, contrasted with the hopes current in our own day." On the 22nd, Bro. Ellis, of Nottingham, lectured, his subject being "the saying of Jesus - the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." On the Sunday following, Bro. Handley dealt with "the controversy concerning Jesus Christ - was He under the Adamic condemnation?" His object was to reply to certain views enunciated in a lecture by Mr. F. P. Shuttleworth, of Birmingham, the Sunday previous, in which he made use of the genealogy of Jesus to show Him son of David - son of Abraham - son of Adam - and so bring him out of the loins of Adam, and hence under the Edenic curse. This argument, however, unfortunately for our opponents cause, was shown to be lame at the outset, for it does not and cannot prove the Father of Jesus to be in the genealogy at all; and all the genealogy would do for him (Jesus) would be to make him legitimately born and legally entitled to any rights, privileges, and immunities which may arise to him through being in the eye of the law a son of Joseph. He, however, repudiated such extraction Himself (and we ought not to want better authority) when he said to the Jews, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above," and if He spoke the truth, as was His want, when He said to them, "Ye are of your father the devil," He should have held his peace according to our opponents, for they put him in the same category as those He was rebuking for making Him (in the words of a writer in the last Christadelphian) "in diabolos flesh from His birth to His death." What our friends will make of it next it is perhaps hard to say, but, methinks, this last quotation is a very unhappy argument for their cause. Yours in the one hope, CHARLES WEALE.

MALDON. - We were all very glad to meet father again after an absence of six weeks, and to learn of the prosperity and future prospect of the truth in all places where he has been. He has long wished and prayed for a field in which to labour for the Glory of God. The soil in this part of the country seems very barren indeed: we have laboured hard, and willingly, too, to bring the people under the sound of the Gospel, but with very little result, still, we are not discouraged; the command is, "Occupy till I come." In the mean time we rejoice in the glorious hope of everlasting life, thankful for this our day of visitation, we endeavour to encourage and exhort one another to patient continuance in well doing, knowing that the time will speedily arrive when "they shall come from the ends of the earth and say, surely our fathers have inherited lies," etc., and when, under the glorious administration of Christ and His brethren they shall all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent. On Sunday morning 18 of us broke bread together in our Meeting-room, and spent a profitable time. In the afternoon father went to Hazeleigh, and met a goodly number there, all of whom rejoice in the truth as it is in Jesus, recognizing the great love of

God in the gift of His Son, and the forgiveness of sins through faith and obedience in His name. At night, there being no strangers in, father gave us an outline of his sojourn in the Midland Counties, which was very interesting and encouraging. We pray and believe that much fruit will abound to the Glory of God. We expect him to stay at home next Sunday, and the following Sunday he will be in London, and then wherever necessity may require, for, as I said before, there is very little to do here - albeit we mean not to be idle, but as the summer comes on if they won't come and hear inside they must outside.

My brethren, let us labour all,
In every town and village call;
"With fervent zeal, and single eye,
The good news of the kingdom cry,
Make known to sinful, dying men,
That Jesus died and rose again,
From sin and death to set them free,
And give them immortality.
I pray for you, and you for me,
That we may speak unblushingly;
That utterance may to us be given,
To preach those things revealed from heaven
In such a demonstrative style
That God may on our efforts smile;
That men of honest hearts may hear,
And fruit a hundred-fold appear.

C. HANDLEY.

NOTTINGHAM. - The brethren in this town have the pleasure to announce the immersion of John Balm, aged 62, husband of Sister Balm, formerly Campbellite, after passing a very satisfactory examination of the things concerning the Kingdom and Name. The lecture announced in our last issue to be delivered by Bro. Clement, of Mumbles, on Wednesday evening, February 8th, on the subject of "The reward of the righteous," brought together a very fair audience, among whom were many who are not in the habit of attending the lectures delivered at the Synagogue on the Sunday evenings. Our hope is that the truths advanced will be the means of inducing them to look further into the matter. The following Sunday evening lectures have been delivered to very attentive audiences, namely: Sunday, February 22nd, "The destiny of the Wicked," Bro. Handley, of Maldon; March 1st, "The earthly house and the heavenly house; or, the present and future tabernacle of the saints," Bro. Hayes March 8th, "19th century Witchcraft, Spiritualism, a delusion, and a snare," Bro. Ellis; March 15th, "Divine Promises versus Popular Traditions," Bro. Glover.

