

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 140

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Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

We start this month with two items of good news: firstly, it is with joy that report that Brother Lez Mozley's wife, Chrissie, has accepted our understanding of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ with all that it entails. Sister Chrissie was for many years a Christadelphian together with Brother Lez, but when Brother Lez left the Christadelphian community several years ago in favour of the Nazarene Fellowship, Chrissie remained with them until last June. Since then I understand that Brother Lez and Sister Chrissie have met together with Brother Eric and Sister Lillian Moore around the table of the Lord on several occasions. I am sure all of like-minded faith will rejoice with them and wish them every happiness.

The other item of good news comes from Brother Phil Parry. He writes:

"Greetings in the exalted Name of Jesus. I am pleased to report that on Sunday, 6th December 1992 at 1.15 pm at the Beaufort School Swimming pool, Tuffley, Gloucester, Mr Brian Langford Jones, aged 72, was Baptised into the Name and sacrificial death of Jesus Christ after witnessing a good confession of faith in those things of the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ most surely accepted and believed by us who are called Nazarenes. Our Brother Geoff Hampton was here for the week from 28th November and made the arrangements for the Baptism, myself and Sister Rene being present. I assisted Brother Hampton in the immersion of our new Brother after he had asked him to witness to his faith, we then returned to the home of Brother Jones and after offering our right hands of fellowship we remembered our absent Lord in the symbols of the Bread and Wine, and adding words of encouragement from the Epistles of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul. We commend our new Brother to all of like faith, knowing he will be pleased to hear from you."

Brother Phil Parry.

Thank you to all those who have written since the last Circular Letter. If I haven't already replied to your letters then I hope to do so very shortly.

Brother Eric and Sister Lillian Moore send their sincere best wishes to all Brethren and Sisters hoping that 1993 will see the return of our Lord.

Brother Leo Dreifuss asks for a correction to be made regarding his exhortation in the last C.L. -

"Important correction of error in the exhortation, "The Golden Calf." Right at the start (line 2, Page 4) I said "It was human nature at its worst." It has been pointed out to me, and I discovered it for myself on re-reading, that this phrase can be misunderstood. It is inconsistent with our, and Scripture, teaching that man has been created "very good." So please change "nature" to "behaviour" to make it read "It was human behaviour at its worst."

Other matters raised in correspondence are discussed on pages 8 to 13. On page 17 we have the first of a series of Bible essays by our late Brother F. Lea and I have the next two essays but I believe there are more which I have not seen. Has anyone any of these other essays which they are able to let me have, please?

Best Wishes to all our readers for your welfare in 1993 and may our time of waiting for our Master's return soon be over.

With Sincere Love to all, in the Master's Service. Russell Gregory

CREATION AND PURPOSE

These few thoughts are the result of reading Ecclesiastes chapter three especially verses 1 and 17.

V.1 "To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven."

v.17 "I said in mine heart.... for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

The Scriptures reveal God's purpose to those who seek to know why the earth was created, and come to our aid if we will do as the Lord tells us; "Seek and ye shall find." In our seeking we turn to the prophet Isaiah where, in chapter 45 and verse 18 we read;

"For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the Lord; and there is none else."

In Psalm 19 David tells us, in verse 1, of the physical creation, that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth His handiwork." The heavens and the earth are brought before us in the early chapters of Genesis, also in the concluding chapters of Revelation.

Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

Revelation 21:1, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

The above quotation from Isaiah tells us God formed the earth to be inhabited. David confirmed the heavens declare the glory; but what of the inhabitants who are to declare the glory of the Lord - as Moses, in Numbers 14:21? Concerning which we shall speak later.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth; but when was the beginning, we ask? Much speculation has taken place among men of many callings such as Scientists, Astronomers, Geologists and religious leaders; but where do we stand on this question? Let us accept the statement of Scripture. If it were essential for man to know, God would have caused it to be revealed in a positive form for men to understand, but when looking at the creation the periods mentioned are mostly defined as the "evening and the morning" of the day. Also, when dealing with time, let us remember the words of 2 Peter 3:8,

"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day."

The second verse of Scripture brings before us (as does the remainder of the first chapter) a lot of detail in relation to creation we should not know from verse 1.

"The earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep."

So we have what may be termed the basic elements of God's creation, but they had to be co-ordinated to take their part in God's purpose in creation. Genesis 1:26 and 27, we read:

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image.”

And in chapter 2 verse 7; “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.”

So man was of the earth by creation. Now the words “image” and “likeness” both convey something which can be seen, such as an article, a person, a photograph, an idol, or a sculpture. One well known writer of a past generation says both words have an “optical appearance.”

In the concluding words of Genesis chapter 1 we read;

“And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.”

The first three verses of the next chapter relate to the physical works which took place in the creation by God; and on the seventh day He rested and set that day apart and He blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.”

Now a word about further developments. We are told God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. For the fulfilment of God's purpose men and women require something more than life, which the Oxford Dictionary describes as the active principle peculiar to people, animals and plants to maintain a living state. God requires in addition that the living soul shall develop' character. Character is not an article from an outside source; it is up to the living soul to develop this for himself or herself. The basis upon which character should develop is set before us in Matthew 6:24 to 34, and let us note especially verse 33;

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness...”

In the purpose of God like begets like; parental characteristics are passed on from generation to generation, whether human or animal, or even vegetable.

Another aspect which comes to mind; God, the Creator of all, knowing the many varied attributes and capabilities of man, did not leave him to get on best he could in a newly created world of which he had no experience. Every facility was provided by God for man to develop a suitable character well-pleasing to his Maker. Man had no need to be worried about food, raiment or shelter, for all these things were provided by God, as we have seen in the latter part of Genesis chapter 1 and much of chapter 2, but there was work ahead for him to do – no doubt Adam was created a grown man, for in Genesis 2:8 and 15 we read;

“And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden... And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.”

We all know how quickly a neglected garden can turn into a wilderness where weeds take over and harvests diminish and it takes a lot of hard work for it to be restored to its original beauty. The natural creation has to be fed, pruned, grafted and generally cultivated daily for a continuation of good food and flora. We often wonder what must have been the thoughts of Adam in his first days of life doing the work God had instructed him to do - all for a purpose. This garden, planted by God, must have provided very pleasant surroundings for Adam, and the work he was given to do would keep him in good physical condition. We are reminded in Ecclesiastes 5:12, “the sleep of a labouring man is sweet” and rest is essential to his well being. But there is a vast difference to be seen when we turn to Genesis 2:2 & 3, for here God rested, though not from exhaustion, for “God is Spirit,” as we read in John 4:24, and Spirit life does not tire or grow weary from exhaustion. So we have in creation that which is necessary for natural life, but when we

turn to the matter of character something far more is needed. Rules are brought into being, as in Adam's case we see in Genesis 2:16/17

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying. Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

If we take a step forward in time, similar types can be seen. Many generations later we see, in the Pentateuch, the same provision for character building. The material needs of the children of Israel were provided by God in Egypt and during the 40 years wilderness journey, as we are reminded in Deuteronomy 8:3 & 4,

“And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years.”

All the children of Israel received the many blessings that God gave them during that long journey. All their travelling was done on foot, for few chariots were in existence and these were used for warfare, as for instance, when Pharaoh pursued Israel (Exodus 14). Pharaoh took six hundred chosen chariots and followed Israel into the dry land in the midst of the sea, but then God saved the Israelites by a destruction of their enemies in the midst of the sea. On reading it I think the wheels must have begun to give way near the axle pins and finally broke off; it was then that Moses held out the staff in his hand and the waters returned and all the Egyptians and their equipment of war disappeared in the Red Sea and Israel saw them no more. Surely the Song of Moses was a time for the faithful to rejoice and join in with him.

Yet despite all these wonders witnessed by the children of Israel only two of them were allowed to enter the promised land at the end of the forty years wanderings - Joshua, the son of Nun and Caleb, the son of Jephunneh.

