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Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends, Loving Greetings to you all.

As we all embark on another year it is only natural that we should reflect on the old one and try to assess its meaning and lessons for us. We are perhaps able to consider thankfully what we have achieved in the past year or as we grow older and it is to be hoped a bit wiser, we go over ruefully what we confidently set out to achieve and yet dismally failed so to do.

But whatever the successes and failures of our particular year have been we can be fairly sure that the general confession some of us used to say in school each morning will probably be apt:-

"We have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep.
We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.
We have offended against Thy holy laws.
We have left undone those things which we ought to have done;
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done
and there is no health in us."

On the same matter Francis de Sales wrote some good advice:-

"Here we are fallen into a ditch - ADMIT IT
"Let us implore the mercy of God - CONFESS IT
"Trust that He will help us - HAVE FAITH
"God shall help us - LEAVE IT - FORGIVEN

These are comforting and wise words with which to begin a New Year or even start or end every day.

There is always an underlying sorrow as an old year dies for unfortunately some other things may have died with it. Hopes or dreams long cherished and some of us will also sorrow for the people who have disappeared from our lives during the past year. Some of them will have gone forever but some we can be sure we shall see again under remarkable circumstances, for we look for the fulfilment of a great promise when the earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. One year will have to be the year Jesus returns to sit on the Throne of David and 1996 may indeed be the one we so long for.

The start of any New Year is a step into the unknown. In fact every day of our lives we walk into the unknown. We think we know what is coming but we can never be sure for each day is a Journey into the

unexpected. But because we make plans and some of them usually materialize we soon labour under the delusion that we know what lies ahead of us and that we are actually in full charge of our lives. In small details of course I think we are. But it is the unforeseen events that befall us that often finally shape our lives and send us off in undreamed of directions and then we see how little control we have over things.

On such occasions the Bible is redolent with wise and simple advice for us- But U is strange how the simplest things are always the hardest to do - love your enemies - forgive those who spitefully use you - rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him,

Such simple injunctions so hard to actually do. Jesus did them all therefore we know we can do them also. We know if we acknowledge God in all our ways He will direct our paths.

So as we all take our first steps into the unknown and unknowable territory of 1996 I will tell you the words I always think of at this time of the year. They are words my father liked and he used to recite them to us, usually over the midday dinner table on December 31st. He had heard them first in 1939 spoken by George VI at the end of a Christmas Day Broadcast -

“And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year “Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown,” and he replied “Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”

Love to you all, Helen Brady.

Those who are familiar with the history of events of 1873 will know how the article which follows came to be written but it may be helpful to others to give some explanation:

Edward Turney was invited by some brethren in Birmingham to explain his views. At this first meeting some 20 brethren were present and were so impressed with what he had to say they asked him to give a lecture to a much larger audience at the Temperance only six days later. The title of Edward Turney's address was “The Sacrifice of Christ” and it was at this gathering that Robert Roberts after repeatedly interrupting the speaker finally cut short the meeting by an outburst of shouting at the top of his voice after Edward Turney had suggested yet again that they meet in discussion with one another. But rather than come face to face with Edward. Turney, Roberts wrote “The Slain Lamb,” a rather notorious article which has since been altered and sections deleted by various Christadelphians after Robert Roberts' death. This reply which now follows, was Edward Turney's answer to Robert Roberts' “own Revised Speech” :-

The Lecture entitled “The Slain Lamb” Dissected

The truth and the reason that are found in this lecture can only be enjoyed by separating them from the predominating mass of slander, misstatement, and misapplied Scripture, The slander is as bad as it can be, because it is put forth in the name of the honourable dead.

The author of “The Slain Lamb.” well knowing the great esteem in which Dr. Thomas was held by the brethren at large, has sought to strengthen his calumnies against us by asserting that we, in our Birmingham lecture, “cast dishonour on the doctor's name.” The best answer to this charge is our widely known respect for Dr. Thomas» and a request to read the allusion we have made to him in our lecture, the words of which allusion stand precisely as they were uttered. Whoever reads those words will see the utter untruthfulness of the above allegation, and perhaps detect the bad, acrimonious spirit by which their author, half-conscious of the weakness of his cause, endeavoured to prop it up.

Much as we have admired Dr. Thomas, and profited by his works, we cannot descend to that abject state of hero-worship which would not allow his writings to come within the pale of fair and reasonable

criticism. Perhaps the author of “the Slain Lamb” would fain pacify his own self-smiting memory at our expense, for he cannot have forgotten his own hostile and disrespectful attitude towards Dr. Thomas, concerning whom he was wont to say, “Yes, yes; but I must leave the Doctor and follow Christ.” If the Doctor was a follower of Christ, to leave him was to dishonour him, and Christ also; either he was or he was not. Brother Roberts may sit on the horn of his own dilemma which he finds the more comfortable.

We now proceed. The first paragraph of “The Slain Lamb” introduces “Elymas the Sorcerer” and “the subtle hypocritical foes” of Jesus as a sufficient excuse for the shouting and temper displayed by the editor at the close of our lecture on “The Sacrifice of Christ.” If it be possible that we are not a “subtle hypocrite” a “child of the devil, an enemy of all righteousness,” for so Elymas is described, then it would seem that there was no adequate cause for so violent a perturbation of “that perfect equanimity (as Brother Roberts’ says) which it is desirable at all times to observe.” Without fear we venture to leave our identification by this hue and cry to the brethren in all the earth.

Paragraph 2. Brother Roberts says he was delegated to ask us questions, and we knew it. Those who have read our lecture know how we came to be delegated, and those who have not should do so. Among his misstatements is this: “Knowing that weakness compelled his absence at the seaside, we took advantage of the opportunity to come and lay our clever fallacies before” the meeting at 71 Belgrave Road. If Brother Roberts knows the truth of the matter, he has told a deliberate falsehood; if he does not, and has any candour left at command, he will promptly apologies for this entirely untrue assertion.

Paragraph 3. This admits that he (Brother Roberts) “was goaded into a breach of public etiquette;” and then tells us he “was not dissatisfied with his offence in the matter”! That is to say, he was satisfied with his own disgraceful behaviour! Setting aside this peculiar logic, this utterance pictures a self-satisfied, self-sufficient individual.

Paragraph 4 opens thus: “The question, as a whole, is a difficult question, for one reason; it has to do with God’s view of the case.” “The case” is that of redemption, and if it is difficult to see through, God is made responsible for the difficulty, and the consequences arising out of it; but if it is simple, easy, plain, and intelligible to an unlettered teachable mind, then Brother Roberts has quite misunderstood “the case” The real difficulty, and it is insuperable, is to make Brother Roberts’ case plain and convincing to his own mind. Do what you will with it, his reason, his sense of justice and mercy remain unsatisfied; and feeling this, he sets out by saying, “The question as a whole, is a difficult question,” and struggles into a “break down” to explain it. But the “one reason” he assigns for this difficulty is fatal to his position - viz., that “it has to do with God’s view of the case.” Now, if man had been left to propound a scheme of redemption the case would have been difficult indeed. This may be seen by the fruitless efforts of those holy men before the birth of Christ “to look into it;” but now we have a Revelation of the mystery the question is no longer difficult, but plain. The New Testament record of the birth, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ are on a level with the minds of “the poor to whom the Gospel is preached.” And this is still more largely true of those poor who delight to study “the record God has given of His Son.” “These things” are said to have been written “that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and believing ye might have life through His Name.” God has condescended to make “the way so simple that a wayfaring man, though a fool (in worldly wisdom) cannot err therein.” Brother Roberts’ notion makes the knowledge of redemption harder of attainment than the summit of Parnassus; and thus convicts him, while professedly a teacher of the unwise, of profound ignorance of that perfect wisdom by which the Almighty has been able to speak to the poorest of His children. God’s paths are straight, not crooked; those who walk in them, walk in the light, not in darkness; it is only the wicked who accuse God of being a hard master, and of strewing their path with difficulties too hard to overcome.

This fourth paragraph closes in part with these words: “Now, one thing that distinguishes this disturbing heresy more than another is that it cannot express itself in the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth but it is obliged continually to employ invented phrases.” Those who use invented phrases and coined words continually show that they are very imperfectly acquainted with the treasures of the English tongue, the richest, most apt, and copious, whether for prose or verse, of all known languages, except the Greek. But a lecture containing 423 quotations and allusions to Scripture does not very clearly prove the lecturer’s inability to expound his subject “in the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth.” It has been said

that this number of allusions is found in the lecture on “The Sacrifice of Christ” by one who has had the curiosity to count it through.

Paragraph 5. Here Brother Roberts says: “I employ the aid of a chart, not because I think it proves anything it cannot demonstrate.” This being admitted, any conclusion established by reference to the chart is not worthy of notice. But Paragraph 34 shows that Brother Roberts put his chart to this very use. Not being able to explain in words, either human or Divine, “how Jesus could be Sinful Flesh, and yet sinless,” he pointed to the “central sun” at the top of his chart, and exclaimed, “That is my explanation, brothers; that is my explanation!” It is to be presumed, however, that some of the said “brothers” would hardly recognize that as a satisfactory “explanation,” although they were domineeringly told that it was “Paul’s explanation,” and that “God did it.” There must be some blunder here, either “in the weakness of the moment, or else in somebody’s weakness; we are not aware that Paul ever used that “pointer,” and that “sun,” or anything like them, to make his “explanation” of the plan of redemption.

Envy and rage are twin demons, and it is not astonishing that some sad things should be said, when we see by his own Revised Speech that Brother Roberts told his “brothers” that we had employed our chart not to explain, but “to dazzle their eyes, and to sorcerise their imagination, and to implant heresy in their minds.” He does not say that we did these wicked things unintentionally, but that we “made use of a chart” to accomplish these nefarious designs. While we are truly sorry for Brother Roberts on account of his bodily afflictions, we hope that under the cooling influences of hydropathic treatment his brain will cease to give off such wild and unsound asseverations.

Paragraph 6 calls for no particular remark except on the sentence which says: “God is too much left out of modern theorisations and definitions of the plan of salvation.” It is difficult to see what this applies to. All sects, save Socinians, make very much of God in redemption: but Socinians are not a modern but a very ancient sect. This, therefore, looks like a random unintelligible phrase, such as one would expect from a person who almost regards ignorance of all things outside the Bible as a virtue.

Paragraph 7. This is the happy but rare exception. It appears scriptural enough.

Paragraph 8 we gladly assent. It is of the highest importance that we should recognize God as the Saviour in the strict and ultimate sense; but this is not incompatible with co-operation on the part of Jesus, any more than “working out our own salvation” is incompatible with God being our Saviour.

Paragraph 9 is conspicuously bad. It debases its author by putting a lie into the mouth of his opponent, who, he says, teaches Jesus to be “a mere man.” Now, which theory ought to be accused of this sin the one that lays great stress on the fact that Jesus was the Son of God, or the one that makes Him the son of Adam?

Paragraph 10. This is a long paragraph, but its fault lies not in its length, but in its untrue statements and wrong use of Scripture. We have pointed to the parallel between Adam before he sinned and Jesus. Brother Roberts says there is no parallel but “a great difference.” He then shows what he imagines the “great difference” to consist in. “Adam,” he tells us, “suffered no evil, no pain, no weakness, no grief,” But Jesus did. This conception about Adam before he sinned is totally at variance with Dr. Thomas’s view on the subject. He says that our flesh is constitutionally no worse than Adam’s flesh before the fall. (See “Ambassador” August 1869, page 216).

