

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 163

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Editorial

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends, Loving Greetings.

As another Christmas approaches we can celebrate, if only in our hearts, the birth of our Saviour. It may not be the exact date of His birth but I do not think that matters. The fact that the great event is commemorated from one end of the earth to the other is surely significant. So just as we derive pleasure from greeting our friends and family on their birthdays, we can take immense delight in remembering Jesus and His birth at this time of the year and as always we can be truly thankful for what He did for us even before He knew us.

It is no exaggeration to say that Jesus gave up everything for us. A home, family, safety, comfort and security, the possibility of a wife and children and a life of three score and ten years. He was a man with normal hopes and desires and no doubt as He saw His friends and family enjoying some or all of these usual human blessings, He must have wished they could be possible for Him also. But such things were to be denied Him because of who He was and what was expected of Him. He turned away from them all for the joy that was set before Him. His life was to be short and difficult with incredible demands both physical and mental made upon Him. We are told He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. We can imagine the grief He felt at the death of his cousin John and we know He wept about Lazarus and over Jerusalem and her inhabitants. At the end of a life lived entirely altruistically in which He told nothing but the truth and did nothing but good He laid down His life for His friends. Jesus died a terrible death suffering unspeakable torment and agony at the hands of wicked and uncomprehending men. Yet at any moment He could have escaped His awful fate but He bore it all for the sake of His friends and died that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

When we reflect on the life that Jesus lived and the death He died it is no wonder that at the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow. Nor is it any wonder that His birth is remembered each year as no other person before or since. He has and will always have the central place in the history of mankind because without Him none of us would ever have lived. We owe Him our natural life as well as the undreamed of joys of the life to come when He returns at long last to sit on the throne of David, then the glorious and inspiring words of Isaiah shall come to pass "...in the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, 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. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Love to all,

Helen Brady.

A Tribute to our Brother John Carter

Born March 18th 1901. Died 26th October 1996.

Buried at Wick Cemetery, Caithness, Scotland, 28th October 1996.

On Saturday morning 26th October 1996 at 8.20am. I received a phone call from Mr David Brown, Staff Nurse at Riverside Nursing Home, Wick, Scotland, with the news of Brother John Carter's decease peacefully in his sleep at 3.30 am the same morning. Our brother was aged 95 years on March 18th of this year, an old sea-faring man who from his school days had a very hard time, and after a spell of farm work he went off to sea.

I think he was on a merchant ship when taken prisoner by the Germans, John was carrying his Bible when searched by the German ship's Captain who handed it back to him with the remark "A good book."

John always had respect for God, and sincere belief in a limited sense at that time, and always carried his Bible with him which no doubt was a comfort to him during the period as a prisoner of war when hunger was common.

How he became a Christadelphian I don't know, but due to receiving literature and resulting correspondence with our late Brother Brady and then brother Brady passing the correspondence over to me to ease his other work of writing and editing, it came to a point where John recognized fully the imbalance of Christadelphian belief and teaching on important subjects.

On a brief visit to Oban while on holiday in Erskine, Scotland, Rene and I met Brother John and had a talk with him on The Truth, but our time with the coach trip was limited. In May 1979 we arranged for a coach Holiday to Oban which involved staying four nights in a Hotel and gave us a better opportunity to visit John and we were satisfied he understood what was necessary for salvation. While still discussing these essential matters he suddenly put the question, "Well, are you going to put me under the water?" I replied, "If you so desire and your bath is large enough, yes." When all was prepared, Sister Rene helped me to immerse John in the water on his declaration of belief and faith.

Following this we partook of the Unleavened Bread and Wine having offered John the Right-hand of Fellowship. I must say that I cannot re-call how many times he exclaimed, "Thank God for Ernest Brady," whenever we spoke with him on the things believed by the Nazarenes. Here indeed was a man who appreciated Truth and The Grace of God through Jesus His Son.

I now come to the time for John's laying to rest which when phoning Riverside Nursing Home I was given October 31st, Thursday, at 2.00pm at the same time I was given the name and address of Brother John's daughter, also her phone number. I then wrote to her on behalf of our members but later on I could not contact her by phone, she must have been on her way from Oban to Wick. I allowed time then for her return home to Oban from Wick following John's burial. I phoned her on Friday evening 1st November when she said she had not long got back home, but I had difficulty with her dialect and quiet tone of voice but I did gain from her that a short service took place at Sinclair's Rest Rooms and at Wick Cemetery conducted by a Mr Murray whom she said gave a very nice address. I have now learned from a brief reply to my letter to Riverside House Nursing Home that they did not know who the minister was as he did not belong to that area, but that it was our Brother John's request that he should be buried in Wick Cemetery. The writer of the letter, M.Shearer, on behalf of Mrs M.Doull, Matron (on holiday) expressed thanks for the donation we sent for The Home adding that their Occupational Therapist and one of the patients attended the funeral.

Sister Rene and I held our own simple service to our late Brother John's memory at around 2.30pm. Thursday 31st October 1996, about the time of his being laid to rest and await his awakening by the voice of the Master to Life for evermore with all of like Faith and Hope. Therefore in the words of our Brother Paul, "We sorrow not as others who have no Hope." 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

Brother and Sister P.Parry, on behalf of the Nazarene Fellowship.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Mr Anthony Hone:

Dear Mr Parry, I have received your letter of 31st August, enclosing a copy of your booklet entitled "By Man Came Death - What Death?"

To deal first with your letter, I am not aware of any evidence to support your statement that Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts originally interpreted the first few chapters of Genesis in the same way as Edward Turney, and later revised their views. Dr. Thomas's first major work after finding the Truth was *Elpis Israel*, written in 1848. In chapters 3 & 4 of that work he deals with the entry of sin into the world and the atoning work of Jesus, and the views he expressed then are those accepted by Christadelphians today; they certainly do not support the teachings of E. Turney. Robert Roberts' first contact with the writings of Dr. Thomas was in 1852, 4 years after *Elpis Israel* was written, and he learned the Truth largely from this work. He was only 22 when he gave the lectures which were later to be published as "Christendom Astray," and there is no hint in them that he held the views later propounded by E. Turney. Indeed, it was only 12 years later, when he was still only 34 that he so strenuously opposed the teaching of Turney.

But even if it were a fact that at one time they held this teaching, it has no bearing on the issue. At one time they accepted much of the false teaching of Christendom, but later, as a result of their study of God's Word, they rejected it. It is a pity that those who have espoused the teaching of E. Turney do not do the same.

With regard to your booklet "By Man Came Death - What Death?" I regret to say that this tells me very little indeed about your beliefs. Most of it I find quite unintelligible and such attempts at scriptural exposition as there are are an affront to the intelligence of the reader. Take for example: on page 6 you quote from Romans 5:15 the words, "for if through the offence of one many be dead..." You then continue: "I ask, How were the many dead, and when? The answer is obvious. They were dead when the offence was committed. And how were they dead? They were in the loins of Adam when he sinned."

What a travesty of the apostle's teaching! In the first place, if the many were dead "through" (because of) the offence of Adam, they must have become dead after the offence was committed: they could not have been in the loins of Adam when he sinned. Secondly, it is quite wrong to describe Adam's prospective progeny as being "dead" in his loins. The words "be dead" have the meaning "have died," and are so translated in virtually all versions from the R.V. onwards. For a person to have died he must have formerly been alive, and that cannot be true of those "in the loins of Adam." Even if you insist upon the form of words in the A.V. you are in no better case; the phrase "be dead" is in the present tense, so it cannot apply to those in the loins of Adam, who were dead, according to your theory, very much in the past. Thirdly, and most importantly, your interpretation completely ignores the theme of the apostle's reasoning. The phrase you have quoted from verse 15 is clearly a reiteration of what the apostle has just written in verse 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." This makes it clear that the "many (who) have died" are the descendants of Adam, not those in his loins at the time the offence was committed.

In order to understand these matters it is essential to bring to bear all the scriptural teaching on the subject, as I have tried to do in my article. It is just not good enough to pick out one or two passages, often quoted out of context, and try to justify your theories by distorting their meaning. I do not mean to be unkind, but, to be quite frank, I am, appalled that anyone could issue a booklet so lacking in substance as this on such an important subject as the atoning work of Christ. I do hope that you will re-read my article carefully, and that it may help you to a sound understanding of the wonderful provision God has made for our redemption from death and our inheritance of the gift of eternal life.

Yours sincerely, Anthony Hone.

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Brother Phil Parry's reply-

Dear Mr Hone, I thank you for your letter of reply to my booklet "By Man Came Death - What Death?" which you describe as a travesty of the Apostle's teaching and to your mind unintelligible. This is to be expected of all who believe that death by decay is the penalty God warned Adam would be the result of violating His law. This is the whole stumbling block to the Christadelphian community, but I am surprised that you cannot understand our being in the loins of Adam before he sinned and after he sinned, for it was indeed the shed blood of Christ typified in coats of skin-covering for Adam and Eve, which gave us the means of being born, and also the opportunity of personal Redemption and Eternal Life through faith in Jesus.

On this matter of being in the loins, have you not read Hebrews 7:9,10? The teaching of the Apostle is plain in the fact of stating that Levi paid tithes to Melchizedec, for he was yet in the loins of his father Abraham when Melchizedec met Abraham.

Do you also regard this as a travesty? Or is it perhaps a fact that you do not understand much of the epistle to Hebrews? I am aware that you do not in regard to the latter part of this seventh chapter in your statement that Jesus was a High Priest and had to offer first for His own self and then for the people, as per Aaron, when in fact while on earth Jesus could not officiate as a Priest. Hebrews 8:4.

Now on this subject, who is making a travesty of the Apostle's teaching in making Jesus the shadow instead of the substance? Why, the Christadelphian obsession and erroneous belief that God changed Adam's flesh after he sinned. This was the theory that entered the early Christian Church and since 1898 compounded in Clause V of the Christadelphian Statement of Faith by Robert Roberts who when such a theory was put to him by a certain David Handley, emphatically denied there was any evidence in Genesis to support it, Dr.Thomas also confirming the same. Edward Turney came to a realization of these former and correct views of Thomas and Roberts namely, that there was no change in Adam's physical nature as a result of his sin. But in his conviction of the truth of this and endeavouring to enlighten his brethren, Turney was opposed by Roberts who invented and accused him of teaching that Jesus had a different flesh to other human beings. But Turney neither taught that the flesh was clean or unclean but he supported the teaching of Jesus that there was nothing wrong with Adam's nature when created nor after he sinned. Dr.Thomas in "The Herald of the Kingdom," page 159 said, "We believe that the change was moral nor physical." Roberts in "The Visible Hand of God" said it required what men called a miracle to depress to the level of the beasts that perish the noble creature God had made in the image of the Elohim." Dr.Thomas, in Eureka, volume 1 page 248, wrote, "Seeing that man had become a transgressor of Divine Law, there was no need of a miracle for the infliction of death. All that was necessary was to prevent him eating of the Tree of Life, and to leave his flesh and blood nature to the operation of the laws peculiar to it." This latter is what happened in Adam's case after God spared Adam from the infliction of death when he became guilty. This is the teaching of Scripture in which both Roberts and Thomas are in conflict as to the Truth of the Genesis account. If you did a thorough reading of Ezekiel chapter 18 you would probably grasp what the Scriptures teach about death in its various expressed meanings. Take for example verses 20 and 21 in accepting natural decay and death as the penalty for Adam's sin, you also involve Jesus and all other men when in fact this was not the penalty God declared to Adam but in the day you disobey you will "surely die," the same death-threat is made in Ezekiel 18 against a corruptible and already dying transgressor and the promise that if he repents and turns from his wickedness he will surely live, he shall not die. What does "surely die" mean here? We know for a fact that although God said the righteous man would not die, that he did eventually die the common death through the physical law peculiar to his nature. The same happened to those who were healed of the serpent bites through faith in looking up to the Brazen Serpent, they "surely lived," but those who lacked faith "surely died" inflicted deaths. Hence the contrast of the case, those who lacked faith in the word spoken suffered "the death by sin" but the spirit of faith in those who had respect to the word in looking up to that which would save them from "death by sin" continued to live, but in due course even if they remained faithful would still die naturally. In what other way can the words of Jesus be explained, "Let the dead bury their dead"?