Society always has to have basic laws to live in harmony. During the wilderness journey they were soon set before the children of Israel, as we see in Exodus 20, where we have the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses. Further on into the book of Exodus and continuing into the book of Leviticus we have set before the children of Israel all the details of the moral laws they were to observe. These were given to govern their individual lives and by keeping them, develop character. Among these were life for life, hand for hand, eye for eye, and laws of compensation for damage or loss. In concluding these varied thoughts I wish to refer to the words of Jesus as seen in John 14, replying to the disciples, Thomas and Philip, in verses 5 to 9;

“Thomas said unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father... Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you and yet thou hast not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?”

Referring again to the creation, let us remember that which we are told in Genesis 1:27;

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

So we see that the disciples who had kept the company of Jesus, saw in Him the Father's character; but only three of them saw Him in glory for a few moments on the Mount of Olives, when He was transfigured before them, as recorded in Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9. Thomas and Philip were not with Jesus on the occasion of the Transfiguration, but apart from this event, throughout the time when Jesus was on earth. His manner of life and His compassion for others show us His character being developed. He wept for Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha; He had compassion for the widow of Nain and raised her son to life, whom

it seems, was her only support. Jesus showed righteous anger over the traders in the Temple. In such examples as these and so many others, I feel we might see, by faith, the same as the disciples saw - the Father in the Son; Jesus reflecting His Father's character, the final goal of God's creation, for Jesus came to do the will of God and to reveal His glory.

Stephen saw the glory of God, and Jesus on the right hand of God; and when he was stoned he prayed "with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," forgiving to the last.

And let us close with a few verses from John chapter 17;

"Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee... I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do... And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one..."

Brother Harvey Linggood.

The Two Judgments

There are several passages which teach directly the truth that Judgment to come will take place in two stages. Foremost among them is our Lord's own memorable declaration, John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." It is well known that the word here translated condemnation means judgment, and is so translated in the verse but one previous. The believer shall not come into judgment, when judgment is to be condemnation. No, he shall not be condemned in judgment; he shall not even come into it. The same word is used in verse 27, and again 29, where it is translated damnation. Now this resurrection of damnation, or resurrection to judgment, is clearly that spoken of in Revelation 20; and into that, our Lord Himself declares His people shall not come. There shall be a reckoning of Christ with His people, as many passages which shall be examined presently teach; but this is not judgment. Alford says: "The reckoning which ends with "Well done, good and faithful servant" is not judgment; the reward is of free grace. In this sense the believers in Christ will not be judged according to their works. They are justified before God by faith and by God; "God is He that justifieth - who is he that condemneth?" Their passage over from death to life has already taken place, from the state of the spiritual death, to that eternal life which they have already. It is to be observed that our Lord speaks in very similar terms of the unbelieving being condemned already, in chapter 3, verse 18. The perfect tense of the verb must not be weakened or explained away." Let those who hold that there will be simultaneous judgment of the just and of the unjust explain this statement of our Lord. He does not say that believers shall not be condemned in judgment, but that they shall not come into it. Can anything be clearer than this?

Into what judgment then shall they come? Into one, distinct alike in its objects, principle, results, and period, from the judgment of Revelation 20:12.

In the judgment of sinners the object is to determine their eternal destiny; in the judgment of saints their eternal destiny is already determined; they are, from the moment they believe, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, one with the Lord Jesus, possessors of eternal life, and heirs of eternal glory. The resurrection which precedes their judgment has manifested this; for when Christ their life appears, they appear with Him in glory, they see Him and are like Him, conformed to the image of God's Son. Now it is clear that when these already glorified saints stand before the judgment-seat of Christ, the point to be investigated and settled is not whether they deserve and are to have eternal life and glory; grace has already given them these, though they deserved eternal condemnation: but the point to be investigated and decided is, how far they have been

faithful servants and stewards of their absent Lord; how far their works, as saved persons, can stand the test of Christ's judgment, and what measure of reward each is to enjoy. Their common possession of eternal life does not forbid degrees in glory, and the fact that they are saved by grace does not forbid that they shall be rewarded according to their works. That this is a very different thing from the eternal destiny of each individual being made to depend on his own works, is evident.

The judgement of sinners is on the ground of "rendering to every man according to his works," justice; the judgment of saints is on the ground of grace, for it is grace alone that rewards any of our works.

The judgment of sinners ends in the blackness of darkness for ever; the judgment of saints ends in "then shall every man have praise of God." The one is a judgment of persons, the other of works only. The one, as we have seen, is prefigured in symbolic vision in Revelation 20, the other is spoken of in various places, in the Epistles addressed to the early Church. "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is;" that is, the searching, penetrating, judgment of Christ shall put the works of His people to the test, and only the perfectly pure shall abide the test. Some works, like wood, hay and stubble, will be destroyed by this "fire;" but even so, the man who did them shall be saved; his works may perish but he shall "never perish" according to his Saviour's promise. In Romans 14 Christians are urged in view of this judgment, not to judge each other, "for we shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ," not the "throne," as in Revelation 20:4

The period of the judgment of sinners before the Great White Throne is a thousand years or more after the coming of the Lord. The period of the judgment of saints is fixed to be at the coming of the Lord: "therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God" (1 Corinthians 4:5).

We conclude therefore that these two judgments cannot be the same and that so far from being at variance with other inspired prophecies, the twentieth chapter of Revelation enables us to understand and combine previous statements, and sheds new light on many. Judgment will no more be simultaneous than resurrection, both will take place at two grand epochs, marking respectively the morning and evening of the Day of the Lord; the former will be a resurrection and a judgment unto life

H. Grattan-Guinness

From Your Letters:

Brother Leo Dreifuss writes:-

"Now concerning the section "Jesus said..." of the Sep/Oct Circular Letter, like Sister Evelyn, I cannot agree by a long way that the "slaying" is the conversion of part of Israel. It seems to me, to be quite honest, rather far fetched. You say (middle of page 13 of the Nov/Dec C.L.) that "the angels of Michael being Israel" and make reference to Joshua 5:14; but this was a messenger sent from God to instruct Joshua how to deal with Jericho.

"Just who will kill God's enemies is open to controversy. It could be the angels, the resurrected saints, who, as mentioned in some previous Circular Letter, might be fighting the Lord's battles after their resurrection, or even unconverted Israel. In Old Testament times Israel truly was God's "battle-axe," even the unconverted, unfaithful ones. God uses the wicked as well as the good to fulfil His purpose. Good examples are Pharaoh and Hitler. The former eventually forced Israel to leave Egypt to enter Palestine. The latter, very similarly, brought about the second mass emigration to Israel. I am sure many more will write on this."

With reference to the point Brother Leo makes regarding my statement that "The angels of Michael being Israel," my reference to Joshua 5:14 was to illustrate what happened when Israel went into the

Promised Land the first time. This messenger, I am sure, did more than instruct Joshua on how to deal with Jericho for he said “As Captain of the host of the Lord am I now come” and I believe this Captain was none other than “Michael, your prince” of whom we read in Daniel 10:21, and it was this Captain’s mission to see that Israel were successful in all their battles. For example, it was not Joshua or the Israelites who made the walls of Jericho fall but the power of God exercised I believe by their Captain, Michael, their Prince. In like manner I see the work of Michael in going before Israel in the future as pictured in Revelation 12:7, “Michael and his angels fought against the dragon.” I see Israel (that is, converted Israel, for there will be no one of Israel unconverted at this time) as the angels here referred to, for who else is going to follow Michael into battle, except Israel? Not the “Bride,” the Elect of Christ, for Michael is not their Prince. Jesus Christ is the “Bride’s” Prince, the Prince of Peace. I see Michael as Israel’s Prince.