How does Brother Roberts know that a corruptible body would feel no weakness and no pain? This looks contrary to the nature of the thing. Even now there are people to be found who live and die ignorant of sickness and suffering. But Brother Roberts is trying to make it appear that Christ’s being tired, His weeping, His grief, and finally His death, were all the result of Adam’s sin in His, that is, Christ’s own body! He might as well say that if Adam had not sinned Jesus would never have been hungry. Why did Jesus weep? Was it for Himself or His own bodily sufferings? There is not a line to prove that He was ever sick an hour, nor one to suggest that that He had ever any cause to weep for Himself. The weakness through which Christ died was ours, not His, morally speaking, while as to His nature it was human “for the suffering of death.” But this weakness of a very different sort from that sinful weakness which Brother Roberts finds in the flesh of Christ.

Jesus was a man of intense sympathy; He wept with those that wept. But had Adam no sympathy before he sinned? Could not his heart have been moved and his eyes filled with tears? If not then he was more than human; if not, then those human qualities came to him after transgression, so that he was more amiable and humane as a sinner than a just person! But Brother Roberts says “he proposes to strengthen this beyond the power of resistance.” This strengthening is to come from the Psalms to favour the idea of an unclean Christ would be more correctly styled weakness than strength.

The first Psalm referred to is the 40th, and the words emphasized are, “for innumerable evils compassed me about; mine iniquities have taken hold upon me; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.” The sense in which these words are applied to Christ is most abominable; it makes Him the vilest wretch; He is worse than Saul, who thought himself “the chiefest of sinners.” Brother Roberts says, in a parenthesis which betrays his own embarrassment, “The iniquities of His brethren laid on Him in their effects.” Did the bearing of these “effects” fill His flesh with sin? Did the enduring of these “effects” make His own iniquities more than the hairs of His head? What were the “effects”? The answer is, death. Did the suffering of death as a sin offering for His brethren fill the flesh of that offering full of sin? O Socrates, we sigh for the abuse of thy method of finding out the truth of the matter.

When the priest’s hands were laid on the head of the victim all the hands of the congregation of Israel were represented - a great pyramid of hands, symbolizing a mountain of sins; so also “the hairs of the head” may symbolize the sins of the world. But was the victim physically unclean, physically a sinner? If so, then why was the type without spot? Brother Roberts, however, has elsewhere said “There is no sin pervading the physical nature; how, then, does he now say Christ’s body was filled with sins countless for multitudes? Let him keep to one side, whichever that is, he cannot be on both. As though not satisfied with the “strength” extracted out of the 40th Psalm, he says to his “brethren” - “But you will find something more striking in other cases.” However that may be, the “brothers,” we imagine, would not be struck with the “strength” of this effort to crush the “disturbing heresy.” Some of them would very likely be struck with astonishment to find their leader so perverting the Word of God.

As the “strengthening” process proceeds the weakness of Brother Roberts’ position becomes more painfully manifest. He next quotes from the Hebrews 1:8 & 10, and then proceeds to address his “brethren” as follows: “The things that the spirit, in Paul. Here applies to the Messiah; you will find in the 102nd Psalm: 1-11.” For shame, Mr Editor! Do you think that an investigator is to be carried away by such miserable audacity as this?! It is true, as you say, that “at the 8th verse of Hebrews 1, we have the words, “Unto the Son He saith;” and also it is true that He saith “certain things.” At the 10th verse we read, “And thou Lord,” “and so forth;” but where among your “certain things” and your “so forth” do you find the eleven verses applied by Paul to Jesus from the 102nd Psalm? Is this “strengthening your position beyond the power of resistance”? It is an attempt to “strengthen” your position which cannot fail to injure it and you in the eyes of your best friends. Whoever of your “brothers” will compare the 102nd Psalm with the 8th and 10th verses, and your “certain things” and “so forth” will see that not one verse of your whole eleven is applied by “the spirit of Paul” to Jesus. It is quite enough for the cause of truth to adhere to the words of the Spirit when you profess to apply them, and it is no light offence against God and your brethren to make so glaring a false statement as this.

Paragraph 11. This is a miserable specimen of throwing literary mud and of raising a cloud of dust. The editor wishes to make his audience believe that we hold and teach that life is a thing, a living intelligent existence, which may go out of a man’s body and come into it again! No such nonsense was ever heard or read from us; and the editor, in raising an alarm on such grounds, is like the boy in the fable who cried wolf, wolf, when there was no wolf. But this is the way the editor shows how “a rope of sand falls to pieces when you see the initial fallacy.” if his opponent has no such “rope” he spins one for him, and like those bad men who put stolen goods into other people’s possession who are innocent, he gives it out that the said “rope” is the making and the property of his antagonist.

Paragraph 12 is but a continuation of talk on the false alarm raised in paragraph 11.

Paragraph 13. Brother Roberts returns to the Psalms to prove that Christ was unclean, was full of sin, was “a child of wrath,” as every sinner is, and, therefore, born under sentence of death. It will be noticed

that he deals with the Psalms in wholesale fashion, speaking of them as though they all and every verse belonged to Christ! Having seen how he tried to thrust eleven verses of the 102nd Psalm into Paul's mouth, it will be nothing new to find him trying the same experiment with Christ. In this respect Brother Roberts may be said to be "no respecter of persons;" he treats friends and foes, inspired and uninspired, all alike, if they do not say the false and foolish things he wishes them to say, he says them in their name without asking their permission. Mark what he says here: "I will without further quotation give you a list of them (the Psalms), and the New Testament reference in each case where The Psalm is by the Spirit applied to Jesus." Nothing could be more deliberately unfair and misleading. If he had said, "I will refer you to those verses in the Psalms which are applied to Jesus in the New Testament" there would have been nothing amiss; but he takes his besom, opens the sack's mouth, and sweeps in the whole lot; throws the sack to his "brothers" and says, "There, I give you a list of the Psalms as applied by the Spirit to Christ."!

Being favoured with that "leisure" in which the editor hopes his "brothers" will compare the texts given, we propose so to occupy it for our own benefit and the enlightenment of those whose time is all taken up by hard work.

We begin, then, with Brother Roberts' first reference - Matthew 21:42 (Psalm 118). What saith Matthew? "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner- This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes." Now here are the 22nd and 23rd verses of the Psalm, and not a word more. Whereas we are told that the Psalm is applied by the Spirit to Jesus in Matthew. But this is not by any means the worst of it. Brother Roberts appealed to the Psalms to demonstrate "beyond the power of resistance" that they proved Jesus to be full of sin. Do these two verses prove that? Does the rejection of Jesus by the Jews prove Jesus to be physically unclean? There could not be a worse instance than this of dishonesty in argument. We feel, however, somewhat relieved by the sheer ridiculousness of such a quotation. If Brother Roberts were quite sure he was addressing blind people, or people deprived of the Psalms in a language they could read, he might, by laying aside all honesty, venture to handle the Psalms thus; but if he calmly reflects, surely he must see that he himself is doing more to bring his house down about his ears than those whom he contends against.

Next Matthew 28:25 (Psalm 22). Matthew's words are: "Then answered all the people, and said. His blood be on us and our children." What the object is of referring this to Psalm 22 we know not. Brother Roberts promised faithfully to show us only those Psalms which are applied by the Spirit to Jesus, and to give the verses in which they are so applied. But this verse is not found at all in the 22nd Psalm, nor, as far as we remember, in any other part of Scripture. And if it were, does it prove that sin filled the body of our Lord? Does it prove that the flesh of "that Holy thing" born of the Lord's handmaid, begotten of Holy Spirit, was as unclean as any sinner from the loins of Adam is supposed to be? Alas' alas! If this is the "irresistible" argument for a Filthy Son of God.

Our attention is next directed to Hebrews 2:14, and (the same Psalm). This verse is a quotation of the 22nd verse of the Psalm, and no more. But, like the preceding, what does it help Brother Roberts? Does the announcement that Christ "will declare His Father's name to His brethren" demonstrate that He (Christ) was made of unclean flesh?

Surely this is a new kind of proof. We could recommend Brother Roberts to issue a treatise on logic which we might understand how to apply such principles. We confess that the standard works we have glanced at are of no service in this new style.

Luke 4:10 (Psalm 91): "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee." These words agree with the 11th verse of the Psalm. And it is needless to tell the "brothers" that they furnish no proof of the editor's proposition. Let us state the matter formally.

Proposition: "The flesh of Jesus Christ was full of sin."

Proof: "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee."

If some of the old masters of logic could rise up and see this new style, would they not say "Alas! Alas! for our 'carnality' we could not see "below the surface!" Woe unto us, for we are not of "prolonged spiritual education," we are undone!"

Luke 13:46 (Psalm 31). Luke says: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit," quoting the 5th verse of the Psalm. Let us repeat our example.

Proposition: "The flesh of Jesus Christ was full of sin."

Proof: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit."

Again John 2:17 (Psalm 69); "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." This is from the 9th verse of the Psalm.

Proposition: "The flesh of Jesus Christ was full of sin."

Proof: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up"!

Is not this a good specimen of the reductio ad absurdum?

But Brother Roberts is determined we shall be amused by his incongruities. Acts 1:20 (Psalm 109). "Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein; and his bishopric let another take." This is drawn from the 8th verse of the Psalm. In our simplicity we always took it as applicable to Judas; it never struck us that it was intended to prove Jesus a constitutional sinner. Perhaps we may yet detect this by the aid of Brother Roberts' new system of reasoning.

Proposition: "The flesh of Jesus was full of sin."

Proof: "Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein, and his bishopric let another man take.""

We are now arrived at the last reference, and are not sorry for such monstrous absurdities; such mockeries of reason, soon turn merriment into disgust.

Acts 2:25 (Psalm 16). We cut this short.

Proposition: "The flesh of Jesus was full of sin."

Proof: "For David speaketh concerning him. I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand that I should not be moved."

We sincerely believe that any man who has got into the state of mind exhibited in the foregoing handling of the Word of God, to support his notion of the physical uncleanness of the unblemished "Lamb of God" is, for the time being, totally unfit to investigate any question, and entirely unworthy of any consideration as a professed teacher of the ignorant, and of them that are out of the way. We feel sure that this display of want of candour, of deliberate abuse of the Word of Truth, and of a list of gross incongruities and shocking absurdities will save many more from his trust and guidance, and we hope will be to them and others a standing lesson of the necessity of proving what they assent to for themselves.

Paragraph 14 reaffirms "the entirely dissimilarity between the position of Adam and the probation of the Lord Jesus Christ." It is upon this entire dissimilarity that the leader of the theory of an unclean Christ rests his argument. If a striking similarity can be fairly made out, then the whole position which stands on the opposite idea will fall through. The author of "The Slain Lamb" will have no half measures. If he is to employ the Psalms, he will employ them wholesale. It is the same with the Adams; he will have no resemblance whatever; nothing short of entire dissimilarity will serve his purpose. Now for the facts:-

1. Adam was son of God; so was Jesus
2. Adam was made a living soul capable of death; so was Jesus
3. Adam was human nature, or "flesh and blood;" so was Jesus.
4. Adam was formed of the dust; Jesus of flesh which sprang out of dust.