What do you make of John 5:24? Is it not as Jesus says that the legally dead can by belief of Him that sent Him and through His Word have everlasting life and not come into condemnation (judgment), but is passed from death to life?" Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are in that position in the sight of God. Jesus said of them, "God is not the God of the dead but of the living."

Proverbs 12:28 expresses it thus, "In the way of righteousness is life; and in the pathway thereof there is no death."

Considering also that Dr.Thomas and R.Roberts regarded the flesh and blood of Christ as "unclean" sin stricken nature and you regard them as reliable witnesses of Truth, perhaps when you commemorate the Lord's death you might contrast such teaching with the one concerned and His words, John 6:53-55. I pray you, consider the seriousness of the Christadelphian position and especially your own. I did, Praise be to God.

Yours in anticipation, P.Parry

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Letter from Alan R. Harding.

Dear Helen Brady, Greetings! I received your two printed books at the beginning of October but having quickly surveyed their contents despair at making a close study.

You will forgive me if I submit my understanding of Genesis starting with Romans 3:23... "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

Whatever "Sin" is, it is related as a measure of how far we fall short of the glory of God, where there is no law there is no sin so as law reveals God's will, sin is disobeying that revealed will.

By one man "sin" or not doing God's will, entered the world and death by "sin" (not doing God's will). Note! That death is the product of not doing God's will. In the case of Adam eating of the Tree of Knowledge, forbidden until he learned that the fear of the Lord is the vital safeguard to using it with wisdom (Proverbs 1:7),

Death to Adam was being deprived of access to the Tree of Life which was consummate with a body made from the dust of the ground and becoming "living" by God's breathing into it the breath of life. The first experience of dying was nakedness and desire to hide from God's presence -

Unless we divide mind from body there was certainly a change from the man Adam in obedience enjoying fellowship to cringing behind trees in shame.

It took several millenniums in the making of man to produce one man in the image and likeness.

God's will is still not done on earth, therefore the Kingdom has not yet come. God's purpose stated in the present tense (Genesis 1) is already accomplished in the Divine foreknowledge, but awaiting angelic hands for its final reality on earth.

Man was created in God's image in the image of God created he him and the 2nd stage, male and female, but nowhere in Genesis 2 does it say "God blessed them..." Alas! cursed is the ground for thy sake.

The Divine blessing remains conditional upon obedience. Instead of mankind being born of "the will of God," John 1:13, "of the will of man" (Adam). What is not of the will of God is sin.

John the Baptist directed his hearers to "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Luke 2:6, that "all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Christ in contrast was born of the will of God yet manifest in a body whose origin was of the will of man and therefore of sin.

Salvation was needed not only for Himself but for all, who baptized into Him sought to be sons of God.

Publicly laying down His life He declared His separation from the nature that had sinned and was received the third day from the tomb by the angels now having fulfilled the will of God, “to make man in their image and likeness,” although others were to follow in due time.

I think I will stay my pen but hope for a response.

Yours sincerely, A.R.Harding.

Sister Helen Brady’s reply:

Dear Mr Harding, Thank you for your letter.

It was kind of you to write and tell me what you believe. I confess I found it difficult to follow; I don’t know what you mean by saying that Adam and Eve’s first experience of dying was nakedness.

However, when I reached the paragraph where you state “...Salvation was needed not only FOR HIMSELF but for all...” you and I definitely part company.

I do not believe that Jesus was anything but spotless and undefiled. He committed no sin, did always what was pleasing to His Father. He was a human being like His mother and like the rest of us and as I do not believe in original sin or sin in the flesh, I do not accept that there is anything wrong with our flesh or our nature anymore than there was anything wrong with Christ’s flesh or nature, or indeed with Adam and Eve’s flesh or nature either before or after they sinned. Jesus died instead of Adam, as his substitute, He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Adam’s sin alienated us from God, which is legal concept, and when we realize the fact of our alienation we are “in Adam”; when we are baptized we are “in Christ” and we are saved from the consequence of Adam’s sin, eternal death.

We are as capable of obeying the Ten Commandments as Adam was and as Jesus was. I expect some people do keep them all but only God knows who they are. But even if we do obey all the commandments we are still constituted sinners under our federal head Adam in whose loins we were when he sinned. This is the situation Jesus saves us from with His loving sacrifice, dying the death due to Adam. Jesus was not “in Adam” He was never in Adam’s loins for God was His Father.

I know of no other denomination who believe or dare to say that Christ needed to die for Himself except Christadelphians so I presume you are one. If I had to choose I would prefer to believe in the divinity of Christ as the Church of England and the rest of Christendom teach than do despite to my Redeemer and call Him sinful and in need of salvation for Himself.

Thankfully I do not have to make such a choice as I know the truth. I can only hope that when you realize the gravity of the error you believe and the injustice you do to a selfless, loving and faultless Saviour you will change your mind.

I trust you will excuse me for being blunt about what I think of your views, but as you took time to tell me what you believe I felt it best to be as straight with you about my beliefs in return.

Yours sincerely, Helen Brady.

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Letter from Edward R. Harding:

Dear Mr Gregory, I am in receipt of your letter just dated “July 1996. Yes, I am a BIBLE STUDENT - one who cares about the Bible & with my wife, we read it through once a year, so we are VERY familiar with its contents.

I take it that perhaps you may once have been a member of the Christadelphian community but have left it as you talk about “fellowships” etc. I have heard of Mr Ernest Brady & once came across one of his “followers” who lived at Slough some 40 years ago.

After many talks with her I found her reading a copy of the “Logos” magazine when I paid her a visit. She lived on her own & I believe she gave up being a follower of the tenets of Mr Brady.

Well, I am a Christadelphian, & when we write to one another we address them “Dear Brother Harding, Sincere Greetings in the Hope of Israel.”

As regards to fellowships our family & ourselves belong to the original community of Christadelphians now known as the Birmingham Central “fellowship.” It is sad that we have to use that term but we have experienced so much of what John says in his epistles of those who get together like Diotrephes who even refuse to fellowship the inspired apostle John! They walked off! John said they went out from us because they were not of us. Since 1923 we have seen MUCH of this kind of behaviour & and we have remonstrated with them but they “don’t want to know.”

The basis of our community is set forth in the “BIRMINGHAM AMMENDED STATEMENT OF FAITH” & those who hold to the one faith either conform to that or stand aside. If they stand aside, then as John said they are not of us, so must be left to give account of their stewardship to Christ at his coming.

Re the pamphlet “The Netherton Debate” I believe I have read this from the late Sister Houlston but I was not impressed. I enclose a statement of what I believe & and you can either take it or leave it. Honest Christadelphians will accept that statement & if it is not in harmony with the Truth they will point out WHY! I ask you to do the same. I believe the return of Jesus Christ is near at hand & when he comes, no doubt many will be arguing amongst themselves - more or less just feeding upon ashes.

Yours faithfully, Edward R.Harding.

* * *

Brother Russell Gregory’s reply:

Dear Brother Harding, Sincere Greetings in the Hope of Israel.

Thank you for your letter of the 24th July last and please accept my earnest apologies for not answering your letter sooner. However, your letter calls for a careful and prayerful response and I am sure you would not wish me to hurry a letter without due consideration. Extra to this I have had an unprecedented demand upon my time and have been quite overwhelmed with work to meet deadlines.

May I say a few words about myself? I was baptized at Suffolk Street in 1949 at the age of 21. For nearly forty years I was an active member of the Erdington Ecclesia but became dissatisfied with what I saw were discrepancies between the Statement of Faith and Scripture. I asked questions in an attempt to bring out some discussion, but instead I was accused of being a trouble-maker and was asked to leave. The fact is I had no wish to make trouble but I did want good reasons for some of the doctrines upheld in the Statement of Faith. The Bible references given in support of each clause are quite inadequate and inappropriate in the majority of cases.

It is no credit to Erdington Ecclesia to turn me out on such feeble grounds but I bear them no ill will and in my letter of resignation wrote I was leaving “with the greatest reluctance and with a heavy heart... I do this willingly and in love that you may all continue in greater harmony.”

As a presiding brother for so many years I was well known for what I can perhaps term a “standard request” in my prayers when I would ask that in our seeking we should find greater knowledge of God’s will and purpose in the Scriptures; that in our knocking the door of our understanding should be opened that we should better understand His ways and the plan of salvation; and then ask for wisdom from above that we may serve Him as we ought - in ways well pleasing to Him, to His honour and glory.

Since leaving Erdington ecclesia I have found all the answers I was seeking and much, more besides and I thank God for His loving kindness and mercy to me.

Towards the end of your letter you wrote:- "I enclose a statement of what I believe... Honest Christadelphians will accept that statement and if it is not in harmony with the Truth they will point out WHY! I ask you to do the same."

The rest of this letter is aimed to this end.

In the enclosed statement you refer to, entitled "The Bible Declares:" paragraph No. 5 reads "that Adam was created in condition "very good" but by transgression fell from that estate and was sentenced to return to the dust." In support of this claim reference is made to Genesis 3:19; Genesis 2:17 and 1 Corinthians 15:22.

It seems perhaps likely that neither Dr.Thomas nor Robert Roberts were aware of the force behind the meaning of the words "Muth temuth" (dying thou shalt die) and B'yom (in the very day), but this is no excuse for us to ignore their importance today.

Let us consider first, "Muth temuth" as used in Genesis 2; 17 and is translated "thou shalt surely die." This same expression is to be found in the following fourteen passages: Genesis 20:3 to 7; Genesis 26:11; Leviticus 27:29; 1 Samuel 14:39-44 (twice); 1 Samuel 22:16-18; 2 Samuel 12:14; 1 Kings 2:36-46 (twice); 2 Kings 1:16,17; Jeremiah 26:8-19; Ezekiel 3:17-21 and 33:8-11 (twice). It will be seen that in every case it refers to judicially inflicted death - of being put to a violent and premature death. It never refers to the natural death due to ageing which was the experience of Adam. So I put it to you that Adam did not receive the death that was due to him as a result of his transgression.