Sister Evelyn writes:-

“With regard to your interpretation of Luke 19:27 and other relevant Scriptures I am afraid we are not convinced by your further explanation to your point of view as you appear to confuse the preaching of the Gospel with the judgment of the nations at the return of Christ by intimating that the terms “the breath of His lips” and “the rod of His mouth” means His preaching of the Gospel; this preaching will have run its course by then, being fulfilled by Christ’s return; and the judgment of the wicked must take place before peace can be established in the Kingdom of God. This is seen clearly in Revelation 19 especially, and the slaying is definitely literal seeing that fowls of the air are to devour the flesh of Christ’s enemies; in no way can this be made to mean the symbolic slaying or crucifying which we undergo in baptism, this being a confirmation of previous belief in the Gospel, when belief takes place we are no longer enemies and are ready and eager to have Christ reign over us, and as the Remnant of Israel will be when Christ appears to them, so Luke 19:27 does not refer to the symbolic dying with Christ but means a literal putting to death as God’s judgments of the wicked have been throughout the Scriptures, e.g. the flood, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea, the rebels against Moses, the destruction of various nations by Israel as God’s “Battle-axe and weapons of war” as well as various individuals too numerous to mention.

“It is plain to us that Christ and His saints will go to war against His enemies of the nations as Revelation 19 describes, and that the slaying will be literal; some by fire and the remnant by other means, their flesh left for the fowls of heaven to devour, but whether the actual killing is carried out by immortalised saints or by converted Israel is debateable though when we consider that the saints will be equal to the Angels and these in the past have been God’s instruments to carry out His judgments on the wicked, e.g. the angel of death sent to destroy all the first-born of Egypt, those two sent to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, and it would appear that the angel sent to impede Balaam on his unlawful mission would certainly have used the sword to slay him had not God, through the ass, saved him (Numbers 22:23, and 31 to 33).

“In reference to your last paragraph of your letter on page 19 we do not see that what you have said lends any weight in favour of your view as for all we know Solomon may have been present at the killings, as also that of Joab; in any case it is irrelevant, the fact is they were literally put to death.”

On reading Sister Evelyn’s letter it is very evident that I did not make it perfectly clear that it was the Everlasting Gospel that I was talking about and not the Gospel that has been with mankind throughout the Christian era, for this present Gospel will have run its course, as Sister Evelyn says. So again we turn our attention to Luke 19:27 and “Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.”

I see three options open to our understanding of who these enemies are. The first option is seen if we compare this parable of the Pounds in Luke 19 with the parable of the Talents recorded in Matthew 25, and below I have taken extracts from each parable which show some of the similarities between them:

Matthew 25. The Parable of the Talents

v.14. A man travelling into a far country, who called his servants, and delivered unto them his goods.
v.19. After a long time the lord of these servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. v.24. Then he

which had received the one talent came and said, I know thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: and I was afraid and hid thy talent in the earth, lo, there thou hast that is thine. v.27. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. v.30. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Luke 19. The Parable of the Pounds

v.12. A nobleman went into a far country ... and he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds. v.15. And it came to pass, that when he was returned... then he commanded those servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. v.20. And another came, saying, Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. v.23. Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? v.27. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

If these two parables contain the same message then verse 30 of Matthew, “Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness” corresponds to verse 27 of Luke 19, “Those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.” These enemies of Christ being those who do nothing with the money given them - they haven’t allowed Jesus Christ to reign over them during their life time, their “time of probation” as we call it. They showed no faith in Him.

The second option we find by reading a little further in Matthew 25, to verses 32,33,34 & 41; “And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats... and he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” It may be that the enemies of Jesus Christ which He refers to in Luke 19:27 correspond to the “goats” of Matthew 25:32 and 41. This, I think, is the view put forward by Sister Evelyn.

We see then that option one is probably the answer, but Matthew 25:30 makes a clear statement as to who is to be cast out - the unprofitable servant; but Luke 19:27 does not. Option two introduces another group of people - all the nations of the world; and I do not think we can justify this introduction.

That leaves us with the third option, which is my understanding of the matter, for I see this as the moment Jesus makes Himself known to the Remnant of the Jews in Israel who have just been spared because they have called upon God to save them from complete destruction. At this moment they do not know Jesus is their Messiah, so He makes Himself known to them and they are converted – not converted to God, for they believed God and called upon Him, but they needed to be converted to Jesus the Christ.

Taking into consideration the above thoughts I feel the verse in question could be paraphrased thus: ‘But those mine enemies (Jews who know not Christ), which would not that I should reign over them (They have always rejected the validity of Christianity – i.e. Jesus as their Messiah), bring hither (i.e. their leaders, or elders) before me so as to convince and convert them.’ And to this I would add, “for they have a special work to do - to preach the everlasting Gospel to all peoples of the world.” The Jews thus converted at this time are the ones in Israel; the Jews throughout the world will believe their word, and I am here prompted to say more about this Everlasting Gospel, its message, the purpose for it, the effect it will have, and for how long it will be preached. All these matters are revealed in Scripture although only one reference to the Everlasting Gospel by name is made and that is to be found in Revelation 14:6, “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” We see that this preaching of the Everlasting Gospel is to be world-wide. No one will miss out for its message is for all and it is urgent and important.

The time we are considering is when the “wheat” has been “gathered,” the “dragnet” pulled ashore, the “sheep and the goats” are, or about to be, “separated,” and the 2000 year old Gospel is out-dated. The

Jewish nation having already been judged and converted are saved as living witnesses to all people throughout the world - they are in the unique position to preach this new Gospel.

However, the converted Jew in Israel has first to convince their fellows abroad and Psalm 96:1 shows this message: "Sing unto the Lord a new song: sing unto the Lord, all the earth. Sing unto the Lord, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people... Give unto the Lord, O ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth: the world also shall be established that it shall not be moved: he shall judge the people righteously."

Again in Isaiah 12:4-6, "And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: that is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

The above is mainly an exhortation to their fellow Jews but also to extol the praises of God to all people, but going back now to Revelation 14, we see briefly the message of the Everlasting Gospel; verse 7, "Fear God and give glory to him... and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." This message is enlarged in other Scriptures such as Psalm 2, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling... Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." Also Isaiah 55, "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David... Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Those who accept the exhortation to exhibit the faith required are seen in Psalm 24:3-6, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." And how do we know that this is a prophecy for this time; has it not always applied to all generations? The Psalmist goes on to tell us, "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face O Jacob."

There are many more prophecies which we have habitually taken to apply to all time and should, perhaps, be specifically applied to the Everlasting Gospel.

But opposition to the Jew will be extensive and fierce. Fanatics of false religions and superstitions and the atheist will oppose this new teaching with vigour and perhaps, with ferocity. The Jews will not find it easy to convince large sections of the worlds population, hence the prophecy, "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and there rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." (Psalm 2). But Revelation 14:7 tells us the reason for the urgency of the preaching - "For the hour of his judgments is come." And Psalm 2 also tells u how God will respond to man's efforts: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." And yet again - Psalm 97:3, "A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightning enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory. Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols."

But the Kingdom is about to be established and God's will is to be done in the earth as it is now done in heaven. That means that the will of man cannot be allowed to prevail over the will of God any more. Man's will is to be severely restricted and this restraint will be felt most severely by those who oppose the

Everlasting Gospel, and their rejection of it will mean their destruction. “And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. And the idols he shall utterly abolish. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for the fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth” (Isaiah 2:17-21).

Isaiah 11:4 and 5 continues the theme, “With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips (the righteousness proclaimed in the Everlasting Gospel, bringing joy to those who accept it but) he shall slay the wicked (because they reject it).

“The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted” (Psalm 46:6), and Christ begins His thousand year reign of peace.

The constraint of man’s will is the binding of Satan for the thousand year reign of Christ, of which we read in Revelation 20:1-3, but the preaching of the Everlasting Gospel lasts for only as long as the judgments of God are in the earth destroying the wicked. We see the Gospel on the one hand and the judgment of God on the other. The choice has to be made for or against Jesus as King. When all the earth conforms to the law from Jerusalem then we have the “new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13), and the Kingdom of God established. The Everlasting Gospel will have run its course.

Brother Russell Gregory.

Better Things Than That of Abel

Man’s alienation from God by Adam’s sin has not only shown the love of a just and merciful Creator but also His supremacy and Holiness in demanding, through His revealed word and judgment, that He will be sanctified in them that draw nigh unto Him. This is to say, man must acknowledge his estrangement or alienation by accepting God’s way of approach and reconciliation and this we find throughout the Scriptures to be associated with the shedding of blood, but most important, only in the way required and demanded by the Creator.