5. God must have taught Adam, for there was no other teacher; Jesus “heard and learned” of His Father.
6. Adam received a law of obedience from God; Jesus came to do His Father’s will,
7. Adam was put “on trial for immortality;” Jesus conquered through obedience under trial.
8. Adam’s desires tempted him to sin; Jesus suffered being tempted.
9. Adam’s nature and impulses were those common to all men; Jesus “was tried in all points like His brethren.”
10. Adam was born lord of the creation; Jesus was born King of all the earth.
11. Adam’s temptation had relation to eating; Jesus was tempted to make bread out of stones.
12. Upon Adam’s conduct depended the future happiness of his children; upon the obedience of Jesus depended the salvation of those He came to save.
13. Our relation to Adam involves us in real death; our relation to Jesus in figurative death.
14. Adam died through his own sin; Jesus “tasted death for every man” who sinned in Adam.
15. By one man’s (Adam’s) disobedience many were made sinners; by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.
16. Adam “was appointed to suffer;” for in all trial there is suffering; Jesus suffered by the trials of His faith, besides the suffering of death.
17. Adam was simply innocent until he received God’s law; Jesus was innocent until He reached the age to know good and evil.
18. Adam was a man of character while he obeyed; Jesus perfected His character by perfect obedience.
19. Adam was the father of the old creation; Jesus is the founder of the new.
20. The old creation began in “flesh and blood” under obedience; the new creation began in Jesus, who was tried in and by our nature.
21. The old creation closes in death through sin; the new creation attains to life through righteousness-
22. If there is entire dissimilarity how, then does Paul style “Adam the figure of Him who was to come”? Mark, Brother Roberts says in Question 70 that the second Adamship of Jesus did not begin until he became immortal.

In dismissing this paragraph. let it be observed that these twenty-two points of similarity betwixt the first Adam and the second must be all destroyed to bring Brother Roberts’ statement one step towards the threshold of truth. And when he has demonstrated the whole twenty-two to be false, then he must advance a sufficient number of points to cover the whole ground of comparison, and every point must be, not partially but entirely dissimilar. When he has achieved this we will acknowledge our defeat, and give up our sword.

Paragraph 15. Here Brother Roberts invites the audience to look at our diagram, and to notice that by using the word “debt,” to signify that which Jesus paid for our release, we employed “artificial and unscriptural jargon.” To very few persons is a “debt” an “artificial” thing; and if the word may be called “jargon” it is a jargon which most people can understand. But our devout editor has a perfect horror of the “unscriptural.” If “Debt” is unscriptural it will not be found in Scripture. We have before times ventured to

give the editor this piece of information. But if the word “debt” should be found in the Scriptures, and particularly if it should be employed in relation to sin and death how then? The editor has probably read these words; “And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.”

What is signified by “the Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.”? When the lecturer of “The Slain Lamb” has shown this language to be “artificial and unscriptural jargon” we will admit our error.

Paragraph 16 is unworthy of note as regards our position, except for the false application of that text which says “death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression.” If these words be construed to mean that all men did not sin in Adam, then Paul, who writes “In whom all sinned, is made a liar. And if it be held that the consequence of that sin was not death to all, the lie is again given to Paul’s teaching - “and so death hath passed on all,” The Apostle has taught that “remission of sins there is none without the shedding of blood.” Brother Roberts, therefore, in asserting that blood is only needful for personal sins of one’s own committing, makes the apostle a false teacher. Let Brother Roberts point us to one simple text which indicates that a man would be released from death inherited from Adam without the blood of Christ, and we will give up the dispute. That the reader may see we have not misrepresented Brother Roberts’ position, we will give his own words; “I will show before I have done... that that which stands in the way of our resurrection by nature is not our hereditary mortality in Adam, but our personal offences” (paragraph 15, “Christadelphian” page 440).

The “who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression,” we understand this to mean that although men had not literally and actually taken and eaten the forbidden fruit in Eden, the fatal consequences of Adam’s doing so were upon them. For this cause alone Christ’s blood was indispensable, to say nothing of their own personal offences, to efface which it was likewise shed.

Paragraph 17. In this section the lecturer threatens “to make manifest, further on, the most unscriptural, the most carnal, and the most untrue and mischievous character of the new philosophy.” When ever we arrive at this manifestation it shall have our best attention.

Paragraph 18. Here the lecturer directs his audience to a particular line in his diagram. What he says needs no attention from us.

Paragraph 19, Offers nothing for comment.

Paragraph 20 speaks of the Mosaic law, and speaks falsely. The third sentence runs thus: “The law condemned to death all who disobeyed it in the meanest particular.” This makes God as harsh and unrelenting as Draco who instituted but one punishment for all offences, viz., death. There were numerous crimes which “the law” did not punish with death. “On the crimes of theft, Moses imposed the punishment of double (and sometimes still higher) restitution, and in case the person was unable to pay, he was to be sold as a slave, and payment to be made with the purchase money (Exodus 22:1-4). In the case of personal injuries, payment for loss of time, and expense of cure. In other cases the law of retaliation was enforced (Exodus 21:18,19,22-25; Leviticus 24:19-23; Exodus 21:26,27; Deuteronomy 25:11,12). See Boothroyd’s Introduction.

This false statement, that for “the meanest offence” Moses imposed death, is needful to bring every Jew under sentence of death, and then it is randomly assumed that because Jesus was born a Jew He was under the curse, though the lecturer plainly says elsewhere that Jesus kept the law perfectly. If a man must be guilty in order to be condemned to death, though only “in the meanest particular,” and Jesus was not guilty at all, how was He, though born under the law, cursed with death by the law? The lecturer has increased his list of contradictions.

Perhaps this blunder about death for “the meanest” offence has arisen out of another blunder. It certainly cannot come from the words of the law itself. James says, “Whosoever offends in one point is guilty of all.” Does James mean that a man who stole a sparrow, or a pigeon, was as bad as a man who committed adultery, or murder? Certainly not. The sense of the passage appears to be this, that whereas some Jewish Doctors held that if certain points of the law were rigidly kept, a person was not guilty for

neglecting others. A Jew was not at liberty to treat the law piece meal he must take it as a whole if, therefore, he committed a single offence, it was a breach of the law as a whole, but not of every section of the law. Whitby takes this view of the passage.

Paragraph 21. Brother Roberts now begs "special attention" to what we have elsewhere shown to be his perversion of the words of Christ, namely, that the law had power to give eternal life. He has, however, been compelled to admit that his statement "requires qualification." We are glad to see this. If he would cultivate this virtue of admitting his errors, both he and his "brothers" would be benefited.

Paragraph 22. The exposure of one sentence in this section will reduce the whole to chaff. Brother Roberts says, "God will keep no man in the grave because of Adam's sin, if he himself be individually righteous." The nonsense of this utterance may be illustrated in the following manner:- "No man will be drowned if he keeps out of the water." The absurdity of Brother Roberts' speech is seen by inquiring what righteousness is? It is something indispensable to salvation - what is it? Brother Roberts speaks now as though it were conceivably possible for a man of himself to be righteous. If he had not trammelled his Scripture intelligence with bitter prejudice, he would have told his "brothers" that all men are naked before God through Adam's offence that, however good their actions, however pure their motives, unless they have on, or are related to, God's righteousness, they must perish. He speaks now as though a man might be righteous without Christ. Christ is God's righteousness to all men, both Jew and Gentile; whether as an object of hope before He appeared, or of faith and obedience after His resurrection. Without Christ no man can be righteous before God unto eternal life. And if not, then without the blood of Christ no son of Adam can rise from the dead to die no more. If what Brother Roberts here teaches were true, then the blood of Christ might be shed in vain, and resurrection might come through "works of righteousness which we have done." This is one of the saddest and silliest sentences in the whole lecture.

Paragraph 23 is conspicuous for two things; first, it makes God condemn man whom He made utterly helpless for being helpless. Second, it sneers at the use of learning; "heathen poets and doctors of the apostasy." But as Macaulay says, to call a man a blockhead is not the way to convince him you are right; and if some persons were to occupy some of their time among "the heathen poets and doctors of the apostasy" instead of snoring in bed till noon, they would become aware of the fact that very much of what they imagine is original with one, is the result of searching, culling, and classifying from a hundred sources. As a quoter a man can readily acquire facility with fair memory; but quoting and thinking are not exactly the same thing. As Professor Stowe truly says, if you would be deeply acquainted with Scripture, you must read a little at a time and think a great deal about it.

Paragraph 24 is very long. The lecturer here struggles to desperation to support the already exposed inaccuracy of certain things in Jesus Christ and Him Crucified.

Paragraph 25 belongs to those other speakers, which put what is not admitted into the opposite doctrine.

Paragraph 26. This is a "puffed up" insinuation, to the effect that the lecturer is of a "prolonged spiritual education," and that all those who do not acquiesce in his sentiments are "carnal."

Paragraph 27 is marked by what some fall back upon for lack of argument.

Paragraph 28 is occupied in decrying and execrating "flesh and blood." Perhaps the lecturer may live to see the ridiculousness of his remarks, and the injustice, not to say cruelty, which his scheme imputes to God.

Paragraph 29. The object here is the same on the whole as that in the preceding paragraph, but a grossly absurd contradiction marks its close. Paul is made to say that "in the flesh, by natural constitution, dwells no good thing." Let Whately be read on this. But what is natural constitution? Just what the flesh was made. Now, if Paul here refers to his body, how then can it be said by God that it was "very good"? This was said at the time of "its natural constitution" or making. We do not quite understand how the same thing can be pronounced "very good," and also to have "no good" thing in it. But if Paul in Romans 7 is

regarded as speaking not of the body, but of the “flesh,” or fleshly lusts unchecked by divine law, the matter is harmonious enough.

Paragraph 30 contains nothing to object to.

Paragraph 31 expresses a little nonsense. It is said that because of Adam’s sin Cain was a murderer. This was the result of sin in Adam’s flesh. We presume that before Seth and Abel were begotten, sin had left the flesh of Adam and his wife, for these sons were both righteous; in this case sin can hardly be regarded as a “fixed principle” in the flesh. We should rather take Brother Roberts’ view and say, “sin is not a literal principle pervading the physical organisation,” and that at most it can only be a “metonym for the impulses native to the flesh.” Are the “impulses” sin? Surely not; other wise God is the author if sin, for He implanted the impulses in man. The impulses are “very good” when properly directed, for the Creator pronounced “the man whom He had made very good.” We trust that if Brother Roberts is wilfully blind to this, others will not be.

Paragraph 32 strains hard to establish sin in the flesh, and from its doctrine we might very well conclude that if “sinful flesh” were a possibility we had found a specimen of it in the lecturer. The argument runs thus:- “Here are the works of this good flesh - adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like.” Any person capable of calm reflection will see the egregious folly of such talk as this. What is adultery but lawful desire run riot. What is idolatry but the perversion of the faculties of worship? And so throughout. There is no faculty but what is capable of transgressing its lawful bounds, and there is no faculty, when within its bounds, but what is it “very good,” for God made them all.

Paragraph 33 is noticeable for the fallacious use it makes of the words “likeness” and “image” as regards Christ and us. Seth was made in the “image and likeness” of Adam. Brother Roberts denies that Seth “was in any wise different” from his father. What nonsense! This makes Seth Seth’s father, and Seth’s father Seth. Not content with this folly, he handles the passage which speaks of “the image of the earthy” after the same method. “Shall we say,” he asks, “we have not borne the earthy?” “Do we not bear the earthy?” “Yes,” This was presuming greatly on the dullness of his audience. “The earthy here spoken of is Adam. We bear Adam’s image in that we are earthy, but that does not prove that we are Adam, it does not prove that we are not “in any wise different” from him. Adam was quite as “earthy” before he sinned as after, therefore the point Brother Roberts is trying to establish is lost, for it is not in the fact that Adam was “earthy” that made him a sinner, but in the fact that he transgressed.