The word "B'yom" means "in the day" and some suppose this may refer to a "day" of a thousand years.

In the first three chapters of Genesis the word translated day is used in several different ways. In Genesis 1:16 we read "the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night," so this day is about twelve hours. In Genesis 3:5 and 8 we read "God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof your eyes will be opened," and "in the cool of the day." These indicate a day of 24 hours, while in Genesis 2:4 the reference here is to the six days of creation "in the day that the Lord God made the heavens and the earth." To some this means six literal days of 24 hours each and to others it means six extended periods of time.

None of these references cover a period of a thousand years and there is no reason to suppose this is what Adam and Eve were meant to understand by God's words to them. Looking specifically at Genesis 3:5 where we read, "In the day ye eat thereof your eyes will be opened," cannot possibly mean a period of a thousand years for we are told in verse 7 that their eyes were opened that very day - the day of their transgression. Their eyes were opened and straight way they knew that they were naked. This fact alone should make it quite clear that a day of 24 hours was meant when God said "in the day thou eatest thereof..."

Again if we go to 1 Kings 2:36,37 "Build thee an house in Jerusalem...for on the day (B'yom) thou goest out thou shalt surely die" (Muth temuth), we see a parallel with the Genesis account of how both these words should be understood.

It is therefore evident then that Adam and Eve were not put to death as God had said they would be for their transgression and this accounts for the reason of the first sacrifice - that of the animal/s to provide covering for Adam and Eve; to cover their shame.

We see then, from the above that Genesis 3:19 was not the fulfilment of Genesis 2:17, but that Genesis 3:19 refers to their life in the new circumstances outside of Eden after they had been provisionally redeemed by the slaying of the animal to provide their covering.

1 Corinthians 15:22 is not used in a way which takes into account the reasoning of Paul regarding being either in Adam or in Christ in Romans.

Regarding the "very good" nature and the "fall" there is no evidence in Scripture for believing our physical nature was changed from "very good." It is still very good for the purpose for which God created it.

I have a high regard for Dr.Thomas and his approach to seeking the truth. It is the experience of all that deeper understanding is reached with prayerful study and it is significant that in 1855 Dr.Thomas was enlightened to write in "The Herald" magazine;- "Death and corruption then, with reproduction, is the fundamental Law of the physical system of the six days... From these premises it will be seen that we dissent from our correspondent's notion that all creation became corrupt, by which we understand him to mean, constitutionally impregnated with corruptibility at the fall. We believe that the change was moral not physical."

Robert Roberts agreed with his mentor and wrote;- "Our friend imagines there was a change in the nature of Adam when he became disobedient. There is no evidence of this whatever... and the presumption and evidence are entirely the contrary way. There was a change in Adam's relation to his Maker, but not in the nature of his organization... The phrase "Sin-in-the-flesh" is metonymical. It is not expression of a literal element or principle pervading the physical organization. Literally sin is disobedience, or the act of rebellion."

Here we see Dr.Thomas, Edward Turney and Robert Roberts all in agreement and I am sure had reason prevailed the Christadelphian body would have held much sounder beliefs.

In 1987 and 1988 I was in correspondence with Michael Ashton, Editor of "The Christadelphian" magazine on this subject of the changed nature of Adam and turned to him for help and advice as none in the Erdington Ecclesia were able to help and in my letter to him dated 6th February 1988 I wrote: "There is one point which to me is so very important and I would be most grateful to receive your considered reply to it and it is this: - As there are many very sincere and earnest Brethren and Sisters who do not believe any change took place in Adam's flesh when he disobeyed God's command and ate of the forbidden tree, where does one turn to in the Scriptures for the infallible, unassailable and essential proof that Adam's flesh was changed in order to counter such beliefs? I find it very easy to express an opinion but where is the necessary proof which shows beyond all reasonable doubt that the change took place? I am sure you will understand when I say this matter has exercised my mind quite considerably of late and I feel I need help in finding the answers."

This was the end of our correspondence as Michael Ashton did not reply. I have since found the answers through prayerful study and help from those who had faced this same dilemma, and now realize Michael Ashton had no answers to give me and Dr.Thomas was right when he said that "the change was moral not physical." This means the change from "very good" flesh to "sinful" flesh never happened.

This being the case we see that Jesus Christ could not have inherited so-called "sinful flesh" as no such thing as sinful flesh existed, and it follows therefore that He did not have to die for Himself but only for us.

The other point I would raise here is the subject of paragraph 7 of "The Bible Declares:" where we read: "That at the resurrection, at the coming of Jesus Christ, the dead will be raised and together with the living appear at His Judgment Seat to receive the reward of eternal life or eternal death."

This is not Scripture teaching! Revelation 20:6; "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years" What could be plainer? Again, when the Apostle Paul was asked "How are the dead raised and with what body do they come?" He gave the answer in 1 Corinthians 15:35 to 49, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, lest it die; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be... so also is the resurrection of the dead... it is raised in incorruption:.. it is raised in glory;.. it is raised in power:.. it is raised a spiritual body."

The only reason for believing our natural bodies are given back to us at the resurrection is because of the belief that we are supposed not to know if our sins are forgiven until we appear before the Judgment seat of Christ, whereas Revelation 20:6 shows that there has already been a selection made and only those who will die no more are raised; besides, Scripture teaches that "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" - 1 John 1:9. This forgiveness takes place day by day, it is during our life time, so that selection is made before the raising of the dead and only those

worthy of eternal life are raised at Jesus coming. The Judgment Seat of Christ is for receiving degrees of reward but in the words of one brother, “no one can receive more of eternal life than another.”

Just a brief reference to paragraph 9 “...the Devil is the scriptural personification of the principle of evil in human nature.” I am not sure what we are supposed to understand by “the principle of evil in human nature,” but if it means we have the devil in us because we have fallen human nature, then I would say it is a very bad definition. The best definition I know is that the devil is a personification of man’s will when opposed to God’s will.

And going back to paragraph 4, “That Jesus Christ... tempted in all points as we are yet without sin...” I, of course, agree with this as it is a scriptural statement of fact but it cannot be squared with the teaching that Jesus Christ was given extra strength to overcome all temptation. We cannot accept both, and Scripture must have precedence over man’s ideas. The paragraph goes on to read, “...and by His sinless life and sacrificial death He obtained eternal redemption which He will give to all those found worthy at His coming.” This is not a clear statement of the Christadelphian position but if it means that Jesus Christ, by being crucified, obtained eternal life for Himself then it is false. He did not die for Himself in anyway except for the joy set before Him in bringing many sons to glory; it was entirely for us that He allowed Himself to be crucified - “the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” – 1 Peter 3:18.

The first Adam, the son of God by creation, needed redemption after he transgressed. Jesus Christ, the Son of God by begettal, was a new creation, the second Adam, and because He remained sinless He did not require redemption.

In conclusion, Romans 8:3 does not help the doctrine of sin-in-the-flesh one little bit for it is well known that this is a bad translation and does not convey the meaning of Apostle Paul’s words. “Sinful flesh” in this verse means “flesh belonging to sin.” This is the legal position after Adam sinned and sold himself to “sin.” All in his loins being sold at that time so that all generations born of him are all “sold under sin.” Jesus came in the likeness of those sold under sin and was therefore Himself not one of them. That is to say, He was not born into the condemnation of Adam’s descendants, having God as His Father. This proves again that Jesus Christ did not have to die for Himself and did not need redemption but His sacrifice was for us.

Oh, why do so many people fail in their attempts to reason things through properly?

Sincerely your brother in seeking Truth,

Russell Gregory.

* * * * *

Letter from A.Allfree:

Dear Russell, I have received your copy of the Netherton Debate.

I am sorry to say that your speaker in the debate lacks a proper understanding of the Atonement, and about Adam and Eve he seems to jump from one idea to another and so reaches no proper conclusions, so please do not send me any more of your literature,

Please read Eureka by Bro. J.Thomas.

Yours faithfully, A.Allfree.

* * *

In reply:

Dear A. Allfree, Thank you for your note in response to receiving a copy of the Netherton Debate.

It is sad you do not agree with Ernest Brady’s understanding of The Atonement.

The Christadelphian view makes Jesus Christ to have a body full of sin, which could only have been made so by His Father, and was then told He had to suffer the crucifixion in order to demonstrate what such sinful flesh deserved; and if He refused to go to the Cross He would have been a sinner and would have perished as such. There would have been no Atonement for Him or for us.

But a body full of sin is not a fitting sacrifice. Even the types under the Law had to be without spot and blemish and Jesus Christ, the Great Antitype, must not be considered inferior to the sacrifices under the Law. Neither is it any use saying that Jesus Christ was acceptable because His character was perfect, because it was not His character which He sacrificed; it was His body of natural life.

There is no love in the Christadelphian view.

Please read The Scriptures by Almighty God.

Yours faithfully,

Russell Gregory.

A.Allfree Replies:

Dear Mr Gregory, I gather you do not belong to the Christadelphian body otherwise you would not have written such nonsense about the atonement and the nature of Jesus Christ, and in future be very careful what you write about this subject. With your views you could not belong to the true ecclesias. We believe that Christ was more than man but He was a man who was the vehicle of a manifestation of God.

From His mother Mary He derived all the faculties, propensities and instincts which belong to the first Adam. He took upon Himself the nature of the seed of Abraham that sin might be condemned in the nature which had sinned. His body was prepared for a habitation of the Spirit in all its fullness so He could say Lo, I come to do Thy will O God. So He was called Immanuel = God with us.

So we see for the first time God manifest in the flesh and this could not be affirmed of any other man. He was the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

How was the Deity manifested? We answer, in the character of the Son and His mental attributes. So Jesus Christ was the wisdom of God embodied in the flesh. He was the express image of His person/character because it was ordained of Jesus that in Him should dwell the fullness of the Godhead bodily so He received the Spirit from the Father at His baptism without measure for the purpose of preaching the gospel and working miracles and that also He should have power within Himself to become perfect in all virtue (Colossians 1:2)

In Him all fullness dwelt so from the Deity His Father He inherited wisdom, thought, intelligence, elevation and purity of character, but this in no way excludes the fact that the perfect man so made for us was of the same physical nature and put to the proof and was in all points tempted like we are, for without temptation the perfection of the result would not have been manifest and so the Son put to the proof was in itself the excellent thing God had made a pattern of His (God's) own character, the exhibition of His own excellence, the interposition of His own power and kindness for the salvation of His people from their sins as Paul says in Hebrews, Jesus learned obedience through suffering, this manifestation of the Father explains to us why in a man the deportment of God is visible, why in sinful flesh a similar character was involved, why in the impotent seed of Abraham the power of Abraham's God should be shewn, why a man born as a babe in Bethlehem should speak of having come down from heaven, why a man not 40 years old should speak as if He had been contemporary with Abraham, why a man should at once be David's Son and David's Lord, why a man of our own flesh and blood should assume the authority that belongs to God only saying ye call me Master, and Lord and ye say well for so I am. He, Jesus, is not only the first-born among many brethren, He is their Head.