Adam’s sin merited death by the shedding of his blood, because the life of all animal creation, including human, is in the blood which circulates throughout the body keeping every member and particle of the flesh energised through the introduction of food and oxygen combined. Thus the language of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation in connection with blood is so important because it relates to life and death in God’s foreknowledge and plan from the beginning of the Adamic transgression; thus the Divine prerogative from that time is contained in the words, “Without the shedding of blood is no remission of sins” (Hebrews 9:22) .

We are reminded by the wise man in Proverbs 16:25, “There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” Adam, Eve and Cain were the first examples of this; the latter in his ultimate regret because he repented not at the counsel of God and refused the way of redemption and salvation, thus despising God’s supremacy or dominion; an error Jude describes a few thousand years later on as, “The way of Cain,” in referring to the conduct of evil men.

The covering of fig leaves was the way that seemed right to Adam and Eve, but hiding sin does not justify, neither can it be hid from God, as Adam admitted when he said, “I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked: and I hid myself.” This despite the fact that he was already covered by the fig leaves and proof that there was more to it than an outward appearance; I feel sure Adam believed he

was hearing the voice of the approaching executioner of the sentence he had incurred – “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Adam and Eve regarded themselves as legally dead already, but they were to witness the love and compassion of a just and merciful Creator in sparing their lives with the life of the typical lamb as a substitute which pointed forward to the anti-typical Lamb of God, Jesus. As Creator, God had the right to do this with the animals, to make atonement; and speaking later to the children of Israel He confirmed that in regard to the blood of clean animals “I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls.” Adam and Eve accepted their redemption in this way and their faith in putting on the skins provided through the shedding of blood was accounted to them for righteousness, but in the ultimate, as with us, Jesus is the Lord our Righteousness.

Abel also learned these things and accepted them, but not so Cain. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground (not necessarily the firstfruits) an offering unto the Lord which he undoubtedly thought would do. But evidently it was not acceptable to God for some reason, whereas Abel sacrificed the firstling of his flock, through faith, and it was accepted, as we read in Hebrews 11:4, “By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet liveth.” Yes, Abel is even spoken of by our Lord Jesus Himself and testified as being righteous though he knew it was through the merits of His own sacrifice on Calvary, thus our Lord does not diminish the faith of any whom He has justified. On the other hand He is not slow to condemn those whom He regarded like Cain as the seed of the serpent in the figurative sense, and addresses them “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.”

It is interesting to quote Dr. Adam Clarke’s commentary at this point: - “they were serpents and the offspring of serpents – this refers to Matthew 23:31. They confessed that they were the children of those who murdered the prophets; and they are now going to murder Christ and His followers, to show that they had not degenerated – an accursed seed, of an accursed breed. In other words they had not lost the qualities that are normal and desirable or proper to its kind (v. 34). To show how my prediction, Ye will fill up the measure of your fathers, shall be verified. Behold, I send (I am going to commission them) prophets, etc., and some ye will kill (with legal process) and some ye will crucify, pretend to try and find guilty, and deliver them into the hands of the Romans, who shall, through you, thus put them to death. (See Luke 11:49). By prophets, wise men, and Scribes our Lord intends the evangelists, apostles, deacons, etc., who should be employed in proclaiming the gospel; men who should equal the ancient prophets, their wise men, and Scribes, in all the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. The national punishment of all the innocent blood which had been shed in the land, shall speedily come upon you; from the blood of Abel the just, the first prophet and preacher of righteousness (Hebrews 11:4; 2 Peter 2:5), to the blood of Zachariah, the son of Barachiah.”

It is likely that our Lord refers to the murder of Zachariah, mentioned in 2 Chronicles 24:21,22, who when dying as a result of being stoned by the people at the king’s commandment, in the court of the house of the Lord, said, “The Lord look upon and requite it.” It may be objected that this Zachariah was called the son of Jehoiada, but there are many instances of double names in Scripture, sometimes the person was called by one, sometimes by the other. So Matthew is called Levi, and Simon called Peter, and Lebbeus was called Thaddeus. Jerome says that in the gospel of the Nazarenes, it was Jehoiada instead of Barachiah. That Jehoiada and Barachiah have the same meaning – “the praise of Jehovah.” He says also that retribution came upon king Johash and all those responsible for the death of Zachariah (2 Chronicles 24:23-25), so whether there was another Zachariah (other than this one) to which Jesus referred is open for question, of course.

One important Divine principle I noticed when reading 2 Chronicles 25:3 & 4 was the action and also the respect king Amaziah exhibited for the commandment in the book of the law of Moses, “Now it came to pass when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father. But he slew not their children, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses where the Lord

commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.” In view therefore of this and what Jesus Himself said concerning Abel could any person dare to suggest or go so far as to state there was no injustice in Abel’s death by murderous Cain? It should be observed also that death came upon Abel before those who had committed that sin worthy of death, so apart from his dying for righteousness’ sake it would have been unjust for Abel to have died a natural death before his parents, if natural death were the penalty for Adam’s sin, and this might easily have been the case with some of Adam and Eve’s posterity of whom there is no mention in the Scriptures.

There is equality in God’s dealings with man; the penalty for sin was equal to Adam and Eve, and was shown to them as death by blood-shedding (inflicted), not a gradual process of decay where time and chance happeneth to all but some suffer more than others. It was shown and taught to Adam and Eve and their posterity that life forfeited to sin either required the life-blood of the sinner or that of a substitute whose life was not forfeited. Abel was righteous by means of his faith in the more excellent sacrifice which he saw as the seed of the woman and the antitypical Lamb of God which taketh away the Sin of the world; the blood of the sacrifice he offered, neither his own blood, shed by Cain could accomplish what Jesus did upon the cross, as the writer to the Hebrews has explained. The blood of bulls and goats were only types and could never take away sin, and therefore had to be continually offered, “but this man (Jesus) after he had suffered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God... for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Hebrews 10). We are asked by the same writer in chapter 12, to consider the great cloud of witnesses by whom we are encompassed and of whose faith he has written in chapter 11, and above all to consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds. We have not yet resisted unto the shedding of our blood in our striving against sin, as indeed Jesus did and also Abel and many more, so do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked of him: “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

The writer contrasts the position or status of the Christian believers in this twelfth chapter in relation to the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai, “Ye are not yet come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest,” and things they could not endure, and which made even Moses fear and quake (v.18). This is not the position of those who are in Christ, “For they are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God,” to the general assembly and ecclesia of the firstborn, which are written or enrolled in heaven, “to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

I must confess that at one time I believed the writer to the Hebrews was referring to Abel’s own blood shed by his brother Cain, probably because I was taught by others who believed the same, but I have since come to realise that this is not what is meant, especially in view of the context of the whole Epistle which is to explain the sacrifices from Genesis to the One Supreme sacrifice which that foreshadowed. We have certainly not passed the investigation stage as some people have chosen to think and say; we can always find treasures below the surface of the Word of God if we refuse to read superficially and indiscriminately. Again I would like to quote Adam Clarke’s commentary as follows:- “God accepted Abel’s sacrifice, and was well pleased with it; for Abel was a righteous man, and offered his sacrifice by faith in the great promise. But the blood of Christ’s sacrifice was infinitely more precious than the blood of Abel’s sacrifice; as Jesus is infinitely greater than Abel, and the blood of Christ avails for the sins of the whole world, whereas the blood of Abel’s sacrifice could only avail for himself.” Adam Clarke goes on, concerning my mistaken view, which he says many have held so I will not repeat it but take up his remarks further on as follows; “Many have supposed –that the blood of Abel means here the blood that was shed by Cain in the murder of this holy man; and that the blood of Jesus speaks better things, because the blood of Abel called for vengeance, but the blood of Christ for pardon; this interpretation reflects little credit on the understanding of the apostle. The truth is, the sacrifice offered by Abel is that which is intended; that, as we have already seen, was pleasing in the sight of God, and was accepted in behalf of him who offered it; but the blood of Christ is infinitely more acceptable with God; it was shed for the whole human race, and cleanses all who believe from all unrighteousness.”