STOURBRIDGE. - March 10th, 1874. In my last note I omitted to mention the immersion of Phoebe Cope, wife of Bro. Cope, whom you incorrectly reported in the December number as Bro. Hope. On Sunday, February 8th, Bro. Handley paid us a visit and lectured in the evening to a good audience, on "The Baptism of John - was it from heaven or of men?" During Bro. Handley's stay amongst us we arranged a meeting at Brierley Hill, for the benefit of those of the opposite party who live there, thinking that if they could be induced to meet with us for conversation, some good might be done; but although they were very much pressed to come, none of them did so. However, the evening was profitably spent in conversation on the truth, further confirming us in our position.

The lectures on Sunday evenings continue to be well attended, and I am glad to say that the number of interested ones is increasing, and I hope shortly to be able to report more additions to our number.
F. N. TURNEY.

EXTRACTS FROM FOREIGN LETTERS.

BUFFALO. - Bro. J. W. Oakley writes: "We are very much pleased here with the way in which you have set forth the nature and sacrifice of Christ, and think it far ahead of anything yet on this subject. There is one point in your lecture on "The Sacrifice of Christ" which to my mind is not very clear, and needs a little explanation. You say the Prince (or the Christ) offers memorial offerings in the age to come. Now, if this prince be the prince of Ezek. xlv. 22, He offers for Himself and the people, which would not harmonize with the one great offering, for in this Christ did not offer for Himself, and we cannot have a memorial of something that never happened. This brings us to the question whether this Prince is the Christ or not. Ezek. xliii. 4, says "the glory of the Lord came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the East." This glory I believe to be Deity manifested in Christ and His brethren, or the

multitudinous Christ. Now, if this is so, how can we put Christ as the prince worshipping at the threshold of the gate without? Ezek. xlvi. 2. And also whom does the prince (or Christ) worship? An explanation of these things would be thankfully received by a number of brethren.*

NEW YORK. - Bro. J. W. Barton writes: - Speaking of Bro. Latimer as well as for myself in relation to "The Sacrifice of Christ," which has been so much discussed of late, after a careful and thoughtful investigation of the matter, we have been forced to the conclusion that the side of truth is with those who favour an uncondemned Christ. In connection with the subject, it gives me much pleasure to bear testimony to the manner in which you have discussed it - by avoiding all personalities, showing that you are actuated solely by a desire to arrive at the truth.

LISTOWEL, CANADA. - Bro. A. Robinson writes: - We have had to fight the same battle here as you have been fighting, "The Marturion" having taken the same side of the question as the "Christadelphian."* Some of the brethren here cannot see that the Scriptures teach that our Redeemer was "one of the condemned race," as "The Marturion" and the "Christadelphian" teach. Consequently a few of us have withdrawn from the Church (not the Church of Christ) and we now meet together on the basis of an uncondemned Saviour. I have been told by one of the brethren that the Editors of the "Marturion" had expressed their willingness not to mention the subject in the church if we would re-unite with their party. How it will turn out we cannot tell. I am also very sorry to say that the ordinance of the Lord's supper has been discarded here, except once a year, viz., the Passover anniversary. The holding of it on every first day being pronounced a heresy. *Will you be so kind as to give your views on this most important subject through the "Lamp." If anyone on your side of the Atlantic should come to this country on a lecturing tour, I would take it in hand to secure his presence here for a course of lectures, and I would be willing to subscribe liberally towards it myself.

* This Question is briefly dealt with in "Answers to Correspondents," by Wm. Ellis.

* We have this month published a letter received from the Editor of the "Marturion" (W. H. Hacking) to which we refer our readers.

* See "Notices" on cover.