Without sin in Himself we are washed in His blood though it was blood drawn from our poor sin cursed stock clothed with strength crowned with glory and honour He Jesus has known the weakness of

human exhaustion and the bitterness of ridicule and insult anointed with joy and gladness, He has a history of sorrow and grief, so we see Jesus rooted in the Eternal father, so He could be tempted in the wilderness.

I would recommend you read "Eureka," Vol.1, page 106 (New Edition) = Deity Manifested in Spirit.

I do not have any notion to which denomination you belong to, but please do read the Word of God and get rid of your false ideas.

A.Allfree.

Comment:

While Mr Allfree has asked me not to write back to him I shall take this opportunity of looking at some of the points of doctrine in his second letter. His first, very brief letter was blunt and without explanation. In response to this my letter to him was also blunt but put over very succinctly our view of one of the aspects to be found in the teaching within the Statement of Faith.

In reply to this Mr Allfree writes mainly of his views on God-manifestation which are similar to those expressed by both Dr.Thomas and Robert Roberts and this is what I want to look at first of all, for he writes, "We believe that Jesus was more than man..." This statement is extraordinary as nowhere in Scripture is such a view taught. Indeed, Jesus Christ was a remarkable man and we would not wish for a moment to detract from His achievements nor take away from the honour and glory due to Him, but was God really manifested in Jesus by making Him more than a man? Dr.Thomas thought so when he wrote; "Jesus had two sides, the one Deity, the other man." And if you think this is a little too close to Trinitarianism for comfort, and seems somewhat mysterious, then it was good enough for Robert Roberts who went along with the idea and wrote; "It may be difficult for us, as mere flesh-borns, to realize this combination of the human and Divine in one person, but the fact of the combination is self-evident."

So here we have it - the Christadelphian version of God-manifestation; Jesus was more than man, Christadelphians are, in fact, to comprehend a being part man and part God, a combination of human and Divine!

Before dealing with God-manifestation as taught in Scripture let's take a look at R.Roberts statement:

"It may be difficult for us, as mere flesh-borns, to realize this combination of the human and the Divine in one person, but the fact of the combination is self-evident."

I have said before that R.Roberts was very clever in his use of words and here is an excellent example of his manipulation of his readers. Let's take a look at this example and see what he is doing to the reader. First of all he tells us something is difficult; nevertheless he is clever and proposes to let us know what this difficult thing is - and in saying this he has made himself superior to his readers; after all, he knows something they are going to find hard. This strategy is necessary because he is about to tell us the bit of nonsense he wants us to swallow, something which is "far-fetched" and he really doesn't know what he is talking about but in his position as "shepherd of the flock" he feels he ought to know, so pretends he does. So then he says what it is, and adds of course that it is self evident, and by saying this he prevents being questioned, because the reader who has already been made to feel inferior, now feels intimidated and thinks it must be foolish of him to doubt the writer. The fact that it is supposedly self evident, then the reader must be lacking in comprehension but would not like to admit it. Of this statement of Robert Roberts, Ernest Brady wrote, "he should produce the evidence and meet the objections. But Robert Roberts did neither. He made the round assertion and blamed anyone who queried it with lacking in spiritual education." When reading Robert Roberts works beware of these tactics; they are his "stock in trade," and are not conducive to the study of the Scriptures; they are not enlightening to those who seek truth.

Coming back now to the subject in hand, it is our advice to leave any doctrine that has any semblance of "mystery" to The Mother Church and her many harlot daughters and go to the Bible to see how Jesus Christ manifested His Father. He tells us, in John 5:19, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that he himself doeth." How did Jesus manifest God? Why, of course, by doing

His will, and in doing His Father's will He developed a character similar to His Father's. Straightforward, unambiguous and to the point.

It was prophesied in the Psalms 40:7,8, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." And when He came He said, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is Just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." (John 5:30). By doing God's will perfectly (and so can we) He reflected His Father's character, so when Philip asked Him, "Lord, show us the Father," Jesus was able to say, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works..."

With so much evidence of God-manifestation before us from the mouth of Jesus Christ Himself let us not make a mystery of it by adding to what is written. And let it be said that we can all be obedient; Jesus proved it can be done. "Be ye therefore perfect" is the command of the Lord Jesus to each of us, and He meant what He said. Perfect obedience is attainable for each one of us and thus we can reflect His character as did Jesus Christ; we can and ought to manifest God in our lives. This does not make one a mysterious "combination of the human and the Divine in one person."

The fact is simply that Jesus Christ derived His life direct from His Father as we do from ours and He was born of Mary, from whom He received the only kind of natural human body known to us; flesh and blood identical with all other people. I see no difference between Jesus and Adam; both Sons of God, both remarkable people, both with the same capabilities, attributes, faculties, and of equally intelligence. One failed to keep God's law, the other did not. Jesus Christ was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin and thereby He became our example and pattern, showing us that we too can be obedient. This is why Jesus Christ was justified in condemning sin, and this He did while He Himself was in flesh like ours. He was proving that we could and should be obedient and that there was nothing wrong with our flesh; we cannot blame "sinful flesh" for our failures. He "condemned sin" while He was "in the flesh." (Romans 8:3).

Jesus Christ is most certainly our Lord and Master and we do well to live by His commands, but He alone was in the position to give His life in place of ours. He bought us with His own precious blood and His life-blood was precious because it was not sold to Sin; whilst we are all born into the bondage of Sin as a result of Adam's transgression. The one life given to Adam at creation has been passed down to us through generation after generation - a life which Adam by transgression, forfeited any right to; and but for the grace and mercy of God would not have continued. Jesus Christ was a new creation - He had another life from God, not life via Adam. Nowhere in Scripture are we told Jesus was a descendant or son of Adam. He was truly the Son of Man because He was related to the human race through His mother Mary, but not through any male line traceable to Adam. He then gave His life in place of Adam's life as the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. Thereby redeeming Adam and all who share his forfeited life. Our present life is our redeemed life.

A few other points may be worth mentioning. Mr Allfree says that "Jesus inherited wisdom, thought, intelligence, elevation and purity of character." None of this is true except perhaps the fact that one's level of intelligence can be inherited in some measure. Wisdom, thought, and character are not inherited in any sense whatever, while intelligence can be developed with application.

Again, Mr Allfree contradicts himself where he writes; "He took to Himself the nature of the seed of Abraham that sin might be condemned in the nature which had sinned." I see two mis-statements here. Firstly Jesus did not take to Himself the nature He had unless of course He pre-existed. He had the nature His Father gave Him - the same nature as the rest of us. Secondly, the nature which sinned in Eden was very good nature, which, so they say, was changed afterwards to very bad nature; does Mr Allfree mean that Jesus Christ had the same nature in which Adam sinned? We would say, Yes, of course, but this would contradict Mr Allfree's other claim that Jesus had sinful flesh.

However, it is this idea of flesh being sinful that brings about all the trouble in Christadelphian thinking. Some say that Dr. Thomas uncovered the Truth, but he didn't uncover this doctrine of sin-in-the-flesh because it had been Church doctrine for about 1400 years. With our last Circular Letter we sent out

the booklet entitled “The Usage and Meaning of Muth Temuth and B’Yom” which gives positive proof that when God said to Adam that “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,” He meant what He said and Adam understood it. Adam and Eve hid in the Garden because they feared for their lives. There is no hint of any physical change to their flesh whatsoever.

Several times we have heard it said of the Nazarene Fellowship that in our understanding of Genesis 2:17 we start marching on the wrong foot, but this booklet shows we start on the right foot and are on the right pathway all the way through. We see Christadelphians as not starting on the wrong foot so much as launching themselves into flights of fancy on reading the early chapters of Genesis, then flying straight for Romans 8:3 which they briefly look at to confirm their hypotheses, without checking the grammar; a quick glimpse at Romans chapter 7 to convince themselves they are right in supposing they can’t help themselves sinning from time to time; over to Hebrews where they pick out the most difficult passage they can find (13:20), and say their understanding of it is the only right one and make the assumption that Jesus Christ had to die for Himself; and then dare to say we are wrong! So please, stop and think and reason, before it’s too late. We ask all who read this to prove whether Muth Temuth means natural death or inflicted death, and whether B’Yom means the very day of 24 hours or an age of a thousand years in Genesis 2:17; and to prove whether Romans 8:3 means flesh is full of sin or that it means flesh belonging to Sin; whether Romans chapter 7 refers to Paul or others before or after conversion; and whether Hebrews 13:20 proves or does not prove Jesus had to die for Himself. Once these Scriptures have been proven, then is the time to re-think the Statement of Faith.

Russell Gregory.

* * * * *

Letter from Brother Ken Bezant:

Dear Brother Gregory, I am grateful to you for sending me a copy of the Netherton Debate and enclosures. You must please let me know if I owe you anything for this production.

Thank you for your invitation to enter into written discussion but this I must decline to do. I shall also be grateful if you will delete my name from your current mailing list.

Yours sincerely, Ken Bezant.

* * *

In reply:

Dear Brother Bezant, Thank you for your note of September 3rd. I have deleted your name from our mailing list as you request, so you should not receive any further literature from us.

Please be assured it is our desire to honour God and His Son in all we do. We have freely received our Heavenly Father’s loving kindness and mercy through Jesus Christ, and we strive to give freely of ourselves in His service. We would love to have entered into written discussion with you – perhaps another day.

Sincerely your brother in the Hope of Life through Jesus Christ, Russell Gregory.

* * * * *

Letter from Brother Bill Davison:

Dear Brother Russell, Greetings in the Name of Jesus. Thank you for your letter of 19th September 1996 and all the enclosures.

My method of study is to scan through the text quickly to get the gist of an argument or arguments, then read the text more thoroughly. I have only completed the first task.

I have always considered the Church doctrine of substitution to be immoral, since it teaches that the Lord Jesus died instead of us, as a substitute, the victim of God's wrath. Whereas, Scripture teaches that His death on the cross was a voluntary act of love, in that He died "for us." Having been taught New Testament Greek, many years ago, where Scripture speaks of the Lord dying "for" us, the preposition "*huper*" is used, which means "on behalf of." If the inspired writers had wished us to say He died "instead" of us, they would have used the preposition "*anti*." This is not just a grammatical point, but quite an important doctrinal point.

Be that as it may, I had only distantly heard of the debate between Brother Fred Barling and Brother Ernest Brady, since it occurred before I was baptized into Christ. My first impressions, are that since Fred Barling's "Opening Address" is omitted in your publication "The Netherton Debate" (the Blue Book) it makes it impossible to draw any firm conclusions as to the "fors" and the "againsts." It is a pity that it is not included, whatever the reason.