We can be grateful for the work of men like Adam Clarke provided we are on guard against some of the popular theories and beliefs they held regarding the immortality of the soul, Supernatural Devil, and other errors held by the apostate churches but even this can be offset against the people who believe in sin-

in-the-flesh, and that Christ's sacrifice was no better than that of Abel if as excellent, in view of the fact that He, Jesus, was as unclean as those He came to save (R.Roberts). At least Adam Clarke understood the significance and efficacy of the blood of Christ and where he has not properly explained it to the full we can be thankful for the past controversies in the persons of Edward Turney, A. and L. Wilson, F. J. Pearce, Ernest Brady, to name but a few, who have brought it to light so that we may appreciate the great love God had for the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish.

God commendeth His love toward us, says the apostle, in that while we were yet 'constituted sinners' or in fact, sinners through ignorance, Christ died for us. For if, says the apostle, while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life; Adam and Eve were reconciled through God's provisional covering, the shedding of blood, while they were enemies, or sinners and this involved Cain and Abel and all who were in the loins of Adam when he sinned, thus all natural existence is due to God's Love and the antitypical sacrifice of His Son, but eternal life involves a faith demonstrated by individual acceptance of why Christ died and why He was raised.

God did not provide the coats of skins to prevent them from dying a death which was natural to their being, but to save them suffering an inflicted death by blood-shedding, which they had incurred by sin, and that by a renewed existence and faith they might continue their probationary life relative to their nature of corruptibility which had never changed. Thus, Jesus did not owe His existence to Adam but on the contrary, Adam owed his to Jesus, through the fore-knowledge and provision of God.

'The federal principle' and 'substitution' are not unscriptural terms when seen and explained by the apostle Paul; it is the erroneous doctrine or 'original sin' wrongly attributed to Paul, which blinds the minds of people already the subjects of such indoctrination; thus they read into his writings things that are not there, but are the seeds of erroneous doctrine other men, void of understanding, have implanted in their minds. An example of this can be seen in the mistaken view that natural death by a physical law of decay was the death Adam incurred by sin, and is a physical condemnation which passed upon all men. To abrogate such a law would mean that Jesus should have lived at least as long as Adam, 930 years to be exact, and then have died by natural causes relevant to His decaying nature, and be raised from death because He had committed no sin. This in fact is how Clause VIII of the B.S.A.F. should be understood in view of natural death as a penalty for sin. But evidently this cannot be the death required by the righteousness of God because the following Clause IX states that Jesus suffered that mode of death, by blood-shedding (an inflicted death). Not satisfied with this contradiction Clause X states that Jesus shared with all men the death which passed upon them by partaking of their physical nature. This is not a true statement in regard to natural death because Jesus did not suffer or share in it, but He did indeed suffer the death which passed upon Adam and all men, by suffering it in their stead; but this was an inflicted death, or judicial death, not due to Himself, He not being in the loins of Adam, and also a righteous man. He suffered, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, and not, as some believe and teach, to shew or demonstrate God's repugnance of human nature and that there was no injustice in His death. If it were so in the case of Jesus then it was more so in the case of Abel, yet Jesus condemns outright the murder of Abel; how much more then His own murder, by wicked hands which the blasphemous Clause XII describes as the instruments of God? Have they never considered Romans 6:13?

Despite the many scriptural references at the foot of Clause VIII which are meant to mislead, the believers and upholders of the Clause cannot prove that Jesus has abrogated the law of condemnation for men, because they affirm it was a physical law in their nature and it is obvious immersion in and rising from the water cannot remove such a physical law, only drowning can do that. A true candidate for Baptism into Christ is not expected to drown but to rise in newness of life, so it can only be by burial, i.e. Symbolic death, into Christ and rising in newness of life in the likeness of His resurrection, though not in our case, incorruptible, but as new creatures having that right if faithful to our calling. The Apostle declares therefore that if we have not put off the old man and put on the new, we are not in Christ nor risen with Him – we are yet in our sins; and this is where the believers in physical condemnation must find themselves.

Thank God and His Son for the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel!
"Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Brother Phil Parry

No. I in a series of Bible Essays.

THE LAW OF REDEMPTION

As a believer in the Bible I appeal to you to consider the following Bible Truths concerning our redemption.

The law of redemption as defined by God in the Law He gave to Israel by the hand of Moses is most interesting and instructive. It is, briefly, that if an Israelite became poor and sold himself to a rich neighbour he could redeem himself, if he were able, or his near kinsman could redeem him. The nearest kinsman had the prior right to redeem; this is shown in the 3rd chapter of Ruth at verse 12.

Let us trace that law in relation to our redemption. We, by natural descent, are in need of redemption; we have been sold and are in bondage. Paul says in Romans 6th chapter: "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are... whether of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness... ye were the servants of sin once but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, etc... ye are now made free from sin.... the wages of sin is death." Here Paul "personifies" sin as a master and us as his servants; he refers to this condition of bond service to Sin as "our old man," "the body of (or belonging to) Sin."

Personification was not a new idea in the Scriptures. In the Book of Proverbs wisdom is personified as a woman. How, then, did we become Sin's bond servants? For the answer to this question we must turn to the account of creation. Here we see Adam a free man in the garden of Eden - God's free man placed there to dress it, and to keep it, with one simple command, namely, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

This law was simple and easy to understand; there was no excuse for disobedience, yet Adam disobeyed God and obeyed the "Devil," or Sin personified; for sin is the transgression of Divine Law and, therefore, is personified as a master (see Romans chapter 6). Yet John tells us in his Epistle, 5th chapter, 16th and 17th verse, "there is a sin unto death," and he informs us that prayer for that sin is useless; he also tells us, "There is a sin which is not unto death;" God, will forgive that sin for Christ's sake. Under the Law of Moses some sins or transgressions were punishable by death - for example, in the case of murder the law said,

"Thou shalt take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer; he must surely be put to death." So God commanded.

The punishment for Adam's sin was death; a judicially inflicted death; an un-timely end. His sin was a "sin unto death." Few, if any, of us have sinned such a sin, but we were in the loins of our father Adam when he sinned unto death; now as Levi paid tithes in Abraham (see Hebrews 7th chapter, 9th and 10th verses), so we sinned in Adam (see also Romans chapter 5, verses 12 to 18). In other words, Adam sinned and merited death; King Sin now had a claim on his life; his life was now "forfeited" to Sin, and he no longer had any right to it; God redeemed him. He bought him with the precious blood of His dear Son. But as the time for the full payment had not arrived God instituted a type; He clothed Adam and his wife with the skins of animals. Thus blood was shed and life was taken; this was the type. Sin took place and death followed; but Paul tells us that "the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin."

We may ask "Why?" The answer is not far to seek - the right of "redemption" was held by the next of kin, and not by an animal; it could only typify the true "Lamb of God," Jesus, who alone had the right to redeem, being Adam's near-kinsman; and the means, a life unforfeited, free to give for "the sin of the world."

Whilst Adam's sin could not be forgiven it could be paid for by the taking or surrender of life. If Adam's life had been taken in Eden, God's plan of filling the earth with His glory and with a people who would revere Him would have been frustrated, and this could not be. God had said to Adam, "Be fruitful and multiply," and this command must be fulfilled. There was not another to take Adam's place and pay the

debt; no near kinsman with right to redeem, but God found a ransom. No man could by any means redeem his brother, we are told, or give to God a ransom for him, for the redemption of their soul is precious. Every man is a bond servant by birth, and owes his life to his master. The life that Adam passed on to his children was that which he had already sold or forfeited to sin, and thus it belonged to sin and was lost.

God's mercy is wonderful. He gave His only begotten Son to die "for the sin of the world," to die for man; the just for the unjust. The hymn-writer expresses it, "There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin." A better way of expressing it would be - there was no other free enough to pay the price of sin.