Paragraph 34. Here we have a specimen of literary ignorance and impudence of passing shamefulness. After pointing out to his “brothers and sisters” that the true reading of Romans 8:3 is “the flesh of sin.” or “sin’s flesh” Brother Roberts then “dazzles” or, more correctly speaking, tries to befool them by saying “sinful flesh” is the English idiomatic equivalent for “sin’s flesh.” If any schoolboy dared to tell his tutor this, the “equivalent” he would get for it would make him sit uncomfortably all day afterwards. “Sin’s flesh,” or “the flesh of sin,” is a phrase in the possessive case. Brother Roberts, abusing the little learning he has, tells the people that if they want to say that in “good English” they must say “sinful flesh,” Miserable! More miserable! Most miserable!!! If I were to say “Green’s hat,” “the hat of Green,” in Greek, and wished to translate the phrase into “good English,” should I have to say “a green hat”? So, if I say “*sarkos hamartias*” (sin’s flesh) - to make “good English,” must I say “sinful flesh”? The possessive case points out the Possessor; the adjective the Quality of a thing, and was so ever since the confusion of tongues, and before it. The best counsel we can give Brother Roberts in this matter is to leave off talking about “idioms” and study Cobbett’s English Grammar for a twelvemonth.

Paragraph 35, “Elymas the sorcerer,” and the “subtle hypocrites” who confronted Jesus, are insufficient to portray our iniquities in ventilating what we believe to be the “the truth as it is in Jesus.” Brother Roberts has found us worthy of still worse company, if such were possible. What is the offence which, in his estimation, is enough to send us down quick into the pit? What is the crime which has earned us a grave with Koran, Dathan and Abiram? Listen, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, Brother Roberts declares that God made man too weak to keep His law, and then condemned him for not keeping it. God gave Christ that power which He would not give to Adam, and blessed Christ for using it. We venture to ask him to show us the Justice of God in this. Herein we discern our fate; fire is already gone out and will

burn to the lowest hell! “It is not,” says one who can look below the surface, “It is not the question of a child of God.”

Paragraph 36. like several others, “beats the air.” It charges us with making nonsense of certain texts, and then rebukes us.

Paragraph 37 solemnly avers that “the scheme of salvation” is never comprehended by those who embrace the “free life” heresy.

Paragraph 38 takes a high tone. Who are they that have embraced this cursed doctrine? Who are they that are blasted with this cankering mildew? “Those who seemed to be somewhat, it maketh no matter to me. They who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me.” Such is inflated drivel and sickly bombast of “prolonged spiritual education,” so called.

Paragraph 39. Before a man takes Paul’s high stand he should be quite sure that he is his equal in knowledge; to say nothing of Divine inspiration. “The remaining part of the chart will be intelligible at a glance,” says brother Roberts. Now we string ourselves up to discover the intelligibility of the next statement. “The resurrection of the offered body of Christ was the Father’s work, as you know, and therefore a stream of light connects the central sun with that event.” Now, on this point, as on others, we say, again, that if Brother Roberts will prove, either in Paul’s words or in any words of Scripture, that Christ’s body was offered before He rose from the dead, we will cease our contention. We maintain that Christ’s body was offered once, and that once was in the most Holy Place - that is, “heaven itself” (Hebrews 9:11,12,24-26). “A stream of light,” says Brother Roberts, “shows this on the chart.” We say all the accumulated starlight and sunlight of the universe cannot prove it true. The priest under the law could not on the great day of Atonement offer outside the holy place. He entered there to offer by means of the blood shed outside. So, also, Christ slain on the Cross, entered the most holy heavenly by means of His own blood. There He offered Himself. He who talks of the Resurrection of the offered body of Christ, says, in effect, that Christ was raised from the dead after His ascension!

In conclusion, Paragraphs 40 to 44 are undeserving of detailed criticism. Personal vituperation is their “trade mark.” We close our dissection of this lecture on “The Slain Lamb” by giving a list of the falsehoods in doctrine which in this controversy Brother Roberts has tried to put into our mouths:

Imputed Falsehoods

1. That the sentence in Adam was eternal death.
2. That Christ Jesus bore that sentence.
3. That the flesh of Christ was different flesh from ours.
4. That life, not flesh, was offered in sacrifice.
5. That life is a living intelligence distinct from body
6. That Christ’s life was taken merely instead of ours.
7. That ours, therefore, might have served if His had not been given.
8. That Christ was “a mere man” - that is, not the Son of God.
9. That Christ was no more a manifestation of God than Adam was,
10. That Christ had no proper relation to our race.

Postscript - There is one thing we thank Brother Roberts for, namely, the insertion of a copy of our diagram in the “Christadelphian.” His styling it the Renunciationist Heresy will not spoil its use with those whose eyes are not jaundiced with the spleen of envy. Finally, should this copious vomiting of bile relieve our fiery antagonist of his dizzy madness, we shall not regret it, even though our outer garments have been some-what befouled thereby.

Brother Edward Turney.

From Your Letters:-

Regarding Ezekiel's Temple Vision. Brother Phil Parry asks - Is It Future and Can This Question Be Resolved?

Just before His ascent to heaven the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" His answer was "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power." (Acts 1:6-7)(Deuteronomy 29:29).

Proof that Israel had no kingdom. Yet those people regarded themselves as being under the Mosaic Law. This should also be the case now with Jews who do not accept Jesus as the Messiah whom their ancestors crucified. They should be practising all the Law and the ordinances contained therein, but do they? Let us assume that they are doing so and that Jesus returned now; their sacrifices were not being offered in retrospect but in prospect of the Antitype who would fulfil these types though they were in the main ignorant of this fact and thinking sacrifices and offerings for sin were pleasing to God. Hence, no exhibition of faith but a justification of works which held them in Edenic bondage.

These sacrifices for sin were never meant to be retrospective but prospective, therefore for anything to be retrospective concerning Jesus and His first mission, a person would need enlightenment and faith in the fact that it really happened. This is the true position of those who are under the New Covenant from the time of the sacrificial death of Jesus. His introduction of the Bread and Wine to His twelve disciples was prospective of His death on Calvary but since that death by His shed blood, no further shedding of blood was necessary "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin." (Hebrews 10:14-18). No, a new and living way has been consecrated under a New Covenant, because the first under Moses was faulty (Hebrews 8:7).

I can well understand why Edgar Wille had a change of mind on Ezekiel's Temple being future if all the ritualistic practices which have been termed faulty under the old covenant are to be restored when the New Covenant is already in operation and still applies to all families of the earth who will be blessed in Abraham who was before the Mosaic Law which was not of faith. When we study Ezekiel from chapter 42 onwards we find that everything in process is identical with the procedure under Moses and when we get to chapter 44 verse 9 this would rule out people who are not circumcised in the material or literal flesh taking any part in the sanctuary of the Lord. There is no harmony here with Paul's teaching in Romans 2:3-4; in fact chapter 2:28-29 makes void that "literal flesh" circumcision would be a condition in a future Temple or sanctuary of the Lord, neither does it make sense that one must be a Jew outwardly under the Old Covenant rituals when a New Covenant had been in operation since Christ's death.

It may be argued that many Jews after the flesh will be convinced of Jesus as the Messiah whom their father's rejected, when they see the wounds of His crucifixion, but where then is the point of a re-introduction of sacrifices and offerings as were under the Old Covenant which Paul termed a schoolmaster to bring him and others under it to Christ, if that very Christ has shown Himself and His wounds to prove He came and died for them? Surely the preaching of the Gospel should be sufficient for them as it has been for us. We did not come to the knowledge of Christ's redemptive work while under the Temple rituals of the Law but through Apostolic teaching under the New Covenant, yet we have not seen Jesus in the flesh or in the Spirit Body, but God has made it possible for us to know Him and His Son. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Read Romans 4 and then ask yourselves "Would God re-introduce the Mosaic rituals of the Tabernacle and Temple when it is said that without faith it is impossible to please Him? All that is described in Ezekiel 42-46 is under the principle of compulsion and a remembrance made of sin in contrast with Paul's teaching in Romans 4, which teaches mercy and grace through faith. I believe a good case was made against a future Temple on the lines of the Aaronic priesthood, in the C.L.157 by both Brother Russell and myself but one difficulty presented itself for explanation, this had to do with the waters which

issued forth until Ezekiel was eventually faced with a river and a condition of things that could not be harmonised with the re-built Temple in Nehemiah's day.

Dr. Adam Clarke explained his views on this and copies have been sent to some who support a Temple future to our present time with sacrifices after the order of Aaron. In sympathy with his thoughts I find there could be a great measure of truth in what he says when I read again the experiences of Ezekiel as he followed the man with the measuring reed. From Chapter 40 his walk commenced and came back to where he had started, with no mention of seeing any water issuing from under the threshold of the house. It appears from this that the measure and pattern of the Temple with its types and shadows and observance of that which was a ministration of death - it could not of itself give life but the water of life was available by a gradual process of walk in following the man with the reed who had shown the measure of the stature of the man Christ Jesus who became an High Priest of good tidings to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building (literal) but through the Spirit. In contemplating this river of life it reminds me of Revelation 21 and 22 and of what Ezekiel witnessed at his return to the brink of the river. We must look beyond the material things to a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.

One last point I wish to make from John 12:41, "These things said Esais the prophet, when he saw his glory, and spake of him," When was this? Turn to Isaiah 6:1-5 read on and consider verse 11, "Lord how long? And the Lord answered, "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant...," and the chapter finishes with a reference to the holy seed which remains as the substance in an oak when the leaves have been cast.

The margin reference is to Romans 11 where the glorious consummation of the elect of Israel takes place when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. For "to Abraham and his seed were the promises made" as Paul explains in Galatians 3:16-29; it is impossible on this basis to speak of Jews as under any other covenant than the one we are under in Christ.

Brother Phil Parry.

* * *

Sister Evelyn Linggood writes:

It must be remembered that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written to the saints, "them who are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:14), not to the nation of Israel who are still "blind" and will remain so until the Gentile graft is complete (Romans 11:25). We know that this will be the time when Christ will come and glorify His saints and will deliver the nation of Israel from Gog and then turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Romans 11:26 and Ezekiel 39:21-29), and following on from that future occurrence Ezekiel is given a vision of a Temple. I believe he sees himself in the future age raised from the dead and is to show restored Israel the pattern of it, etc. They will certainly be ashamed then of their sins and those of their forefathers; moreover in this Temple Ezekiel himself appears to play a part (Ezekiel 43:18-27).

It is strange, if as you say this is the second Temple, that no mention is made of Ezekiel either returning from Babylon or taking part in the Temple appointments; no mention of Zerubbabel either to do with Ezekiel's Temple and one would think so if he laid the foundation and finished it! Moreover, it was only Judah and Benjamin who returned from Babylon with perhaps a smattering of other tribes amongst them as in 1 Kings 12:17 for instance. The point I wish to make is that in the Ezekiel account of the inheritance of the land all the tribes are there, not just Judah (Jews). In Ezekiel 47 and 48 the Sanctuary is bound up with the giving of the inheritance.

You admit that the waters flowing from the sanctuary must be in the future and so it is; the tribes must be re-gathered to make the inheritance possible and we know that Christ when He comes is to "raise up the tribes of Jacob" (Isaiah 49:6), and two nations, Israel and Judah, are to become one in His hand (Ezekiel 37:15-22). God will then make a new covenant with them (Jeremiah 31:31-34); this was only partially fulfilled in the 1st Century.

If there is to be no animal sacrifices in the Kingdom, what do you make of such Scripture as, e.g. Jeremiah 33:14-18, and Zechariah 14:21? And if there is to be no material Temple in the Kingdom where will Israel and the nations go to worship the Lord? I think Micah 4:1,2 supplies an adequate answer - "But in the last days the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains and it shall be established above the hills and people shall flow unto it And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord to the house of the God of Jacob and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." (In Ezekiel the Temple is referred to as a "house").

Adam Clarke's spiritualising of the waters issuing from the Sanctuary leaves me cold.

We know the "restitution of all things" is still future, and might not the "all things" include Temple worship? Elijah, we are told is to restore all things. I think it is important that we strive to see things aright, otherwise we get a wrong idea of the Kingdom which formed much of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles. I often think that we as a body have emphasized the teaching of the Atonement - and we know this is most important - at the expense of other important tenets of Truth.