The appendices towards the end of the Blue Book, are to say the least "confrontational" and are certainly not written in the spirit of Christ - and do untold damage to your cause. To keep referring to Brother Fred Barling as "Barling" is horrible!

The words "Legal" and "Federal" appear to be two keys words used in the Nazarene Fellowship's vocabulary, to explain the nature and sacrifice of Christ. Since both terms are foreign to Scripture, are they germane to the main thrust of the argument?

A brief final thought. Why drag up the past and bandy about the names of honest, sincere brethren now deceased - which will only cause heartache?... particularly as Fred is not here to defend his cause.

Surely, if the Nazarene Fellowship wishes to circulate its views on the sacrifice of Christ, would it not be better, to start afresh and publish a new booklet setting out the various propositions, in a reasonable and balanced manner?

Sincerely your brother in Christ, Bill Davidson.

* * *

In Reply:

Dear Brother Bill, Greetings in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Thank you for your letter of the 23rd September 1996.

I, too, consider the Church doctrine of substitution to be immoral, as you point out, such a doctrine teaches that the Lord Jesus died as a victim of God's wrath. This view is appalling and in my opinion anyone holding this belief must have a strange understanding of the love of God. However, that does not mean we have to fight shy of the true understanding of substitution which shows what Jesus Christ has done for us.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to draw a parallel story or parable which covers all aspects of what Jesus accomplished, because His situation was absolutely unique in human history, however, the story of "The Tale of Two Cities" by Charles Dickens shows one aspect of the sacrifice of Christ which is true substitution. This story is set in France at the time of the French Revolution and very briefly tells of two men, one a prince the other a commoner and a poor man, who both love the same lady. In the revolt, the prince is put in prison, tried and sentenced to death and while awaiting his execution the poor man, realizing that the lady he loves loved the prince and that he himself has comparatively nothing to offer her, determines to take the place of the prince in the prison. He goes to the prison ostensibly to wish the prince farewell; he is allowed into the prison cell where he changes clothes with the prince and it is the prince who walks free in the commoners clothes. The next day the prisoner is duly guillotined in front of the mob shouting for vengeance on royalty, while the true prince makes his escape out of the country with the lady as his bride to be. What the commoner did for the prince in this story is what Jesus did for Adam. This is true substitution

as it has love as its motive; love in doing for others what they may wish they could do for themselves but cannot. No one could possibly say that what this poor man did was immoral, and neither can anyone say what Jesus Christ did for us in giving His life in the place of ours was immoral. It was based on love, compassion and pity. Not on anger and wrath or revenge. This is true substitution for which we thank God. Again, let's consider a loving father on seeing their child drowning, would he not go and help his child to safety even if he knew he could not get back to safety himself? Such action of a person, in giving his life so that another could live, could not be said to be immoral, but would be considered deserving of great praise and honour.

Jesus said "I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep... Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." On reading this can anyone dare to say that Jesus laid down His life for Himself? And if so, can His death be termed a voluntary sacrifice? If it was in anyway or in any sense essential for Himself then in no way and in no sense can it be said to be voluntary.

The important grammatical point you refer to in the words "*huper*" - "on behalf of" and "anti" - "instead of" is worthy of another look. For this I quote from the booklet "Thinking it Over" by Brother Ernest Brady;

"Jesus said that He was "to give His life a ransom for many" and we want to know what He intended us to understand by "ransom for many." Did He mean to say that He was dying as one who "stands for all" - as a representative - who shares men's nature and who must ultimately die on men's behalf? Or did He mean something quite different? We get our Young's Concordance and we write down every example of the use of the word "anti" - for:

Matthew 5:38	"An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."
Matthew 17:27	"take, and give unto them for me and thee."
Matthew 20:28	"and to give his life a ransom for many"
Mark 10:45	"and to give his life a ransom for many"
Luke 11:11	"will he for a fish give him a serpent?"
John 1:16	"have all we received, and grace for grace."
Romans 12:17	"Recompense to no man evil for evil."
1 Corinthians 11:15	"her hair is given her for a covering."
1 Thessalonians 5:15	"See that none render evil for evil."
Hebrews 12:2	"Who for the joy that was set before him"
Hebrews 12:16	"Who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright."
James 4:15	"For that ye ought to say "If the Lord will."
1 Peter 3:9	"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing."
Etc.	

It will be seen that in every instance this word "anti" translated "for" means to put one thing in place of another - it is not by any means the same as "for" used as a simple preposition in a sentence like "Member of Parliament for Liverpool," which is generally (but not always) the meaning of "*huper*." ...in its context "*huper*" also can mean "in place of" as well as "on behalf of." But when we find that Jesus used the special "anti" instead of the common "*huper*" in His statement "His life a ransom for many" it was without doubt because His life is set against the many as an equivalent, like one eye for another, like a fish instead of a serpent, like hair for a covering or one morsel of meat instead of a birthright, and so on.

If this were not conclusive enough there is one even more telling text. The same word "anti" also occurs in Matthew 2:22; "But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither." The four words "in the room of" are a correct translation of the single word "anti." If the scholars who made the A.V. had been as casual as those who made the N.E.B. they could have rendered it "Archelaus reigned in Judea for his father Herod" but they knew this would not be a correct translation because he reigned in the place of or instead of Herod - therefore they translated "anti" by giving its radical meaning "in the room of." We think therefore that when Jesus used this word "anti" in His own explanation of the reason for His death - to give His life a ransom for many, it was because He knew that in

the Divine plan of salvation it was necessary for someone to pay the debt incurred by Sin, otherwise humanity would have perished.”

I feel I need add nothing more. Your next paragraph expresses disappointment that our publication of the Netherton Debate lacks Brother Fred Barling’s opening speech. This was an extreme disappointment to us and as Brother Fred Pearce said in 1950, he felt it was still better to publish the debate even without Brother Barling’s address, rather than attempt to hide it as the Christadelphians of the day had done, though I give credit to Brother Michael Ashton for his approach to our problem in his reply to Sister Helen Brady’s letter as reported on page 6 of that publication.

Your next paragraph refers to Part Two of “The Netherton Debate” and I see no reason for not being “confrontational” as this is how we see all the holy men of old and especially Jesus Christ Himself. Throughout the Scriptures was there ever a God-fearing man who was not “confrontational”? I doubt it. Neither do I see how we can do harm to the Truth when, by being confrontational we are upholding the Truth with zeal. Then you say “referring to Brother Fred Barling as “Barling” is horrible!” I must admit I was a little taken aback on reading this and wondered how it could be. It had never occurred to me that using a persons name without the title or forename would be thought “horrible” and I can only suppose and hope it is due to my age and the age in which I grew up. I was at school during the 1930’s and 1940’s and I was known to the teachers and class-mates as “Gregory” and we never used first names; in fact I never heard the first names of most of the boys I was at school with - first names such as Peter, Alan, or Charles were never used. We never thought it horrible. I suppose it was the same for those older than us who wrote various articles in the Netherton Debate Book, and I am sure they never meant to cause any offence by it. I see I used the expression once in “A Final Word” and out of respect for your view I have now changed the master copy so that future “Debates” will go out with the reference to “Mr Barling” and not just “Barling” as in the first copies. However, I am reluctant to change anything others have written, even on a point such as this. I ask therefore that you may put it down to having lived in a different age and ask your tolerance as it seems to me there was never any wish to use it in a derogatory sense. Personally, I like to use a title when referring to the Lord Jesus and refer to Him as either Lord Jesus or Jesus Christ; just “Jesus” seems a little too casual, though I find I use it sometimes.

The words “legal” and “federal” are indeed germane to any discussion regarding the Atonement whether or not the terms are found in Scripture. When talking of law one is talking of the legal system and using legal terms; likewise when one is talking of being “in Christ” or being “in Adam” one is talking of the Federal Principle or system; and incidentally it was Dr.Thomas who pointed out the Federal Principle expounded by the Apostle Paul.

I am indeed sorry there should be heartache caused by republishing “The Netherton Debate.” However, as the problems were not properly faced at the time, and were certainly not of the Nazarene Fellowship’s making; and neither indeed have they been faced properly since the time of Edward Turney, it is not those who seek the Truth who are the cause of any upset but of those who would hide it. I do not think our language is particularly abrasive, and I do not accept that it is not in the Spirit of Christ.

I am sorry too if any one is dismayed at our uncompromising exposure of Christadelphian confusion but we see a straightforward solution to their problem by reference to the Scriptures and we are sure members of that community can see the force of our reasoning but perhaps don’t like what they see for it means two things: 1) that so many have been so much in error for so long, and 2) to put right the whole body of Christadelphia is far too monumental a task to contemplate. But I feel it is not right to say “Others have worked it out and I accept what they say.”

Regarding the possibility of starting afresh with a new booklet, why, the Turneyites, Renunciationists, and the Nazarene Fellowship, whatever you like to call us, have published over one hundred booklets and pamphlets in over one hundred years. Starting afresh is not the answer. The answer is getting people to reconsider Scripture in the light of reason. You talk of “a reasonable and balanced manner,” but there is no proper balance between reason and unreason. Christadelphians have satisfied themselves in the comforts of unreason far too long and it is reason which we desire to see in that community. We have great concern for the brethren and sisters which so many of us left behind and we dearly wish they would reconsider their position for we are concerned at the confidence they put in the Statement of Faith and the works of certain prominent Christadelphians; we feel they are in a dangerous position and may so easily lose the place in the

Kingdom which they surely expect. This is why we spend so much time and effort directed towards this end, to the honour and glory of God, in thankfulness for what He has done for us. It is little enough indeed in return for His love.

We ask you all to “search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life” and we testify of the things they teach.

Sincerely your brother in Hope and earnest expectation of Life Eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Russell Gregory.

Brother Phil Parry comments on certain of Edward Turney’s views.

Dear Brother Russell,

Through certain correspondence in recent weeks Edward Turney’s lecture “The Sacrifice of Christ” has come to the fore as worthy of consideration in the cause of seeking The Truth, but this does not mean he was correct on every point of the Spirit’s teaching. It would be wrong to say he was, especially after studying what is written on page 37, bottom half (in the original edition, or middle of page 39 in the 1961 edition), where I believe he has got it in reverse when he says, “You have not forgotten that sacrifice consists of two things, killing and offering. Jesus was killed on earth. He offered Himself in Heaven, then His sacrifice was complete.”

I agree with him when he says “Our friend Mr Roberts does not know what he is talking about on this subject,” but on the other hand I do not wholly accept Edward Turney’s view of the matter, though his view does not, as does that of Roberts, detract from the credit and honour due to Jesus in giving Himself to God as a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour. We must appreciate that Edward Turney was a Christadelphian gradually emerging from the darkness of that community toward the greater light, which many of us have discovered only separation can achieve

I have found Edward Turney to be a very intelligent and gifted man and his writings a pleasure to read in the way he presents his views on spiritual matters with little if any, contradictory statements, which cannot be said for either Dr.Thomas or Robert Roberts.