Jesus was the only one who had the right to redeem Adam. Adam was God's son by creation (see Luke chapter 3, verse 38). Jesus was God's Son by begetting, Adam's near kinsman, the second man or second Adam. He had the means by which to redeem the first Adam; His life He received direct from God, free from sin; His right to life He never forfeited or lost by transgression. He was the only man who had power to retain His life or give it freely for us. "No man taketh it from me," He said, "I lay it down of myself." This is in John 10th chapter, 17th and 18th verses.

God saw this "greater love" by which Jesus would lay down His life for the sinner, and foreshadowed it in Eden by the typical "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and Adam was redeemed; he was not slain; he did not die the death for his sin in Eden - a violent judicial death on the day of his transgression; the animal did die such a death, but as we have seen, its blood could not take away sin; it could only prefigure the "precious blood of Christ," which did.

The result of this redemption was that Adam's life was saved from immediate destruction, and he was allowed to continue in life for 930 years. He thus escaped the penalty of his sin and when he died at the age of 930 years that death was the natural death which terminates all life that is manifested in a natural or corruptible body; whether human, animal or bird.

This is not the death for sin, as we have seen, but merely the consequence of his failure to attain to the life eternal which Jesus now possesses and enjoys as a result of His perfect obedience.

Jesus said, "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world." This light is knowledge, and when we understand these glorious divine truths we are in the light and, therefore, under the condemnation to which Jesus referred, if we ignore the divinely appointed means of redemption. If, then, we do not accept God's terms of redemption by associating ourselves with Christ's sacrifice by being baptised into His name, thus becoming Christ's, we too are guilty of a sin unto death, and will merit the final judgment of Divine wrath, and will suffer extinction in the "second death" (see Revelation 20th chapter, verses 11 to 15).

To sum up, it was necessary for Jesus to be one who had the right to redeem;

He must be Adam's near kinsman; and it was also necessary that He should have a life free to give for Adam, and that He should be willing to give it.

This was not the punishment of a just man by God for the sinner, but the voluntary surrender of life by the "just for the unjust;" God was the loving Father giving His only and well beloved Son - "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish" (John, 3rd chapter, 16th verse). "Scarcely for a righteous man would one die" writes Paul in Romans, 5th chapter verses 6 to 8... "but God commendeth His love to us in that, whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Such is the love of God for us! Should we not show sufficient interest in these things as to impel us to look further into what God has left on record for our learning in spiritual things, and to aspire after the things which will please Him?

Brother F. Lea.

FOR WHAT THE LAW COULD NOT DO

What Think Ye of Christ?

“But seek you first His righteousness and kingdom” Matthew 6:33 (Emphatic Diaglott).

“Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.” Matthew 13:52.

“It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.” Proverbs 25:2.

“Wisdom is the principle thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.” Proverbs 4:7.

These Scriptures quoted above are, like many more, exhortations to the effect that it is necessary to seek, study, and prayerfully meditate in order to find out many things that would otherwise be hid. If we search we shall find (Isaiah 55:6; John 7:17). The secrets of the Lord are with those who are watching at His gates daily, and who delight in the law of the Lord.

The heading or the title of this article may not seem interesting, and perhaps, after trying to understand the meaning of what we say, most will probably disagree with our conclusions. But we ask you, while considering this article, to compare Scripture with Scripture, and see if a more loving and harmonious plan of God’s redemption of man can be Scripturally produced.

There are many ideas propounded upon this subject, and they are in opposition to each other, and are the cause of most of the religious disputes that exist, which disputes we know will not end until the Judge of all the earth returns. When we contemplate the maze of conflicting theories and confusion that exists over God’s plan of redemption, it is evident that “mystery” is written over those theories.

There is always a bias at the root of all theories which cannot find a Scriptural foundation, and that bias will invariably be maintained in reasoning, even at the expense of truth. A ball with a bias will never run straight to the “tee.” Jesus we know is the person through whom God hath appointed to reconcile the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). God in His wisdom has condescended to teach us this most important lesson in a simple manner that all may understand, who desire to, by being open-minded and not allowing theorists with a bias to do their thinking for them. We must remember that Jesus said that “all who will shall know of the doctrine...” (John 7:17). Without the necessity of their being among the “wise and learned” whose learning unfortunately is in opposition to the attributes of a just God upon the question of man’s redemption as centred in Jesus. We must be learned in “the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3).

God has used many every day experiences in the natural order that a “childlike disposition” can understand, and which is proof of the spiritual (Romans 1:20).

Jesus said: “If I have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?” (John 3:12).

Look at the following few conflicting ideas as to how Jesus is the centre of God’s plan of redemption:-

The Roman Catholics make Jesus the Christ to have been of a different nature to every (other) son of Adam.

The Josephites say that He was like every other son of Adam because Joseph was His father; in other words He was born of the will of the flesh.

Then we have the Trinitarians, or the pre-existence theorists.

Then the Unitarians who exclude Jesus from being the Son of God.

Then we have others who contend for the glorious truth as proclaimed in the Scriptures regarding His divine birth, but nullify that glorious truth by contending that He was sinful flesh, and as much under the curse of Adam as those He came to save, merely to uphold their theory that the condemnation passed upon all men was physical, i.e., that we are sinful flesh, and under physical condemnation because of Adam's sin. The Scriptures are absolutely silent regarding physical condemnation and sinful flesh is only mentioned once in the whole Bible, and even then it is a faulty translation, ignoring the Greek genitive case (Romans 8:3). We say emphatically that none of the above contradictory theories are in accordance with the Scriptures of truth.

"Extreme begets extreme," but the truth is in harmony with itself, and this is an advantage ground where all things can be seen in their true perspectives. We could scripturally refute each of the foregoing theories from several angles, but we will do it from what God has caused to be written for our learning on this important theme.

God, who is the Creator and Sustainer of all things, is also just, and we can rest assured that all He does is on a just principle, because God cannot be otherwise. First that which is natural, and second, that which is spiritual (1 Corinthians 15). Adam was first created, and he was the figure of Him that was to come - Christ (1 Corinthians 15:45,48; Romans 5:14). The "elder" (Adam, the natural) shall serve the younger (Christ, the spiritual). The first shall be last, and the last first. It is out of the natural, which is first, that God is taking a people for His Name, to be His sons and daughters to eventually fill the earth with His glory (Numbers 14:21). "He created it for His pleasure" (Revelation 4:11). And He created it not in vain (Isaiah 45:18).

The manner how God is going to justly bring this about can only be understood upon the Federal principle. God has not shackled anyone physically, because He is just. His principle concludes all under Adam's sin, without that sin physically affecting anyone. All are constituted legally in Adam as the basis of the operation of that principle. We can leave the Adamic Federal Head (as members of that body) and place ourselves under the Christ "Federal Headship." God does not physically punish anyone because of Adam's sin, but that sin was the means of bringing a just principle of concluding all Adam's posterity under Adamic relationship, which relationship a person annuls by becoming "in Christ." It is all a matter of Law, therefore legal, not physical. We are in the privileged position to have the comments of inspiration upon these two federal headships. Though the term "Federal" is not used, reason demands that we understand it as such owing to the fact that we can leave Adam, and "put on" Christ while still remaining the same natural person, or persons. Paul, in the 5th chapter of Romans gives us a sevenfold divinely balanced antithesis of a just God revealing a mystery which was hid, and not revealed, as it was in the days of the apostles (Ephesians 3:5).