Evelyn Linggood.

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Brother Harold Dawson writes in response to the query regarding his statement that "Jesus alone would know if He had anything to wash away in baptism." (C.L. 156, page 2, 4 lines from bottom of page) :-

"Perhaps I should have refrained from making this comment, but having made it, and it being published I will endeavour to explain if I can.

Throughout the ministry of Jesus, the 3 years - Common Sense came through the Gospel narrative on many occasions. Examples are surely known to us. Matthew 9:13 -

"I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Matthew 9:12 - "They that are whole need not a physician..." Common Sense is certainly clearly implied by Jesus in making these two statements and indicates a very important matter of guidance, already perceived by the Nazarene Fellowship, that Jesus did not condemn "Human Nature" in His own thinking and belief, but did condemn sin; i.e. the blatant breaking of the 10 commandments - which He never did. The late brother L. Sargent who became Editor of "The Christadelphian" but only for a short time, due to his untimely death, came to see this truth due to the writings of the late Brother Ernest Brady and wrote in the Magazine in March 1967 issue :- "Jesus did not condemn human nature in His death on the Cross, but sin whenever and wherever it held sway." This was undoubtedly dynamite to "The Christadelphian" magazine readers, and had Brother Sargent not died shortly after, such comment from the Editor of the magazine could have and should have caused a re-think by Christadelphians throughout the world in a way that the efforts of worthy Nazarene Fellowship writers had failed to do - and for the disfellowshipping of Brother Sargent (Impeachment really I suppose).

At the time debates were taking place between Brother Ernest Brady and several Christadelphians and in the process a simple logical deduction became bogged down in rhetoric.

These two statements say nothing of belief and baptism but generalize the subject of common sense - right attitude of mind in which the right spirit can develop and grow, leading to belief and baptism.

When Jesus was talking to a young man about salvation, He said to him; "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God" - Jesus saw that the humility necessary to have his mind "right" before God was present in the young man.

When Jesus came to John for baptism (Matthew 3:14,15) John forbade Jesus saying, "I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest thou to me?" "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness"

Was Jesus being an example to the newly faithful to come - up to 1996 and beyond, or was He using His characteristic modesty about the years about which we are told nothing of His experiences of daily life as we all have experienced it?

The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove and the voice of God "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" as Jesus rose from the waters. This marked the commencement of the 3 years ministry of Jesus Christ, during which He never failed in every way and on every occasion to keep the 10 commandments and He brought that perfect degree of righteous keeping of the Law to the Cross ultimately - the Lamb of God - without spot or blemish.

But He had another vital qualification - He was not the Son of Adam, or in particular of Joseph. But He was born of the Holy Spirit - born of a woman under the Law, which Law He kept, as God knew He would and so declared "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Later on Jesus made an important point when He said, "He that is washed need not to wash except for his feet." I believe this was the meaning behind the ritual in which Jesus washed the disciples feet - humility and love, and what Jesus meant regarding His own baptism, that undoubtedly was unnecessary and John's protest was justified - but Jesus said "suffer it to be so now - to fulfil all righteousness (in His case).

What more then do we need to know? Jesus tells us - "Fear God and keep the commandments" (the 10 commandments) and amplified by Love (if we possibly can) and as Jesus fulfilled in His life, and death for us - the Lamb of God, who gave His life for the sheep. "Greater love hath no man than this..." "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Brother Harold Dawson.

Brother Leo Dreifuss writes:

Concerning the last C.L. there is a lot of controversy. Concerning the baptismal formula, I think it is an insertion; but let us be careful! We cannot say every time we don't understand something, or cannot reconcile it with something else, "Oh, that is not genuine," or else we end up with everybody making up his own Bible.

Concerning the Temple Vision of Ezekiel, I cannot help thinking that it will be built. Anyway, I suppose it will all come to daylight at the return of our Lord. Many people say "We shall find out when we get there." God has blessed us with some better knowledge than this.

Now concerning your paragraph on page 10 of the last C.L., I think that Elias coming to restore all things refers largely, but not exclusively, to the 12 tribe Kingdom of Israel.

Now I find no difficulty in reconciling God's will and our own free will. When we were baptised we chose to serve God from then on and to obey His commandments. This decision was the result of the exercise of our free will. But once our new life began we must observe God's will as laid down by His commandments, and not our will. A good example of our Lord's prayer in John 17: "Not my will, but thine be done." If we defiantly disobey (not sins committed in the heat of the moment), then we are amenable to judgment at the second resurrection. I will illustrate the idea by means of an example from everyday life; howbeit, regrettably, having to go back a few years before this age of unemployment. Mr Smith is looking for a job. He has three choices - working for Mr X, Mr Y, or Mr Z. He chooses to work for Mr X's firm. This choice was made of his own free will. He could have chosen Mr Y or Mr Z, but now that he started work for Mr X he has to do what he is told and do it the way he is told. Exercise of free will? Not if the way he does his work contravenes his new boss's orders, or else he has to face the consequences - the "sack." And if we defiantly choose to disobey divine commandments we face the consequences - eternal death.

This, I hope, will help to resolve the difficulty.

Brother Leo Dreifuss.

THE Gnostic “GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THOMAS”

I have in my library a book about “the Gospel According to Thomas,” published by Collins in 1959. It describes the finding in 1945 in Upper Egypt of several papyrus manuscripts written in Coptic, from the library of a Gnostic community, probably dating from about the end of the fourth century. The most interesting of these manuscripts is the said Gospel, and the authors speculate that it was probably composed about the middle of the second century, in Greek, and later translated into Coptic. It is now kept in the Coptic Museum of Old Cairo. A photograph of one page is reproduced on the front cover; the main part of the book is a careful reproduction of the Coptic text (on even pages), and the English translation on facing pages.

My estimation of the text is that it is a confused mixture of snippets from all four canonical Gospels, written from memory by a garrulous Gnostic leader whose distorted and muddled recall of the Gospels resulted in a work that is both mysterious and confused. Human nature being what it is the Gnostic disciples were evidently not perturbed by the confusion but were favourably impressed by the mysticism. Here is a sample of the text:

“Jesus said, ‘It is impossible for a man to mount two horses and to stretch two bows, and it is impossible for a servant to serve two masters, otherwise he will honour the one and offend the other. No man drinks old wine and immediately desires to drink new wine; and they do not put new wine into old wineskins lest they burst, and they do not put old wine into a new wineskin, lest it spoil it. They do not sew an old patch on a new garment, because there would come a rent.* Jesus said: ‘If two make peace with each other in this one house, they shall say to the mountain, Be moved, and it shall be moved.’ Jesus said: Blessed are the solitary and elect, for you shall find the Kingdom; because you came from it, and you shall go there again. Jesus said: ‘If they say to you, From where have you originated? say to them, We have come from the Light, where the Light has originated through itself. It stood and it revealed itself in their image. If they say to you, Who are you, say, We are His sons and we are the elect of the Living Father. If they ask you, What is the sign of your Father in you? say to them, It is a movement and a rest.’ His disciples said to Him, ‘When will the repose of the dead come about and when will the new world come?’ He said to them, ‘What you expect has come, but you knew it not.’

It is a sad truth that many people would respond to a call to such confused nonsense even today, as they still do in great numbers to the mystical oriental cults, as well as to numerous false Christian sects. We must be thankful to God for our ability to discern truth from error, fact from fiction, good from evil, and pray that we should walk consistently in the straight and narrow path of righteousness.

Brother John Stevenson.

* * *

Brother Phil Parry writes

“Just a few observations which I hope will be of interest.”

“But what went ye out for to see? A Prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist... And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias (Elijah) which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” (Matthew 11:9-15).

Malachi 4:4-6 Remember the Prophet Moses. A prophet like unto Moses I will raise up; the prophet whom ye seek Malachi 3:1 Acts 7:37,38 - Jesus.

When considering the Mount of Transfiguration we have before us the countenance of Jesus altered, as with Moses in Mount Sinai when he received the commandments for Israel on two tables of stone. Moses the Prophet and lawgiver, in company with Elijah, were also seen in vision and glory as confirmation of their acceptance and living unto God through the sacrifice of Jesus which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. And when Moses and Elias were no longer present, though Peter, James and John had seen them, Peter thought it good for Moses and Elias to stay with Jesus, and he suggested making of three tabernacles for them, not knowing what he said. "While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved son: hear him," (Luke 9:28-35).

The Law and the Prophets were until John = Moses and Elias. Jesus was left alone with His disciples; A Prophet shall the Lord raise up like unto Moses, unto him shall ye hearken (Acts 7:38).

Here then is demonstrated that the ritualistic Law of Moses was at an end though its righteous principles of belief and faith in God's chosen mediator was not. This Son was not a servant like Moses, He was and is a Son over His own house even the household of Faith (Hebrews 3:1-19).

In view of this declaration on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Hear ye him," we cannot ignore the declaration of the writer to the Hebrews chapter 1, "God... hath in these last days spoken unto us by His son." (See Matthew 13:10-17.) I am not opposed to what is stated in Isaiah 11, for it is stated in verse 9 "For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Many will have returned to the Lord as a result, and God will set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people - "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate" (Romans 8:29). "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew..." (Romans 11:2). "There remaineth therefore a Rest to the people of God... Let us labour therefore to enter into that Rest." (Hebrews 4:9-11).

The writer to the Hebrews is not divorcing them from the "Rest" which remains for the people of God - there is only one "Rest" - "God's Rest," and the people that enter into it must be God's people by faith and by covenant relationship.

Some have stated that Abraham's seed did not inherit the land promised to him. This is true in regard to the spiritual seed in Israel and in Christ by belief and faith, but the seed after the flesh, did inherit it but only temporarily - not for an everlasting possession which the promise to Abraham involves. From Joshua chapters 14 to 18 it is shown that the twelve tribes were allotted their respective territory. In Nehemiah 9:22 we have it confirmed that they possessed the land.

In my Bible is shown a map of Canaan as divided into the twelve tribes with the six cities of refuge underlined, being Shechem, Hebron, Golan, Kedesh, Ramoth, Gilead.

Paul speaks of Abraham as being heir of the world - Romans chapters 3 and 4. All nations, Jew and Gentile under Federal Sin.

Through Christ, all nations blessed in Abraham are the spiritual seed of promise and not by the Law (Moses).

Read Joshua 21:43 - 45. They received the land. All came to pass. But the true Rest remaineth to the people of God. Who are they? The answer is in Romans 9:6-8. See Romans 11:13,21,23,25,26. Read Joshua 23.

In all Scripture the context is important; e.g. Isaiah 44:1-8. Israel were God's witnesses before they were taken to Babylon for failure to continue that status. Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed. Cyrus was raised up of God to cause the re-building. Isaiah 44:28. The message of Isaiah 45:17, "In the Lord Israel saved."

John 3:10 - Nicodemus, whom Jesus addressed questioned "Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things?" should have read and known the meaning of Isaiah 44:3-5 as being born from above.

Jesus said to him, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God... Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." (i.e. from above).

Jesus said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." To resolve anything unclear in the Spirit's teaching, this is what we must do. The words of Jesus to Nicodemus stand for all time, for He said "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God." What then of supposed sacrifices in a supposed future Temple after the return of Jesus? Can animal sacrifices be substituted for Birth of water and Spirit without which Jesus said a man cannot see much less enter the Kingdom of God?