I do not therefore profess to exceed E.Turney in what I have said of him. After all it was on reading his lecture that my mind was fully made up to the fact my views were confirmed, that Christadelphian teaching was very much astray from the Truth. This was around 1951 after Christadelphian membership of about 17 years duration.

Now, the comments I am about to make are subject to any constructive criticism or alternate view point on a scriptural basis and I shall welcome it and not be offended.

There are three statements in the New Testament which in my view show that in the case of the sacrifice Jesus made of His life in the blood, His offering was first and His death the result and reason for that offering. Consider Matthew 20:28 for example, “For the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” Consider John 10:17, “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.” Hebrews 10:7 and 10, “Lo, I come to do thy will, O God... By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Please note, Jesus said to His disciples at the last supper when handing them the unleavened bread in symbolic reference, “Take eat, this is my body which is given for you.” To whom did He give His body, and who offered that body for the sanctification of the many? I have quoted it in Hebrews 10:7 and 10.

Now consider Romans 8:31 to 33, "What shall we then say to these things? if God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things."

Note what Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldest have no power at all over me were it not given thee from above," Jesus then made reference to the High Priest as having the greater sin, for only God was in the position to offer Jesus as a sacrifice for the Adamic and federal sin of the world. Psalm 49 - None could give to God a ransom or redeem his brother with no matter how much wealth they possessed, "but," says David, "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me."

No High Priest under the Mosaic Law was in any position to slay a man who was without sin, therefore it remained that only God had the authority by His own attributes and principles of justice to offer up His sinless Son's life as the Ransom price required to purchase Adam and all his posterity from under its claim, that claim being the life of a sinner. Therefore, the Law having no claim on the sinless Son of God's love. God was able, by the willingness of Jesus in offering Himself to God, to allow Him to be put to death by wicked hands.

The High Priest under the Law could only officiate under God's authority after being cleansed by the shedding of animal blood given of God to Israel upon the Altar to make atonement for their souls. Therefore after offering for his own sins the High Priest was in a position on the annual Day of Atonement to offer for the sins of the people.

I can quite understand that if Brother Turney were confining the statement "killing" and "offering" to the rituals and ordinances of the Law of Moses itself, and not to what took place in the case of Jesus, he would be correct, but only insofar as the animal was slain and its blood taken into the Holy Place made with hands, only a figure of the True. The veil typified the body and flesh of Christ which veil as long as it remained a type and obstacle to the Holiest of All even Heaven itself required the shedding of animal blood for the High Priest to enter beyond it with that blood. The body of the animal slain was not taken in by the High Priest, only its blood.

When Jesus suffered without the camp He was a true sacrifice for all, and it pleased the Lord to bruise Him for the reasons stated in Isaiah 53. This explains how He offered Himself without spot to God through the Eternal Spirit, this being the Spirit and Power of God by which He was begotten of the virgin Mary that He might be free from the Adamic life forfeited to the law of sin and death, and by maintaining His freedom of Sonship of God, be the means by which God could reconcile the world unto Himself in the sacrifice of His natural life yet still maintaining God's appointment of Him as Heir of all things by raising Him from the dead in a life not in the blood, but in the Spirit.

I can accept that Jesus presented Himself to God after rising from the tomb in Spirit nature but this fact fully depended on God raising Him to life - Jesus could not do this of Himself. But when the Apostle speaks of Him offering Himself without spot (fault) to God, Jesus did this of His own initiative and maintenance of perfected character while on earth, in order that God might offer Him up for us all. His blood was not carried into Heaven, the life in it had been given and as a sacrifice, it could not be taken back, therefore spirit must energize the remaining flesh and bones which saw no corruption. This Spirit-energized body of Jesus was taken up into Heaven there to appear in the presence of God, having an unchangeable Priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Here is the contrast - the animal slain under the Law ceased to exist. The High Priest under the Law could venture no further than the Holy Place - a figure or pattern of things in the heavens (Hebrews 9:23).

Moreover, Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us (Hebrews 9:24).

A reading of Hebrews 8 should convince the reader that Jesus was the Lamb of God who offered Himself to God as the sacrifice to take away the Sin which entered the world in Eden.

When the life of Jesus expired on the Tree of Calvary the veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, this signifying that the way into Heaven itself was open, by a new and living way through the veil, that is to say, His flesh, and by (not with) His own blood.

“The cup which my Father hath given me to drink shall I not drink it?” He could have prayed the Father and He would have given Him twelve legions of angels to save Him from that death required to reconcile the world, but He set His face toward Jerusalem and drank the cup. The sacrifice was then complete when He cried out, “It is finished” (John 19:30) (John 17:4) (Romans 10:4) (Hebrews 10:1-14).

In the presence of His Father He will see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Isaiah 53:10-12.

Brother Phil Parry.

The thought has occurred to me: If Jesus was pre-existent with the Father so were the Jews of His day when John The Baptist spoke of Him - John 1:11, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” Have you worked it out?

P.P.

We are grateful to our brother John Stevenson for sending us this article from Australia, taken from the September 1996 edition of the Logos magazine. John’s letter to the author, Stan Snow, follows the article;

“LOGOS” - Upholding The Faith

Nottingham Revisited

E.W.Turney and The Clean Flesh Theory

1. Whilst Christadelphians would, in the main, recognize that the Truth has been revived in the earth by the instrumentality of John Thomas, with the publication of Elpis Israel in 1849, many may not appreciate just how close we came to losing it twenty-four years later in 1873.

2. The Christadelphian for October 1873 (page 476; see also November, page 525), reported that several brethren - E.W.Turney and W.H. Farmer - renounced the Truth that had been painstakingly unearthed by Brother Thomas, and were reimmersed into a new theory, which denied that Jesus Christ was God manifest in our condemned nature, for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself. This teaching, which was foreign to the Brotherhood, was soon aptly named “The Clean Flesh Heresy.”

Turmoil and Debacle - The Renunciationist Theory

3. During the months of August and September, 1873, the brethren in Birmingham were subject to considerable turmoil. Brother Roberts was out of action due to ill health, and Edward Turney delivered a lecture and answered questions upon his newly adopted theory, which he borrowed from a “Brother Handley” at Nottingham. Brother Turney, being of such long standing in the faith, and a tireless worker for the Truth, his remarks understandably made a cogent impact upon many of those present, who, for the time being, accepted the ideas as truth. At least most of those in attendance were initially of this mind.

4. In the following week, Brother Roberts was again absent on the Truth’s work in Ireland, and this is a story in itself, as we shall see. Back in Birmingham, E. Turney addressed another meeting in Temperance Hall, to further expound his new ideas. Circulars were printed, inviting brethren to be present on Thursday, 28th August, 1873. Brother Roberts arrived back in Birmingham on Monday, 25th, and the following day he was questioned by supporters of Turney, whereupon Brother Roberts agreed to put questions to him at the close of his lecture on the Thursday.

5. A large number of Christadelphians were present at the lecture, many expecting to hear Brother Roberts put questions to E.W.Turney, but it was not to be, for Turney spoke for nearly two and half hours, leaving no time for Brother Roberts, who was disallowed. Consequently, Brother Roberts challenged Turney to a debate the following week. This challenge was not taken up in the confusion. Brother Roberts responded by announcing that he would deliver a lecture the following evening, Friday, 29th August, which we have in the publication, *The Slain Lamb*, available in the *Logos Volume, The Atonement*.

The Truth Scarcely Saved

6. There was a real danger that the Truth, so dearly won in the investigations of Brother Thomas, could now be submerged again by the Gnostic fables that troubled the apostles in their day, namely the teaching of those who “confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh” (1 John 4:3). E.W.Turney excluded Jesus from “Adam’s posterity” by defining that phrase to mean “Every human being who has been born of two human parents” (Questions and Answers, No. 9, by Turney). An “essential difference” was alleged to exist between “Jesus and the posterity of Adam” (Q, 11). So much so that “Jesus was not a son of Adam” (Q.13). It was stated that “the body of Christ was not under condemnation” (Q. 19). Consequently it was alleged that Christ himself was not redeemed by his own sacrifice (Q 24,27). See *The Christadelphian* 1873, page 314.

7. At the beginning Brother Roberts was not confident that he could easily turn the brethren round, for he stated in regard to Turney’s steps to persuade them: “Those steps were at first attended by an unexpected degree of success” (ibid, page 474). However, following his lecture *The Slain Lamb*, Brother Roberts could say, “Most of the brethren who had been disposed in favour of the new theory, gave way before the testimony adduced, and are now united in the maintenance of the faith” (page 475).

Standing for the Faith

8. We earlier said that Brother Roberts was, in the beginning, absent in Ireland upon the Truth’s work. The circumstances are of interest, to demonstrate our brother’s trials in standing for the Truth, come what may. The editor left Birmingham on Monday, August 18th, to lecture four times in Ballybay and Cootehill. This was near Dundalk, a seaport on the west coast of Ireland. When halfway through the lecture, Brother Roberts, on account of ill health, was obliged to sit down and answer questions which were arising from the audience. The meeting grew turbulent and finally broke up with “shrieks and yells in true Irish fashion.”

9. Two nights later he lectured at Cootehill, eleven kilometres away, and was greeted by a large crowd, with three constables in attendance. He sat to lecture, again because of ill health, and again after half an hour, questions began to be put from the audience, and the excitement arose as the people crowded around the speaker in a threatening manner, occasioned by shrieks and yells as before. Soon rotten eggs began to be thrown! Eventually the head constable took charge, and with difficulty in the midst of an excited crowd, escorted Brother Roberts to a vehicle, and away. The brethren considered it unwise to hold another meeting, and so Brother Roberts departed for Birmingham, arriving back at 3 am. on August 25th,

10. Having faced troubles “without” in Ireland he now encountered troubles “within” in the heresy being spread in his absence at Birmingham. Is it any wonder Brother Roberts suffered ill health! These background events may help to explain why Brother Roberts lost his composure on the occasion of Turney’s lecture, when he was denied the opportunity to question Turney, and in frustration he shouted to have his point heard. To quote his own account of the affair, he wrote “Little wonder then in our own weak days under the goading presence of many evil circumstances there should be a departure from that perfect equanimity which it is desirable at all times to observe.” (opening paragraph. *The Slain Lamb*; see also *The Christadelphian* 1873 page 474).

The Division

11. In view of the danger of the Truth being again lost, Brother Roberts, notwithstanding his ill health and weakened condition, was resolved to give his life to preserve it. He wrote: “But apostasy once succeeded and may again” (ibid, page 409). Again: “Therefore if I am left alone on the top of a mountain; if all the brethren and sisters forsake me, I will stand alone... I have taken upon myself a great deal of labour, and have brought upon myself the infirmity of the flesh. But for this I care not, if the Truth be saved. I will

die, if necessary, in the attempt to stem this tide of corruption which is streaming in and sweeping away the brethren” (ibid, page 451).