The first man was God's son by creation. He was placed under law to his Creator, and was given dominion over the creation. Had he been obedient to His Creator, all would have been well with him. The life (natural) that he possessed was unforfeited to sin while he was obedient. When he transgressed that law by disobedience his life became forfeit, as the terms of God's law was to the effect that on the literal day (B'YOM, Hebrew idiom) that he transgressed he would surely die (Hebrew: MUTH TEMUTH, - therefore violent death). He had sold himself to sin which is personified as a master, or lord, and therefore he had changed his master. "His servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or obedience unto righteousness" (Romans 6:16). "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24). Had Adam received the execution of the sentence that he had incurred, viz., a violent death on the day that he transgressed, that would have been final, and we would not have existed, but thanks be to God, He began with mercy and typically covered Adam's sin in the figure of the animal slain. Adam could not be allowed to remain in Eden, as God's justice was that Adam and his posterity should only enter the paradise of God (of which Eden was the type) upon God's conditions, viz., "I (Jesus) am the door." To climb up another way is to be a "thief and a robber" said Jesus. The expulsion of Adam from Eden after transgression was necessary to the bringing in of God's just principle of concluding all under Adamic relationship because of Adam's sin, which excludes all from entering into Eden that is to come otherwise than in the appointed way. Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Why? Because a man needs to be redeemed from Adamic relationship. Adam could not redeem himself, because the equivalent ransom price was "a life for a life," and if Adam gave his own life (which would have been impossible because the equivalent required a life not forfeited to sin) that would have been the end of all for him, and us; so it is evident that if Adam could not

redeem himself we cannot redeem ourselves. This brings out God's just method of concluding all federally "in Adam" from birth, in order that none can ever entertain any hope of entering the kingdom without first leaving his Adamic relationship by accepting redemption there from in the recognition of Christ's death being the redemption price which could only be an unforfeited life which Adam could not pay himself.

We can be either "in Adam" or "in Christ;" either dead while alive, or alive to God now while we live, in that if we fall asleep our resurrection is sure. By man came death, by man came the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:21). "By one man sin entered, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men (in whom, Adam, margin) all have sinned" Romans 5:12). "Through the offence of one man many be dead... and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ." By one man's offence Death reigned, much more will those receive the abundance of grace - shall reign in Life by one, Jesus Christ. By one offence Sentence came upon all men to condemnation, so also through one righteous act Sentence came on all to justification of life. "By one man's disobedience many were made (Constituted) sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made (Constituted) righteous" (Romans 5:19). "As sin has reigned unto death, so grace reigned through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:12,21).

Can we have a more just principle than this, in God concluding all under one sin (without in any way interfering with man's physical constitution) as the groundwork of becoming constituted righteous by leaving that relationship to become obedient adopted sons and daughters? One man, one sin, one life. All under sentence, constituted sinners.

Sin is an act. Here we have all under sentence before they knew good or evil! Under sentence in Adam's loins simply because they will be born in Adamic relationship. There is no physical condemnation in this, but merely a legal procedure on God's part from which His righteous principle must be manifested. "As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The other (Christ) one man, one act, one life. All under Sentence (of life) constituted righteous. Adam the head of the natural; Jesus the head of the spiritual. Two distinct heads of two distinct bodies which have many members. First that which is natural, then that which is spiritual.

The purpose of this article is to prove conclusively that the second man, or last Adam, was the only possible means of bringing about God's plan of redemption. The very statements "second man" and "last Adam" utterly forbid the possibility of any other son of Adam accomplishing such; besides the one to accomplish God's plan of redemption had to be clear of any Adamic condemnation. If this were not; the necessary qualification how is it that no other son of Adam, born of the will of the flesh, could accomplish it? If redemption could have been accomplished by anyone in "Adam's loins" then the appearing of Jesus in the plan of redemption would have been unnecessary. If man born of the will of the flesh, or law, obedience to law could bring redemption about, there would be no need of the following Scripture: "No man could redeem his brother" (Psalm 49:7-8). "What the law could not do. God did." (Romans 8:3).

The Seed of the Woman

Let us watch the slow but sure development of the last Adam, Jesus Christ. The first intimation that we get in the Scriptures of this wonderful and loving plan of redemption is in the promise of God to the woman in Eden. The promise was that her seed should bruise the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15). If the promised seed was, as some affirm, in the loins of Adam, then He could not possibly have been that seed of the woman. Because He was raised of the seed of David according to the flesh, it is affirmed by some that He was in the loins of Adam and bore Adamic physical condemnation because He was born of a woman (Galatians 4:4). It is indeed a deplorable fact that the genealogies of Matthew and Luke are studied (or supposed to be studied) with a biased mind. If fair attention was paid to the Matthew and Luke registers it would be found without any fear of doubt that Jesus came in the female line; therefore, God being His Father, and a virgin being His mother. He was the seed of the woman, which glorious truth rules out any theory of Jesus being at any time in Adam's loins. Let us further enhance this glorious truth by glancing at a prophetic statement that occurs in Jeremiah 22:26; "Wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed? O earth, earth, earth; hear the word of the Lord; write this man childless, a man who shall not prosper in his days. For no man of his seed shall prosper sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah." What is the importance of this prophetic statement? Why, it is of the utmost importance to the understanding of the

genealogies of Matthew and Luke. According to Matthew's register, Joseph is the direct descendant of Solomon. We observe therefore, that the continuance of the royalty in this line was positively, contingent upon faithfulness. (Psalm 132:11; 1 Chronicles 28:5-9 and 22:13; 1 Kings 9:1-9). Were these conditions fulfilled? Alas! Both Solomon and his posterity proved unfaithful. What was the result? "The Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel" who had appeared unto him twice. Though the kingdom was not taken from Solomon, it was only spared for a while. The prophecy quoted from Jeremiah 22 referred to Coniah, or Jechonias in Matthew's register. If Jesus came through the Solomon branch of the Davidic tree He would have come through a branch that was eternally barred from occupying the throne of the Lord. Where would this land Jesus? This would force the Almighty to stultify Himself who declared: "I will give unto him the throne of his father David." Listen - "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper" (Jeremiah 23:5). In what branch of the Davidic tree was he raised up? In the kingly Solomon branch? No! That branch, with its fruit has been eternally barred from royalty, and another branch divinely chosen in its stead. Shall we therefore make Jesus a twig of that rejected branch or one of the righteous chosen branch? "Every tree which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."

Let us examine this other branch. Do we find Solomon and the other kingly descendants there? No. It is the branch of low degree. Luke's register reveals also a direct line to David like Matthew's, not through Solomon but through the lowly Nathan-Mary line. This is indeed very important. Joseph is here said to be the son of Heli also, but this can only mean son-in-law, since Matthew declares that Jacob begat Joseph. The foregoing is truly remarkable because Jesus is still the "Prince of the House of David," but in the lowly Nathan-Mary line. There is no Solomon or Jechonias in Luke's register. Did the thought of the Son to be born to her inspire Mary's song, if that Son was ever in the loins of Adam, which would debar that son eternally from being the seed of the woman.

"And Mary said, my soul doth magnify the Lord, even my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Why Mary? "For He hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden... He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats (thrones), and exalted them of low degree" (Luke 1:46-52). Behold the seed of the woman "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" 'Hebrews 7:26. We have had to traverse a long way from Genesis 3:15 but it is indeed necessary to do so in order to set aside the bogey of Jesus ever being in Adam's loins which would nullify Him from being the seed of the woman. Let us retrace.

God, who is spirit (John 4:24), and the fountain of life (Psalm 36:9) caused the creation of the first Adam from the dust, and promised to raise another in the natural order by His own power. The promise of a Son in this way necessitated a miracle as in the case of the first son, because the Son promised was to bruise the serpent's head, therefore that Son would need to be miraculously begotten because such a Son could not be born via the natural channels as in that case He would be under the same legal condemnation. He would of necessity have to be the seed of the woman (not man) in accordance with God's promise. The seed of the woman also became in time the seed promised to Abraham and to David through the female line as we have shown. This has been carefully guarded as can be seen first in type to Abraham. The promise to the faithful friend of God needed a miracle to produce a son in Sarah's old age, as recorded in Genesis 18:10 to 15 and 21:1 to 7; and the Spirit's comments in Roman's 4:16 to 21 and Hebrews 11:11 But even the type of Isaac was inferior to the antitype, because Abraham was the Father of Isaac, Sarah being given strength to conceive. Not so Mary. She knew no man. Jesus was holy from His conception. "That holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1). Regarding the promise to David in 2 Samuel 7, we have shown in our remarks on the genealogy that the promise cannot apply to Solomon, we are faced with the fact that never in the history of the world has there been such a miracle performed as was performed upon Mary. God was the Father of Jesus; He was the only begotten, and Adam was the only created. Here we have the two direct sons of God, therefore brothers in the sense that they had the same Father. What was the difference between them? None, physically, but the difference lay in the fact that the first sold himself to another master and became sin's slave, whereas the second retained His position. "She (wisdom), is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is everyone that retaineth her" (Proverbs 3:18). Jesus retained His hold of the tree of life; Adam lost his hold, therefore Jesus was in a position to redeem Adam His brother, and all in Adam who will accept redemption. No man can by any means redeem his brother. Even Jesus did not redeem us. God alone could do that by giving Jesus the life. Hence we have the clear proof of Jesus being the only possible redemption price of "a life for a life." (Exodus 21:23; Deuteronomy 19:21).