It is argued that animal sacrifices under the Levitical order will be restored in a future Temple. As a Christadelphian with that communities' superficial knowledge and lack of understanding of the true meaning of sacrifice in relation to Christ, I simply accepted the views of that community, that the Temple of Ezekiel's vision would be a material building of the future after Christ's second advent, and that animal sacrifices would be retrospective of the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary, It is this latter feature that I have come to reject not only from what Jesus said to Nicodemus but on the basis of the letter to the Hebrews. If what we read in Ezekiel 40 to 44 is to be introduced in a future Temple either just before or after Christ's return, then this condition of things cannot be styled as in the Kingdom of God

Of course I left the Christadelphian community by reason of more important factors than this matter of the Temple and I would not say that our salvation depends on whether it is built at some future time to the present or not. Jewish theologians tend to support such a view and also try to support it by saying Elias (Elijah) will come and restore these things, amongst others. Of course, being Jews of the flesh (Mosaic Law) they would; but they ignore that in expecting the Messiah to come in power and glory, they have left out the fact that the true Messiah's coming had already been prepared by God's messenger, John the Baptist and the rulers had killed both him and the Messiah.

Let us now consider where the truth lies as to Elijah. Matthew 11:10-14. See Malachi 3:1.

Read the account of John the Baptist - Luke 1:14-17 and 66-80. We are informed in Luke 2:25-32 that Simeon, a just and devout man, was waiting for the consolation of Israel, Isaiah 40:1-11. He also said of the child Jesus, "This child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign that shall be spoken against." See Isaiah 8:13-22.

What a lot is fulfilled in both these chapters! Jesus was to be for a Sanctuary (His Temple body?) but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, etc- verses 16 to 18 - "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples. "And I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me (John 17:6) are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion."

The words Jesus spoke, confirmed Isaiah 8:17, "I thank thee O Father that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes..."

I accept Micah 4:1-4. but I read it on the basis of Paul's declaration that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, His house being the spiritual household of Faith - His law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem - verse 3, "And he shall judge among many peoples and nations, some afar off and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks..."

My reading and understanding of Paul's letter to the Romans, the eleventh chapter, verses 26-28 informs me that he is not himself making a prophecy but drawing attention to a prophecy and covenant made by God through Jeremiah (Chapter 31) involving the taking away of Israel's sins, which Jesus accomplished, that is, the transgressions that were under the old covenant.

We should not ignore the meaning of Isaiah 59:20-21, for Jesus said "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob?).

We should not ignore the reasoning of Paul in Romans 9 and 10. "What then?" says Paul in chapter 11 verse 7, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved." See Jeremiah 3;23. "Truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." I do not believe that the fullness of the Gentiles is come in at the return of Jesus though the times of the Gentiles probably will do in respect of their treading down of Jerusalem, when the time will begin for Jesus to judge the world in righteousness as per Matthew 25 all nations, Jew and Gentile will emerge, as converts to the Abrahamic covenant, or as rejecters. Then will the sealing be complete as in Revelation 7:1-7. Also Revelation 21.

The millennium is the Kingdom of Jesus in which there will be people of flesh and blood, but as Paul says, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, so we must admit a marked difference between the two as in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28. This explains the words of the Angel - Luke 1:33 - "And of his kingdom there shall be no end," How so? Because it will continue under God even the Father, that God may be all in all. All I have demonstrated is the fact that there are not two different Israels under the Abrahamic promises in Christ and that I do not see the necessity of a Temple involved once more in ritual animal sacrifices to teach and convert people to Christ.

If I am mistaken I stand to be corrected, and will answer for myself to Him to whom God has committed all judgment. I have stated my views mainly on the matters of what is stated in Ezekiel in regard to what appears to be a restoration of the priesthood under the law of Moses which I believe to have been fulfilled by the Antitype Jesus, at least in regard to animal sacrifices. Jesus said, "I came not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I came not to destroy but to fulfil."

After His resurrection and while with his disciples, Jesus said unto them, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" - Luke 24:44-48.

That work is stilt continuing in ways which God chooses, and as a result "There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." Luke 18:28-30,

"And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matthew 8:11-12; Luke 13:29-30.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. (Romans 16:25-27).

Yours in the Hope of the Kingdom of God,

Brother Phil Parry.

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HUMAN NATURE SHIPWRECKS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Six thousand years ago, God gave mankind dominion over the earth and everything in it. Regrettably mankind became very evil, except for one man who walked with God. He and his family escaped to a new world on a ship known as Noah's Ark, while the old world was erased by the deluge. Regrettably the new mankind descended from Noah also went bad, mostly forgetting to walk with God. But God selected

Abram, who did walk with Him and sent him to the land of Canaan to found the nation of Israel. After a period of slavery in Egypt God appointed Moses as captain of the good ship Israel, to steer her back to the Promised Land, with commandments and ordinances given them by God. In time the people of Israel also went bad, and their ship foundered on the reefs of sin and apostasy, resulting in invasion and exile, and later subjugation by Rome, with servitude and tax tribute.

Next God sent His own Son, Messiah Jesus, to give the people of Israel, and through them the whole world, the true unfailing direction towards the promised kingdom. Jesus and the apostles, including Paul, launched the new ship Christianity, after Jesus had redeemed Adam and his progeny from the kingdom of Sin, and had also given us a new commandment, that we love one another (Greek - AGAPE - which implies respect and honour rather than just affection) (John 13:34,35). Unfortunately, within a century or two, the new ship lost its way amongst a maze of reefs of sin and apostasy and man-made creeds, a long way from the true course of "love one another." In the dark ages, a thousand years ago, the good ship Christianity was stuck fast on the reefs of corruption, decadence and false doctrine. Dissidents were either made to walk the plank, or had been cast adrift in little boats. Four hundred years ago, God raised up Martin Luther and numerous other reformers who mutinied and set out in several smaller sectarian ships. Their chief contribution was liberating God's Word, published in the vernacular for ordinary people to study, but otherwise their reforms were only partial, and some of the decadence and false doctrine stuck to these smaller Protestant ships. Their captains were less likely to make dissenters walk the plank, but often persecuted them and set them adrift.

Nearly two centuries ago, God raise up Dr. John Thomas who studied God's Word and pointed out the true direction to the Promised Kingdom and he launched a ship called Christadelphia, setting it off in the right direction. After his death, Robert Roberts became the next captain, and he decided to make adjustments to the course, with the approval of the brethren. His new bearings were muddled so that the ship Christadelphia veered off course and foundered on a reef called Sinful Flesh, and was trapped by other reefs close by, like Original Sin and Defiled Christ and B.A.S.F. When some of the wiser brethren pointed out that the ship Christadelphia had strayed off course, captain Roberts denounced them and turned them adrift in boats, and was applauded by the majority of the brethren. Other brothers claimed that the ship was stuck on a reef, but Captain Roberts replied "No, it hasn't, it is heading to the Promised Kingdom. Look at the waves coming past. I know the way." He denounced them too and turned them adrift in boats.

When Captain Roberts died, his successors, with the support of the subservient brethren, continued to cast dissenters adrift, and justified their actions in the Christadelphian Media as necessary to keep pure the doctrine of sinful flesh, and to keep the good ship Christadelphia on its supposed course towards the Kingdom. The dissenters tied their boats together to form a raft called "The Nazarene Fellowship" and helped and encouraged each other in their course towards the promised Kingdom, leaving the ship Christadelphia stuck on the B.A.S.F. reef. The captains (editors) and arranging brethren had quite forgotten the New Commandment, because excommunication of Clean Flesh Heretics was much more important; hadn't Captain Roberts said so?

When it is so starkly manifest that mankind, consistently loses his way so that ecclesiastical ships always stray off the course of God's way and end up shipwrecked on reefs of man-made creeds and apostate doctrine and self-righteous decadence, then it behoves us to take great care that we do not follow all those precedents. Fortunately, we have the Word of God, including the commandments of Jesus; especially His New Commandment, to act as our guide.

When the Son of Man shall come in His Glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His Glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations. And He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He shall set the sheep on His right hand and the goats on His left.

Then shall the King say to them on His right hand "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For you have rejected the trinity doctrine and the immortal soul theory and the sinful flesh heresy and the defiled Christ doctrine." No! That obviously is not what Jesus said.

I will leave it you to check the last dozen verses of Matthew 25 and to study and analyse just what Jesus actually said. Surprisingly, it has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with doctrine. It is closely related to the New Commandment.

It has been said that the one thing man learns from history is that man does not learn from history.

May God prevent us from being so obtuse!

Brother John Stevenson

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And here are the verse John alludes to:-

Matthew 25:31, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32. 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: 33. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36. Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38. When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39. Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40. And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. 41. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: 42. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: 43. I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. 44. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? 45. Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

Part Six

Introduction

The priests, the sons of Zadok, referred to in Ezekiel's Temple vision must be mortal Levites of a higher order, as was shown previously (C.L.153) on grounds of detail and of basic principle- Our next question is inevitably - Who is the Prince who is prominent in the Temple of the future? Is he Jesus or is he a mortal Hebrew?

Let us first set out a representative specimen of what Ezekiel actually says about the Prince:

Ezekiel 44:1-3. "Then he brought me back the way of the gate of the outward sanctuary which looketh toward the east; and it was shut. Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut.

It is for the prince: the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same."

(Note - verse 3 reads in the R-V., "As for the prince he shall sit therein as prince.")

Ezekiel 45:7-12. “And a portion (of the land) shall be for the prince: and my princes shall no more oppress my people... oh princes of Israel remove violence...ye shall have a just balance.”

Ezekiel 45:16-19. “All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince in Israel and it shall be the prince’s part to give burnt offerings...he shall prepare the sin offering...and the peace offering to make reconciliation for the house of Israel...and the priest shall take the blood.”

Ezekiel 45:22-25. “And upon that day (Passover) shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the land a bullock for a sin offering...”

Ezekiel 46:1-3. “Thus saith the Lord GOD; the gate of the inner court that looketh toward the east shall be shut the six working days; but on the sabbath it shall be opened... And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate; then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening. Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.”

Ezekiel 46:4-7. “...and the burnt offering that the prince shall offer...and he shall prepare a meat offering.”

Ezekiel 46:8-10. “And when the prince shall enter, he shall go in by the way of the porch of that gate, and he shall go forth by the way thereof. But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it. And the prince in the midst of them when they go in, shall go in; and when they go forth, shall go forth.”

Ezekiel 46:11,12. “And in the feasts the meat offering shall be an ephah...to the lambs as he is able to give. Now when the prince shall prepare a voluntary burnt offering or peace offerings...”

Ezekiel 46:16-18. “Thus saith the Lord GOD: If the prince give a gift unto any of his sons, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons’; it shall be their possession by inheritance. But if he give a gift of his inheritance to one of his servants, then it shall be his to the year of liberty; after it shall return to the prince: but his inheritance shall be his sons’ for them. Moreover the prince shall not take of the people’s inheritance by oppression, but he shall give his son’s inheritance out of his own possession: that my people be not scattered every man from his possession.”

Part One: The Prince of the Future Temple.

Jesus?

The arguments in favour of the Prince being Jesus are usually stated somewhat as follows:

(a) The reference in Ezekiel 37, “and my servant David shall be their prince for ever,” would point to Jesus Christ, and subsequent references to “the Prince” would appear to refer to the same person.

(b) The fact that the prince has quite a substantial territory on either side of the Holy Oblation would appear to be a fitting possession for Jesus Christ, but hardly for a mortal man.

(c) It is frequently brought forward that Jesus is the “Prince-Priest” of the coming age, and in this role He is thought to be presented in Ezekiel chapters 45 and 46.

(d) The reference in Ezekiel 44 to Yahweh, the God of Israel, entering in at the east gate and the fact stated in the next verse. “It is for the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the Lord.” appears to identify the prince with Yahweh.

Mortal?

The arguments for the prince being a mortal man can be stated as follows:

(1) Nowhere is it stated that the prince performs priestly functions. He merely provides the necessary offerings.