12. In preparation of this article, the present writer has been impressed with the fact that, whilst John Thomas has been the vehicle used by Providence to revive the Truth in the latter days, Robert Roberts has been the means to prevent its annihilation under attack from the Satan. And this was achieved at great personal cost to Brother Roberts. But he did have helpers in the task. Many brethren and sisters wrote to the magazine to strengthen his hand. Some examples will illustrate:

Brother Smith (Edinburgh):

13. “I have to thank you for your printed letter, and to express my sympathy with you in your contention for the Truth... Regarding the subject that has been leading astray so many at the present time, I have been struck by the very partial and limited view they take of the Scriptures. They almost entirely ignore the typical parts of the Word... In that typical system the High Priest offered for himself and the people. In offering for himself it was as High Priest and not merely as a man. When Israel is restored and in the Lord, the new temple built... the Prince, who is also a priest, on his throne will offer for himself and for the people...”

Brother McKillop (Leith) for the ecclesia:

14. “We are firmly persuaded that the Truth is with you, and repudiate the doctrine hatched in Maldon, and promulgated from Nottingham... We are determined to remain old Christadelphians, in the strict sense of the term... the efforts you have put forth must have entailed much labour and mental anxiety, in assailing the enemy, but what has been put on record will be beneficial to those in the Truth in the future... Moreover it will be advantageous as a test by which to try those who are yet to be gathered within the fold.”

Sister Hage (Bilsthorpe):

15. “We have the Review today which I have run through. I like it much; and we thank Brother Roberts for it very much, not that I did not understand it before, for I did, but this renews the understanding of a matter which is difficult at first... Depend on it, Brother E.Turney has never understood the subject, but has let it pass; perhaps now he never will; we shall see. No one can say anything in favour of his views; they are from themselves, not the Bible. I consider the good Dr, would take this as I do; first astonishment, then make up his mind to the loss, and, like you, write for others.”

Brother Bairstow (Halifax):

16. “Don’t suppose I am an uninterested spectator of what is going on in our midst. I am well pleased with the stand you have taken, but don’t wish you to fight single-handed... The writer of recent tracts says he has no dispute about flesh, and that the flesh of Adam, Jesus and Judas were all the same flesh. I suppose he would not object to Paul being included in the number. Well Paul says something about his flesh, hearken: “I know that in me, that is in my flesh dwells no good thing.” “I am carnal, sold under sin, sin dwelleth in me” therefore, on the writer’s showing, if the apostle is to be believed, as to the inherent evil existing in the flesh, Jesus could not be in any other than the flesh full of sin... In conclusion then, we see that the assumption that Jesus was born in a nature not needing redemption, or not needing to die, is untrue, as also another assumption that Jesus redeemed himself by his obedience previous to death, and that, therefore, death was not a necessity. Death was a necessity to be realized before he could be delivered from it.” (Christadelphian, September 1873).

The Flesh Essentially Unclean

17. Brother Thomas had expressed himself succinctly at various times on this subject. He declared: “Hence the flesh is invariably regarded as unclean. It is therefore written, “How can he be clean who is born of a woman?” (Job 25:4; 14:4; 15:14-16)... Sin could not have been condemned in the body of Jesus if it had not existed there. His body was as unclean as the bodies of those he died for... The nature of Mary was as unclean as that of other women and therefore could give only a ‘body’ like her own” {Elpis Israel, Page 114; 14th ed.: pages 127-128}. Again: “This heresy against the proper humanity of Christ is far more subtle

than the counterpart of it, which denies his proper divinity... for the 'sinful flesh' is as much an element of the divine Jesus as 'the Spirit'," (Christadelphian 1873, page 361).

18. Turney had been full of praise for the work of Dr. Thomas. He wrote in appreciation of him: "You know I have held him as the only man commanding my full and entire admiration... he hears no more the voice of his traducers, and his work is finished. I hope he will be stronger in his death than he was in his life. I hope that those who hold the grand truths he discoursed will redouble their efforts to spread them far and wide, so that when he gets up again, he will rejoice in their works... Well we are left and we must do our best to surprise the dear old man with joy when he wakes up again."

19. Brother Roberts commented sadly: "What will 'the dear old man's' surprise be when he gets up to find that Edward Turney, one of his strongest personal admirers, two years after his death, publicly 'renounced' his teaching on a vital element of the Mystery of Godliness, and before a large audience in Birmingham?"

What Was to be Done?

20. Three months had elapsed since the public promulgation of the new doctrine. Brother Roberts knew that if the Truth were to survive, matters must be brought to a head. He therefore sent a letter through the post to all the brethren and sisters in Birmingham. The letter contained a declaration of Truth believed, and an appeal which included the following:

21. "I therefore ask you to join me in a declaration of withdrawal from all who deny that Jesus Christ was God manifest in our mortal nature... My request is that if you agree with me you will sign and return the declaration which you will find at the end of this letter... I will ask you to meet me at the Athenaeum Rooms, on Thursday night, October 30th that our united declaration may be promulgated... It will be necessary to redraw ecclesial roll, that we may know who thereafter constitute the Birmingham ecclesia, on the basis of unadulterated truth." (Christadelphian, 1873. page 526).

The Outcome

22. The meeting was held as planned. Nearly 150 brethren and sisters responded to the invitation to sign the declaration. This meant dissolving the Birmingham Christadelphian body in a legal sense, and ordering an inventory of the funds, transferring of a proportionate share to those who wished to reform into an assembly on the basis of the new doctrine that emanated from Nottingham by E.W. Turney. The meeting resolved that "On the question of how those stand with God who have embraced the new heresy, they pronounced no opinion: they leave this with Him. Their only concern is their duty."

23. There were those who refrained from taking part in the withdrawal, who held the Truth themselves, but who were not clear as to their course of action at that time. There were also those among the errorists, who were violent, and declared they would disregard the withdrawal, and take their places and break bread as usual. Hence in The Christadelphian 1873, page 566, it was reported:- "It was therefore necessary in the interest of ultimate peace, and edification, to admit by ticket, to that part of the building where bread is broken. Those unprovided with tickets were allowed to be present in the gallery. Peace and truth are now restored to the assembly."

The Nottingham Ecclesia

24. In Nottingham, the seat of the errorists, the majority not only refused to withdraw from the Renunciationists, but passed a resolution (proposed by E.W. Turney) "That in future we meet on the basis of an uncondemned Christ." The minority, holding the Truth, and numbering about forty, withdrew and formed themselves into an ecclesia, meeting in another hall. This involved a sacrifice on their part, for Nottingham ecclesia was probably the first meeting in England to build their own ecclesial hall. But they reported:- "We feel that the severe trial through which we have passed has had a beneficial effect upon us. We recognize even in this 'our Father's hand,' and our hearts rise in thankfulness that we are still on the side of the Truth" (ibid page 477).

25. However, good comes out of all adversity and challenge, to those in Christ, and whilst Brother Henry Sulley, a member of the Nottingham Ecclesia, lost the ecclesial hall he had designed in his professional capacity as architect, he gained his wife who now, as reported in *The Christadelphian* 1873, page 528, was “Sister Jane Sulley, wife of Brother Sulley, who since the division has kept aloof from both meetings, earnestly looking into the subject in dispute, and having come to the decision that we are in the right, and our position therefore a righteous one, she has allied herself with us.”

Epilogue

26. Letters of support came from the brotherhood far and wide. Sister Frazer of Huddersfield wrote “Only those who prayed that you would take up the Thirty-two questions, can understand how thankful we are that you did so. Daily we thank our heavenly Father for you...”

27. Brother Otter of Cheltenham wrote: “I am afraid this tract is calculated to much and serious injury, especially to weak brethren and those unaccustomed to dig below the surface. Permit me, dear brother, to again thank you... I hope that you are in health, that you are not downcast by any of the multifarious vexatious and trying experiences you must necessarily (in your position) be the subject of...” (ibid, page 358),

28. A rival magazine was started in opposition, but it fizzled out after a few years. However, the echoes of the clean flesh theory are seen today in the “Nazarene” publications and kindred magazines since Edward Turney died in 1879.

29. Brother Roberts endured a severe illness following this controversy, necessitating recuperation in a rest establishment. Even from here he continued to write, dictating one very interesting article on “Twenty-One years Waiting and Watching, and at it Still.”

30. Echoes of the first century Clean Flesh Theory, are with us today. Brother Thomas expressed it well; “But as a last resort against all this, the doctors of the apostasy fall back upon the saying of Gabriel, in Luke 1:35, that the child to be born of Mary was a ‘holy thing’, and consequently of an immaculate nature. But they forget that all firstborns of Israel were ‘holy things.’ Jesus was Yahweh ‘s firstborn by Mary; and therefore one of the firstborn of the nation... Hence the holiness of Mary’s babe was not of nature, but of constitution by law... Christ made sin, though sinless, is the doctrine of God” (ibid, pages 361-362). Again in *Eureka*, volume 1: “... the character of Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, without spot or blemish, or any such thing; but his flesh was like our flesh in all its points - weak, emotional and unclean.”

31. It remains for us to be eternally vigilant, for the winds of false doctrine will continue to blow about us until the coming of the Master, who will again, as in the days of his ministry, say to the winds and the sea “Peace, be still” (Mark 4:39).

Stan Snow (Logos).

* * * * *

In reply to this article Brother John Stevenson wrote:

Dear Brother Stan, Your article “Nottingham Revisited” considerably disquieted me because of what I perceive to be prejudices and gross inaccuracies. You said you had all the Nazarene literature; I would be most interested in what you do have and how you got it, because it is evident that you have not apprehended the facts of the dispute. Admittedly I have not seen the reports in “*The Christadelphian*” of 120 years ago, edited by Robert Roberts, but I hope to acquire and study them. From the other side of the fence, it seems to me that R. Roberts was arrogant and callous, like the late Percy Mansfield, and that he would go to any lengths to suppress a point of view he did not agree with. One particularly worrying aspect of your article is that “Logos” would never permit any questioning or reply to your prejudiced account, because of “the dangers of publicly airing any problems within Christadelphia” (current Ecclesial Calendar, page 6),

In the latest Exposition, page 165, middle of left column: “When reason and logic fail, many antagonists rely on distortion and misrepresentation in order to achieve their purpose.” This applies very

often to “Logos,” and especially to your article. I enclose two booklets; “The Gospel That Is Never Preached,” and “Christadelphians, Their Dilemma Exposed” to give you a glimpse of some refreshing concepts that “Logos” and “The Christadelphian” would never permit their readers to see.

The date of the lectures is in doubt; I have been reliably informed that they were in July, not August. Is there any means of verifying the actual month? (*see footnote - Ed)

I am quite confident that it was Edward Turney who challenged Robert Roberts to a debate, and the latter refused, choosing rather to give his views in “The Slain Lamb” lecture the next night. In the 120 years since then, Christadelphians have refused to hear us or allow us to be heard. Most of Nazarene Fellowship members were excommunicated from an ecclesia for not upholding the B.A.S.F., without any semblance of a fair hearing or discussion, because Christadelphians are unable to debate or discuss our concepts, or answer our criticisms of Sinful Flesh theory or Defiled Christ precept.