Jesus was born outside the prison and He 'could therefore give Himself in the stead of those who were in the prison. This He could not do if He was in the same condemnation. We wonder how much the thief on the cross realised when he railed upon his fellow culprit saying, "We are in the same condemnation"? Undoubtedly he realised the truth that Jesus was the only one who can set the prisoner free from bondage (and the thief understood it in a higher sense than mere natural deliverance from natural danger) when he said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom" Luke 23:42

The first son of God incurred death by sinning; the second Son retained His right to life. This does not mean that the second Son had a different nature from the first, which was corruptible or natural. He was made in all points like unto His brethren. "There is one flesh of men" (Jesus included) as Paul says (1 Corinthians 15:39). This is where we can profitably ask why there was the need of this special miracle? We answer firstly that God saw the necessity of it being so from the beginning, and brought it to pass as an essential necessity in accordance with the just attributes of His wisdom and justice. His ways are right and just, and none can ask "What doest thou?" We can endeavour to find out God's reason for doing things without thinking for a moment of calling God in question. God desires that we should endeavour to find out, and He is pleased at our so doing, but it must be in harmony with His just attributes as revealed in the Scriptures, and not with our preconceived ideas as to what His reasons are. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter" (Proverbs 25:2). The fact that Adam forfeited his life to sin, and would have suffered a violent death if God had not spared him and all in his loins, does not alter the fact that the equivalent debt to sin is a life for a life which had to be paid. The violent death inflicted upon the animal in Eden was the type and lesson of what the wages of sin was, but this had to be supplemented by a higher order of sacrifice which was the equivalent of what Adam incurred, but was spared from paying. This equivalent could only be found in Christ (Revelation 5:3) whose life was not forfeited to sin, being as Adam was before transgression, "direct" Son of God, which life He retained being obedient in all things, even unto the death of the cross. The one act of obedience paid the debt that Adam incurred. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission" Hebrews 9:22. God typically redeemed Adam with a "paper note" in Eden, but He laid down the "golden sovereign" on Calvary.

The Seed of Abraham

We have this type developed in the seed of Abraham. Abraham was quite willing to offer up his only begotten son of Sarah (Genesis 22) believing that God would have raised him from the dead (Hebrews 11:17,19). That God was the Redeemer can be seen in His promise, and in providing the ram instead of Isaac. The ram was caught by the two horns (or power) in the thicket. The horns (or power) was typical of Jesus. The people put Him to death because He was king, and claimed to be the Son of God (John 19:13,16; Luke 22:70). He had these titles from the beginning (John 1:49). Nathaniel said on seeing Jesus, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel." Jesus was the seed of Abraham. He was the promised seed of which Abraham's son was the type. In Galatians we are expressly informed that Christ was Abraham's seed. In the 3rd chapter, verse 16, the apostle says: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not unto seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." Upon what authority does Paul use seed in the singular here? Why, upon the authority of Scripture, and that Scripture none other than the Old Testament which were the only Scriptures extant. Being as Paul referred to the promises made to Abraham with regard to the particular seed, it is necessary to verify Paul's authority for using the seed in the singular by referring to the promise of the seed in the singular itself. In the 22nd chapter of Genesis we read of the offering up of Isaac, and the staying of Abraham's hand from slaying his son. Let us now read the consequence of Abraham's faith in God. Verses 16 and 17; "And said, by myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of His enemies." There is Paul's authority for the use of the seed in the singular. Who but Christ is to possess the gate of His enemies? Here we have the Christ as the head of the multitudinous body.

The Jews boasted that they were Abraham's seed, and Christ did not deny it. He said to them, "I know ye are Abraham's seed." (John 8:37). But what Christ did not deny was that they were Abraham's seed after the flesh, or by natural descent. Jesus went higher when He pointed out to them that the true Abrahamic seed were the spiritual seed. He said to them, "If ye were the children of Abraham, ye would do the works of

Abraham; ye seek to kill me... this did not Abraham.” It is evident that the Abrahamic true seed is not confined to fleshly descent. Paul says definitely in Galatians 3, “If ye are Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

No one can be heir to the promise (which is by faith, not by fleshly descent) who has not accepted the redemption from the bondage of Adamic relationship, which redemption can only be found in Christ as the seed promised to bruise the serpent’s (sin’s) head. Abraham looked forward through the eye of faith to the day when his promised seed should be manifested to Israel and the whole world. Christ declared that He was the seed that Abraham saw (by faith) manifested. He declared, “Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it, and was glad.” (John 8:56). How did the Jews take this announcement? Why, they were maddened. They said: “Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?” Is it not clear that the promised seed to Abraham needed to be entirely apart from fleshly descent? Was it not necessary for Him to be outside the prison? Could He offer to set them free if He was in the same prison (condemnation) Himself? We say emphatically. No. The Jews said that, as Abraham’s seed they were in bondage to no man, but they only judged after the flesh; if they were not in bondage, how did Jesus go to them only to bring the kingdom nigh as an offer of inheritance? This of course was an enigma to them, as they understood the Abrahamic seed as fleshly descent. If the true Abrahamic seed of promise was merely fleshly descent, then the Jews would have been born in the kingdom of God. There would have been no need for Messiah to come to them; only for the purpose of restoring the literal kingdom of Israel to them from the hands of the Romans. They could not understand anyone but themselves having any part in the Abrahamic promises. To them the Abrahamic seed was just themselves. Jesus told them that they judge after the flesh. They could not see the spiritual arising out of the natural. They boasted in the law (of Moses), but did not do the works of Abraham in keeping -the spirit of the law; the very ordinances of which law prefigured the promised Seed that was to redeem them (who merely kept the letter of the law) “from under the law. They could not understand Jesus telling them “If the Son shall make you free ye shall be free indeed”. It is obvious that if He were not free from all condemnation Himself, He could not offer freedom to others. Jesus said; “The flesh profiteth nothing” (John 6:63). Fleshly descent confers, no privilege regarding entering the kingdom of God. Neither was Jesus condemned because He was flesh. It was necessary that Jesus should be flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone before He could by a sacrifice for sin, condemn sin. He could not have paid the price of redemption were He not flesh, because a life for a life was the equivalent price needed to pay sin’s claim. That life He gave, which was the life of His flesh which was in the blood thereof. Thus we see that promised seed of Abraham opening up the way of life for all whosoever will by paying the ransom price of the redemption from the condemnation that all were concluded, and are concluded under, namely, Adamic condemnation. It was all done for us. He was made (at 33 years of age, not at birth) a sin offering for us, for what purpose? That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. There is neither Jew, nor Greek; bond nor free, but ye are all one in Christ Jesus; and if ye are Christ’s, -then are ye Abraham’s seed (the multitudinous members of the living head, Christ), and heirs according to the promise. “God commendeth His love towards us.” How? In that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. It was not because we loved Him, but because He first loved us, not willing that they should perish (even Adam), but that all should come to Him. But only upon His just conditions, viz., to recognise that we must leave Adamic relationship (not physically), and become adopted sons and daughters of a new relationship, through the medium of the price paid for our release, the blood of Christ, the promised seed to Abraham, born not of the will of the flesh, but of God.

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To be continued.