(2) He is stated to have servants and sons to whom he may give gifts of lands and possessions. In the case of servants, these lands to return to the prince in the year of Jubilee, but in the case of gifts to his sons they are not to return.

(3) He is stated to worship Yahweh at the threshold of the gate. If he is Yahweh, how can he worship himself?

(4) He is to provide the meat offerings "as his hand shall attain unto," and "as he is able to give," (Ezekiel 46; 7,11).

(5) The prince offers for himself and associates himself very strongly with the people. How can Jesus offer an animal for himself when he has once offered his own body as the antitype of all animal offerings?

Not a Priest.

The above are the main arguments brought forward. Let us examine them. Looking first at the arguments in favour of Jesus being the prince, we feel that points (a) and (b) are valid arguments, but (c) and (d) are not.

Regarding (c) we must point out that in no place in Ezekiel's Temple prophecy is the prince presented as a priest. He does not function as a priest at all- He appears to be responsible for providing the necessary animals, fine flour etc., for the routine offerings in the Temple. He is the receiver of these commodities from the children of Israel and he sees to it that they are provided at the appropriate times for the Temple services. He hands these over to the priests and they make the offering.

Does Not Enter by the Outer East Gate.

Regarding (d) it is not true that Ezekiel 44:3 identifies the prince with Yahweh of verse 2. It is generally thought that these verses teach that it is only Jesus as Yahweh who enters at the east gate, and that when mention is made of the prince sitting in this gate to eat bread the conclusion is drawn that Jesus must be the prince. But not so; a close reading of the two verses shows they are two different persons.

Verse two declares that upon the opening of the Temple the east gate (of the outer court - verse 1.) is opened for the entry of Yahweh, the God of Israel. This is "the glory" - of Jesus and His brethren - which enters the Temple. The gate is then shut, and, presumably, is no more opened. But verse three goes on to say, As for the prince (R.V.) he shall sit in it to eat bread." This makes it clear right away that the prince is not Yahweh. Moreover the prince does not use the gateway (which is shut) but the porch of the gate, as the verse further declares. Now this porch of the gate faces inwards and if he enters the gate building by way of the porch then he enters the Temple precincts either by the north gate or the south gate and then makes his way to the porch of the eastern gate. He does not enter the porch by way of the eastern gate for that is shut. This makes it abundantly clear that the prince is subordinate to Yahweh. Yahweh has used the eastern gateway to enter the Temple but the prince does not use it, he only uses the porch. (It is the outer gate here being mentioned). See figure 11.

Is Inferior to Jesus and the Saints.

Regarding the arguments in favour of the prince being a mortal man, we feel that items (1) to (5) are all valid. Item (1) is definite and has been commented upon above. Item (2) can be explained by those who uphold the theory of Jesus as the prince. It is true that the brethren of Jesus are sometimes referred to as his "sons" and the giving of gifts to some of these "sons" could be meant. Yet a straight reading of the

passages concerned (Ezekiel 46:16-18) with its references to the law of the Jubilee etc., would seem more readily to apply to mortal men.

Item (3) is quite a valid objection although it can be explained how Jesus – as Yahweh - can worship Yahweh. For Yahweh is composed firstly of the Father, secondly of the Son, and thirdly of the saints. The One supreme above all, is, of course, the Father, and it is quite fitting that He should be worshipped by Jesus and His brethren. Therefore although it is the Christ body which enters the Temple as “The Lord” it is still reasonable that they should worship the Father as the supreme head and originator of all things. Nevertheless, a straight reading of the passages would make a more ready application of the prince to a mortal man.

Item (4) can also be explained on the grounds that the stock of fine flour etc., which is placed at the prince’s disposal is provided by the children of Israel and according to the extent of this stock so the prince is able to give. Yet again it must be admitted that the language used in Ezekiel 46:7,11 more readily applies to limitations which are more natural to mortal men than to Jesus.

He Offers for Himself.

Item (5) involves us in rather more serious considerations. The prince offering for himself is clearly a great difficulty to those who believe that Jesus is the prince. The explanation usually offered is that Jesus does this to point back to His own one great offering and to lead the people in this act of worship. It is a memorial of His offering for sins which He made on Calvary.

But the details of the sacrifices create enormous difficulties for this idea. It is not that Jesus simply offers voluntary offerings, burnt offerings, peace offerings - but in addition He offers sin offerings, as Ezekiel 45:21-25 shows:

“In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the Passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin-offering. And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the LORD, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily for a sin-offering. And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah. In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days, according to the sin-offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering and according to the oil.”

These feasts of Passover and Tabernacles are virtually the same as under the Law of Moses. There are slight differences but the meaning and purpose are obviously the same. In other words, as we saw in (5) the Levitical and Aaronic system is reinstated. The meaning of sacrifices therefore would be the same as before. The fact of Jesus having already come in the flesh and having made this one great offering would make no difference to the meaning. All animal sacrifices whether performed before Christ or after Christ can only be a type or shadow of that one offering.

Now for the people of the land to keep these feasts and offerings is quite understandable. The sacrifices have the same basic meaning as under the law, but whereas they then pointed forward to Christ, they will then point back. The offerings are just as effective and just as non-effective as they were before. They cannot take away sins but they can and will teach the people that they are in need of forgiveness and of the covering of sins. They see the shedding of blood is necessary; and their laying of hands upon the head of the animal involves a recognition that what is done to the animal is justly due to themselves. The priests afterwards eat of the offering and associate themselves absolutely with sin and God’s way of its removal.

How Can the Immortal Jesus offer Shadow Sacrifices?

This, as we said, is understandable for the mortal people but extremely difficult to understand of Christ. How can Jesus do such things as these which at that time will have no appropriateness or meaning for Him? He is then immortal, He has no sin’s flesh, how then can He see in the death of the animal what is

appropriate for Him? All that has passed away for Him. How can He associate Himself with the people's offering at that time? And how misleading it would be to the people. Would they not immediately think that the immortal state also has need of offerings of blood? It is often thought that in Jesus joining with the people in their offerings He would be showing them an example. But quite the contrary, He would be misleading them and giving them a false impression of the immortal state. Immortality requires no animal offerings. They are quite inappropriate.

But let us examine the sin offering further and go back to Leviticus to find the details. It involves the eating of some parts by the priests.

“The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it: in the holy place shall it be eaten, in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation.” Leviticus 6:26.

“Wherefore have ye not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing it is most holy, and God hath given it to you to bear the iniquity of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord.” Leviticus 10:17,

Now if Jesus is the priest He not only offers the offering (which is difficult enough to understand) but eats it, and thus associates Himself absolutely with sin and sin's flesh. This, surely, is an impossibility for one who is immortal. We could, perhaps, understand Him doing this in the days of His flesh but not in the immortal state.

And further, the priests bore “the iniquity of the congregation” in this eating. But did not Jesus do this “once for all”? How then can He do it again? How can He bear the iniquity of the congregation in this animal sacrifice - in type - when He has done it perfectly already?

How Could Jesus Slay a Sin Offering for Himself?

But the reader may not believe Jesus is the priest in the case and does not have to eat the offering and is thus relieved of this difficulty. But consider further details of the sin offering.

“And he brought the bullock for the sin offering: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the bullock for the sin offering. And he slew it...”

Jesus, as the prince, bringing an offering for Himself, would have to do this. Think what this means. It involves an acknowledgement that what was done to the animal was justly due to Himself, This could apply to a mortal man but not to one who has attained immortality.

“And Aaron shall bring the bullock for a sin offering, which is for himself, and shall make an atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which is for himself.” Leviticus 16:11.

Can we possibly imagine Jesus doing this “for Himself”? Making an atonement (a covering) for Himself? Is He in need of such a thing in the coming age? Has He not already made sufficient covering? For Him to do this in the future implies that His offering was not sufficient.

“And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat...” Leviticus 16:21.

We have quoted this to show what will be done in the Kingdom, for this was done on the Day of Atonement of which no mention is made in Ezekiel, but this verse does show the meaning of laying of hands upon the head of the animal. Again we ask the question, can we imagine Jesus doing this for Himself, confessing His sins and putting them upon the head of the goat, for this is what He would have to do to fulfil the role allotted to the prince in Ezekiel 45?

We could understand this being done by the people or by a mortal priest or prince, but not Jesus. And it is useless imagining that the prince will be exempted and that he will only make his offering as a memorial. The Scripture expressly states that he prepares the sin offering for himself and all the people. This clearly implies that he is on a level with the people, he is their equal like the high priest of old who offered first for his own sins and then for the people's. How impossible for Jesus to do this, "for this he did once when he offered up himself." (Hebrews 7:27).

It is impossible that he should do this again either in reality or in type. He could only do it by being of mortal nature. Only a mortal man can represent the people and do things on an equality with them.

Does The Prince Even Enter The Inner Court?

Consistent with this line of argument is the obviously subordinate position which the prince occupies. He is subordinate to Yahweh, to the priests and to the laws of the house.

We have seen that his use of the porch of the outer east gate, and not the gate itself, shows his inferiority to Yahweh, the God of Israel. This inferiority is further shown when he brings his offering on the sabbath or the new moon. He brings it to the inner eastern gate * "by the way of the porch" (which faces outwards). He stands by the post of the gate whilst the priests prepare his offering and he worships at the threshold of the gate. (see figure 11). Having done this he goes forth (Ezekiel 46:1,2). He does not proceed any further through the gate. The implication is that he dare not go any further. Only the priests are allowed to approach the inner court and the altar in it. In fact, nowhere do we read of the prince going right inside the Temple - into the altar court, the holy place or the most holy. Surely this fact proves conclusively that the prince is not Christ. The prince goes no further than the threshold of the gate to the inner court, he does not go right through. It appears he is not allowed to, and thus he is on a level with the kings of Israel of old who could not take upon themselves the functions of a priest, nor go where he could go.

This fact shows that the prince is not a priest and to call Jesus the "Prince-Priest" is not scriptural. The prince is clearly subordinate and must obey the laws of the House and keep to his own allotted sphere.

*[*Note: Ezekiel 46:1-2 describes the prince's relationship to the inner east gate; Ezekiel 44:1-3 (R-V) describes his limited use of the outer east gate. The two are often confused.]*

He is not above these laws and cannot go into all parts of the house as he pleases. These restrictions would not be fitting for Jesus, who, naturally, will be superior to all the priests and officials of the House. There can be no part of the Temple which He cannot enter.

These two points - the prince having to make sin offerings for himself and his subordinate position to Yahweh and to the priests show clearly that the prince is not Jesus; he must be a mortal man; there can be no other conclusion. But there is yet another factor to consider which confirms this conclusion.

Part Two: Jesus Christ a Priest After The Order of Melchisedec.

The Aaronic Order.

We have already shown that the Temple services and the Priesthood of the future are essentially Levitical and Aaronic.

The question now to be considered is, "Are Jesus and the saints of the Aaronic order? The answer is definitely "No." The Scriptures make this quite clear and, moreover, it is quite unfitting for the Aaronic order has to do with animal offerings and necessitates mortal priests offering for themselves as well as for the people. They had to do this under the Law and they will have to do it in the future, as we have seen from Ezekiel's details. We would remind ourselves again of some of the words in Hebrews:-

"For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: who can have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are

out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins.” Hebrews 5.1-3.

The essentials of the Aaronic system are here defined, “taken from among men... ordained for men... to offer sacrifices for sins... as for the people so also for himself.”

Jesus, we know, has done this once, but not as an Aaronic priest for he was not of the family of Aaron nor of the tribe of Levi. Jesus will not offer blood offerings for He is not of the tribe to whom God delegated this office.

The Melchisedec Order.

Jesus and the saints are of a different order altogether, in which animal sacrifices are inappropriate. They belong to the Most Holy state - immortality - which needs no further blood offerings at all. They are of the order of Melchisedec, an order which is clearly different and more excellent in every way.

Let us look more closely at this Order. The apostle introduces the matter in Hebrews chapter 5: -

“As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec... Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.”

The apostle continues that he could say many things about this matter. We wish that he had, for our information is very scanty. The reference in Genesis 14 is very brief and the only other reference in the Old Testament is Psalm 110 where we have the “word of the oath,” “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

The Superiority of the Melchisedec Order.

What are the points of contrast with the Aaronic order?

1. More excellent in every way.
2. For ever.
3. No animal offerings.
4. Not Levitical.

1. More Excellent

Considering these points in order, we refer first of all to the statement in Hebrews 8:6, “But now he hath obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant which was established upon better promises.” The excellence is in two ways. Firstly, Jesus is a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle (Hebrews 8:2). “True” is here stated in contrast to “type”. The Mosaic tabernacle was a type, the tabernacle of which Jesus is the minister is the “True.” It is of the Lord’s making, not man’s - “which the Lord pitched and not man.” The contrast is again shown in the words of chapter 9, verse 1:-

“Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service and a worldly sanctuary.”

The Mosaic system and tabernacle was “worldly,” a “type,” a “shadow.” That of Jesus is “heavenly,” the “true,” the “substance.”

Yet the “shadow” and the “worldly” is going to be revived because of its great value in teaching the mortal people righteousness. But is Jesus to be a minister of this “shadow”? Clearly not. How could He be when He has established something far better, more excellent in every way?

The second way in which the Melchisedec order is more excellent is that it promises better things - even life eternal - which can never be accomplished by a system which uses animal offerings. This is not to say that those who keep the Law of the future in its sacrifices and feasts cannot attain unto immortality. Their position will be exactly the same as those of Israel in the past. They had to keep the Law - yet with faith in God's merciful provision of a "true" and perfect offering - and if they did so would attain unto salvation. So it will be in the future Temple. If they keep the Law with faith in Christ as the "true" offering they will gain salvation, by faith.

2. For Ever.

The second point of contrast is that the Melchisedec order is "for ever."

"And they truly were many priests (The Aaronic) because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death; but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood." Hebrews 7:23-24.

This is an interesting passage in that it shows not only the limitations of the Aaronic priesthood but the limitation of the Law itself. This is implied by the contrasting statement concerning the Melchisedec order.

Jesus as the High Priest of that order "continueth ever," therefore the order itself "continueth ever." On the other hand, the Aaronic priests did not continue by reason of death, and thus by implication is shown the "death" of the Aaronic system itself.

Since, then, the Temple system of the future is Aaronic, it must come to an end. The end comes when there is no further use for it - when there are no mortal men to need its ministrations. But the Melchisedec order will continue and is unchangeable.

3. No Animal Offerings.

The third point of contrast is that the Melchisedec order does not require animal offerings.* This is not immediately apparent but when the facts are stated it becomes clear.

*[*Note: This is not to say that Melchisedec himself never offered animals; but inspiration deliberately omits any reference to offerings as well as to genealogy, beginning and end of priesthood etc., in order to stress the unique nature of the Melchisedec priesthood]*

Jesus entered upon this ministry when He passed into the Most Holy state. This is clear from Hebrews again :-

"Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec." Hebrews 5:8- 10.

"Which hope we have as an anchor for the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Hebrews 6:19-20.

These verses show that Jesus became a priest after the order of Melchisedec when He was made perfect; when He entered into that within the veil. He is in heaven now and is officiating as a Priest after the order of Melchisedec. Does He offer animal sacrifices in heaven? Obviously not. We conclude then that the Melchisedec order does not require or use animal offerings. Its sacrifices are of a different order altogether.

When Jesus returns will He revert to animal offerings and officiate as a Priest after the order of Aaron? Surely not. The Melchisedec Priesthood of Jesus is for ever.

Brother Thomas has this interesting passage:-

“The offerings made by the high priest on his throne, after the order of Melchisedec, will constitute sacrifices of a character such as have not been offered on the earth before; whereas the offerings and sacrifices in the Ezekiel Temple service in Israel restored, with the exception of those of the great day of atonement, will be exactly of the character of the offerings and sacrifices under the Mosaic order of things.” (“Herald of The Kingdom” 1851).

4. Not Levitical.

The 4th point of contrast of the Melchisedec order is that it is not Levitical. Hebrews again shows us this superiority:-

“And as I may say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him.” Hebrews 7:9-10.

This paying of tithes to Melchisedec on the part of Abraham shows the inferiority of the Levitical order. This inferiority must apply to the future as well when the Priest after the order of Melchisedec is here again. The whole Temple service and priesthood is inferior to the order of which Jesus is the Chief. Even the sons of Zadoc are of Levi (Ezekiel 40:46), and must likewise be inferior.

Furthermore, Jesus is of a different tribe altogether.

“For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood,” Hebrews 7:13- 14.

Therefore He cannot officiate as a Levitical priest nor offer Levitical offerings in company with the people. He is made “higher than the (Mosaic) heavens; and needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself,” Hebrews 7:26-27.

Now what is true of Jesus is also true of His brethren. None of them can be of the Levitical order. For them the system of animal sacrifices is finished: but not for the people of the world. Those sacrifices are reinstated to teach them by shadow and type God’s way to salvation. The sacrifices offered by Jesus and the saints are such as have not been known on earth before, and whilst they are not detailed we can assume they will be of a spiritual character,

Bringing Forth Bread and Wine.

There is one other matter about Melchisedec which may throw some light on the character of those sacrifices to be made by Jesus and the saints in the future.

We learn from the record in Genesis that Melchisedec brought forth bread and wine when Abraham met him. There was something symbolic in this else the Scripture would not have noted the fact. Our minds immediately turn to Jesus who just before His great sacrifice, “brought forth bread and wine” as memorials of His offering.

Now Jesus has promised to do this again.

“And when the hour was come he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not anymore eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink, of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.” Luke 22:14-18.

It is the breaking of bread and drinking of wine which Jesus will do again in the Kingdom. It was not the Jewish passover which Jesus was referring to for it was not that passover which Jesus and the apostle

were eating. A simple fact disposes of this belief. The passover lambs were not slain until the next day. Jesus was crucified as the Passover lamb and He was dying on the Cross at the very time when the lambs were being killed by the priests in the Temple. Jesus, therefore, could not possibly eat of the Jewish Passover lamb before His suffering. When He said, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you," the emphasis should be placed on the word "this". He was referring to the breaking of bread and He has thus promised to do this again in the Kingdom, when He will come forth and serve His disciples. He will bring forth bread and wine like Melchisedec of old and memorialise His own one great offering.

It is evident, then, from this further point that Jesus is a Priest after the order of Melchisedek, that the prince of Ezekiel is not Jesus at all, and we must look elsewhere for his identification. And this we will do, if God permit, in our next and last paper.

SUMMARY

It will be profitable to summarize this issue of "Restitution of all things" and our first article (C.L.153).

1. We have shown firstly that the Temple services and the Priesthood as prophesied by Ezekiel are the Mosaic system restored with certain amendments. God's covenant with Levi cannot be altered and this implies that as long as there is a mortal Israelitish nation its priesthood and services must be Levitical and Aaronic.

2. We have shown that the sons of Zadok are not the saints, firstly by comparing references in Ezekiel which show that the sons of Zadok are those who can sweat, marry, etc., and secondly by showing that their work of animal sacrifices is inconsistent with the immortal condition of the saints.

3. We have brought forward two major reasons for rejecting the theory that the prince is Jesus:-

(a) It is impossible that the immortal Jesus can offer sin offerings of animals for Himself. He cannot associate Himself with the people in this matter for He is not on an equality with them.

(b) The role assigned to the prince in Ezekiel is one of inferiority both in respect of the priesthood and the holiness of the house. He is evidently subordinate to Yahweh and we infer is excluded from the innermost parts of the house.

4. We have added another reason for rejecting the idea that Jesus is the prince or that He is a priest who offers animal offerings. He is a priest after the order of Melchisedec which order does not require blood offerings. And since Jesus is of the tribe of Judah He is excluded from the priesthood of. natural Israel for this is Levitical and Aaronic.

This series by Brethren Edgar Wille and Bert Gates will be concluded in the next C.L.

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COMMENT

We cannot let this section on Ezekiel's Temple Vision pass without comments on several points:-

1. "Sin's flesh" not "Sinful flesh." It is pleasing to see the correct expression "sin's flesh" being used, as at the bottom of page 26, instead of sinful flesh. "Sin's flesh" is flesh belonging to "Sin" as personified by the apostle Paul; but "Sinful flesh" is a supposedly bad quality of or in our flesh. What a world of difference there truly is, and what a lot of mischief has been caused by wilful indoctrination that the two expressions mean the same, as we read on page 11 (bottom two lines) where Robert Roberts said "sinful flesh is the English idiomatic equivalent for sin's flesh"! What foolish nonsense! How quickly people unlearn what they were taught in school!

2. Of the tribe of Judah and not of Levi. This we emphasized in CL.L.153, page 29, "Jesus Christ was not a priest; He was of the Tribe of Judah, not of Levi, and therefore could not have fulfilled the office of a priest. Jesus Christ was the Sacrificial Offering, the types of which were eaten by the priests who served at the altar." It is important that we realise this fact for it clears away misunderstandings of the work of God in Him, and so it is pleasing to read on page 30, "Jesus entered His priestly ministry when He passed into the Most Holy state," thus confirming Hebrews 5:9,10 - "Being made perfect he became... an high priest..."

3. Sacrifices for immortals? On page 31 Dr. Thomas is quoted as writing: "The offerings made by the high priest... will constitute sacrifices of a character such as have not been offered on the earth before;" and the writers repeat this assertion a little lower down the page - "The sacrifices offered by Jesus and the saints are such as have not been offered on earth before."

These are curious statements and one wonders what portions of the Scriptures led them to such ends, for the only sacrifices that have ever been pleasing to God are the sacrifices of thanksgiving and praise as we read, for example in Hebrews 13:15 - "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name;" - 1 Peter 2:5 - "to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;" and in the Old Testament, Psalm 107:22 - "And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing," and Psalm 119:108 - "Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord."

These are the acceptable sacrifices which have been well pleasing to our Creator since the Garden of Eden and will continue so during the Millennium reign of Christ as indicated in the Book of Revelation in such places as 4:8-11; 5:12-14; 7:11,12; 31:16,17, etc.

4. Did Jesus partake of the feasts? It is my personal opinion Jesus Christ never joined in the Passover Feast nor offered the sacrifices required by the Law of Moses for the people to observe. I would say He observed the spirit of the law but not the rituals of which He was the great anti-type. The only indication we have of Jesus Christ ever being associated with the making of any offering under the Law was with regard to the Tribute Money when He sent Peter to the sea and find money in the fishes mouth "and give unto them for me and thee" "lest we should offend." It is quite evident that Jesus considered Himself free of such duties. (Matthew 17:24-27).

5. Sacrifices in the Kingdom Age for the mortal population. Do we not pray for God's Kingdom to come so that His will should be done in the earth as it is now done in heaven; and is it not going to be the duty of the saints to enforce His law through education and by persuasion and where necessary with some measure of compulsion? So if God's will is being done in the earth, there is no sin being committed and therefore I ask, What need is there of sacrifices for sins? "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice and to hearken than the fat of rams." - 1 Samuel 15:22.

Russell Gregory

Psalm 126

"When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue, with singing:

Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them.

The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing the sheaves with him."