Don’t you think that Robert Roberts’ decision to issue tickets for the Lord’s Table to exclude “errorists” says a lot about his convictions and his personality? Do you think John Thomas would have approved? And would the Lord Jesus condone such high-handedness? I feel that no-one has the right to be so judgmental in these matters, as to cast out a brother on fine points of contentious doctrine. In the Christadelphian body, that custom began with Robert Roberts when he could not face Edward Turney in debate.

As you rightly said, this will all become clear at the Judgment Seat, but if one cannot tell right from wrong before then, one is indeed in trouble

I wish you well in health, and knowledge, and in service of the Lord,

John Stevenson.

* The date of Edward Turney’s lecture was Thursday, 28th August, 1873. Confusion arose when the date of Friday, 29th July 1873, was mistakenly given as the date of Robert Roberts’ lecture in his booklet “The Slain Lamb.”

- Editor.

Commentary by Brother Phil Parry on “Nottingham Revisited” by Stan Snow of Logos:

What bigotry that Stan Snow should presume that the “Logos element” of Christadelphians in Australia are in the true Faith which was once delivered to the Saints let alone boasting of upholding it!

This article relating what he has heard took place between Edward Turney and Robert Roberts, is based on his assumption that Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts had complete knowledge and understanding of the Truth concerning the nature of man, Jesus Christ, the sin of Adam and its effects, and the purpose of Christ’s sacrifice.

This is what Christadelphians glibly describe as “The Truth” but is not, for both these men were in error on much of the Spirit’s teaching.

From what is contained in this article, and what is stated in Zechariah 8:16, “Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates; and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate saith the Lord,” I can hardly accept that any who have contributed matter in the compilation of the article about Edward Turney and his views of 1873, could have read his lecture “The Sacrifice of Christ” delivered on August 28th 1873 in the Temperance Hall, Birmingham, and produced in booklet form by A.L. Wilson of the Nazarene Fellowship and reprinted by F.J. Pearce, for I find too many inaccuracies and misrepresentations in this Logos article of what Turney said of the events prior to the lecture, and the lecture itself.

Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," but to those who believed on Him, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," John 8:31,32.

Jesus at that time was the Way, the Truth and the Life. Therefore to be in the Truth we must be in Him. But we must know the Truth first so that the Truth may be in us. The expression "In the Truth" means therefore, to be "In Christ" through His word, not the part truths of Dr.Thomas and Robert Roberts, "Elpis Israel," "Slain Lamb," etc.

The first paragraph of Anthony Hone's article is thus declared void in that Christadelphians lost in 1873 much of the teaching of Dr.Thomas which was scripturally true but replaced by the doctrine of "sin-in-the-flesh."

Re: the second paragraph. The Christadelphian, October 1873 reporting that E.W.Turney and W.H.Farmer had renounced the fact that Jesus Christ was God manifested in our "condemned nature," for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself. Certainly and rightly so, they renounced the false doctrine of "condemned nature" not only in respect of Jesus but of all men, but they did not deny that Jesus had come in the flesh. Read again 1 John 4:1- 3 and you will see who really is anti-christ, for John says nothing about "condemned flesh," so verse 3 applies to those who accept the adding to and manipulation of the word of the Spirit. They are the spirits of anti-christ which the Logos identifies itself and its members with. God did not condemn Adam's flesh nor change it - God condemned Adam's disobedience. Changed and condemned nature was an invention of the Papacy having no evidence in Scripture when it was suggested for acceptance to both Dr. Thomas and R. Roberts; yet, with no evidence but that of the Papacy, Thomas and Roberts went over to that teaching which they allowed to contradict their words to David Handley, "There was a change in Adam's relationship to his Maker but not in the nature of his organization." Dr.Thomas and R.Roberts pre. 1873.

Edward Turney in his lecture, substantiated these latter statements of Thomas and Roberts and declared his willingness to assist Roberts in preaching the Gospel containing the truth he and Thomas had discarded for the doctrine of the Papacy. Roberts proved himself and subsequently his followers, as anti-christ by enjoining upon them his creed involving Clause V, i.e., that Jesus did not come in a likeness of the flesh of Adam when created, but in "condemned nature" with a bias and inclination to sin which was not in Adam's flesh at his creation. How then did Adam manage to sin? This was part of Turney's appeal to reason, but Roberts would none of it and was instrumental in preventing Turney from using the Athenaeum Rooms, then had the cheek to think he was in order to ask questions in the Temperance Hall paid for by W.H.Farmer.

The Truth Scarcely Saved. What truth so dearly won in the investigations of Dr. Thomas could be submerged by E.Turney if Turney was trying to revive what Thomas and Roberts first believed, namely, that Jesus had come in flesh which was identical with that of Adam at his creation and after he sinned?

Turney did not believe the Gnostic fables which really taught that Jesus did not come in actual material flesh but in a higher nature more in keeping with the Angelic. This is what John termed anti-christ for the simple and scriptural reason that Jesus took not on Him the nature of Angels but was made of the seed of David (Mary) according to flesh so that in the very nature or flesh in which Adam sinned he could demonstrate that obedience to God was possible and thereby in being tempted and tried in all points as Adam was and we are, He could justify His heavenly Father in condemning Adam's sin.

If Jesus had been alienated from God by Adam's sin, and needed redemption and reconciliation, He would not have been in a position to do any more for Adam and his posterity than would a John the Baptist or a Nathaniel.

This is what E.Turney was contending for and what the Nazarenes believe and teach. If the Law of the Spirit of Life was not in Christ as Son of God, He was powerless to make anyone free from the Law of Sin and Death. Yet Paul could say Jesus had done so for him and left him still alive in flesh and blood nature. (Romans 8:1,2).

Apart from the statement about the Gnostics falsely directed at Turney, the remainder of the paragraph concerning his views are true and it was mainly the dictatorial pressurising by Roberts of his brethren that weakened the success Turney had gained for them.

If the doctrines of "The Slain Lamb" lecture were declared from Christadelphian platforms today I am sure their audiences would recoil in horror of such blasphemy, but this is obscured until after a candidate is captured by his or her acceptance of the coming of Christ and the Kingdom of God teaching.

Standing For The Faith. I know all the facts leading up to the Roberts and Turney affair but I am unaware of what R.Roberts said in Ireland to cause the turmoil and threatening behaviour toward him and throwing rotten eggs.

To a certain extent I can understand this happening in Ireland if it happened to be a predominantly Roman Catholic section, for like Christadelphians they are so indoctrinated with Papacy teaching and traditions of men, that opposition, if right, is out of the question. I have read somewhere that some Nazarenes met with violent opposition from Christadelphians in the Birmingham area when distributing leaflets contending for Truth. I know that some years ago R. Roberts was jeered and booed when speaking in Cinderford, Gloucestershire, a town 5 miles from my home. It may have been by reason of his dictatorial attitude in both cases, I don't know, but I do know that members of his own family regarded him as highly strung and dictatorial in temperament.

The Division "In view of the danger of the Truth being again lost, Brother Roberts, notwithstanding ill health and weakened condition, was resolved to give his life to preserve it. But for this I care not, if the Truth be saved. I will die, if necessary, in the attempt to stem this tide of corruption which is streaming in and sweeping away the brethren."

What Truth is he describing in so violent fashion? It is that which he caused to be the Basis of Faith for his brethren, the doctrine of the Apostasy of Rome, "Changed and condemned flesh full of sin," as contained in Clause V and the other Clauses of the B.A.S.F. and is very much under attack from certain sections in Australia, "The Small Voice" magazine being one of the strongest.

I must remind the writer of this article that although Dr.Thomas did revive sections of Truth, he also discarded some of those for the errors Edward Turney and the present day Nazarenes are contending against. And what you are still doing is continuing the Satanic work begun by R.Roberts in misrepresenting our teaching, not perhaps intentionally, but because you and many more have not the true spirit of discernment or are not meant to see these truths.

And it may be that God allows such controversies of lies and false accusations started by R.Roberts in 1873 to continue the zeal for His Honour, His Son and His Word by the people whom He has predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.

I am convinced that the following so-called helpers in your defence of what you glibly call the Truth have not read the whole of "Elpis Israel," "Herald of the Kingdom," "Phanarosis," or "Eureka", nor "The Visible Hand of God" by Roberts especially on the subject of Enoch. So I fail to see from what they wrote, how R.Roberts had any help from them in defending the Truth as Jesus and His apostles taught it; they were defending his erroneous teaching and false accusations which he levelled against E.Turney without examining what Turney taught. Take the first example:

Brother Smith (Edinburgh): This man could be said to be writing against his own community on account of his own ignorance of the rituals of the Mosaic Law and the letter to the Hebrews explaining their meaning. He says, "I have been struck by the very partial and limited view they take of the Scriptures. They almost entirely ignore the typical parts of the Word — In that typical system the High Priest offered for himself and the people. In offering for himself it was as High Priest and not merely as a man." What he goes on to say of the future is very debatable in regard to Israel in the Lord. But if he is talking from Hebrews 7:27 as typical of Christ as a Priest offering for his own sins first and then the people, he stultifies himself by his own limited view and ignoring the typical parts of the Word. Hebrews 7:27 speaks of the High Priest offering for his own sins first, and then offering for the sins of the people. Firstly, Jesus could not be a Priest while on earth - Hebrews 8:4 - and secondly Jesus had no sins, so how could He offer for

them while on earth when The High Priest and rulers of the Jews could not convict Him of sin. Who then is taking the very partial and limited view of the Scriptures, yea, in preference for those of R.Roberts, rather than the Spirit inspired Apostles of Jesus who gave them for that reason?

Brother McKillop (Leith), for the Ecclesia: Representing his Ecclesia, this man states, “We are determined to remain old Christadelphians, in the strict sense of the term — and we repudiate the doctrine hatched in Maldon, and promulgated from Nottingham.” Let me say that an old Christadelphian is old only in as far as he holds the doctrines taught by the man who adopted that name, and actually that man Dr.Thomas was first responsible for the very doctrines “hatched at Maldon and promulgated from Nottingham.” Any person who has the booklet “The Sacrifice of Christ,” by Edward Turney, and circulated by the Nazarenes can read for themselves what David Handley of Maldon wrote in a letter to Robert Roberts to insert in “The Christadelphian” if he chose.

If Christadelphians have so much faith in the writings of Dr.Thomas they should read what he writes on the redeeming blood of Christ and the actual meaning of Redemption. Edward Turney praised him for this as stated in this Stan Snow article, so I need not repeat it. But I would request you read “Eureka,” Volume 1, page 278, referring to life in the blood, not character in the blood. Also “Eureka,” volume 1, page 20, and bottom paragraph giving the scriptural meaning of Redemption which Edward Turney supported and for which he was falsely accused by R.Roberts, and is still accused in our day by the “Logos” element who are in my view the counterpart of those whom Jesus addressed in John 9:31-39, for in this article they boast in the teaching of Dr. Thomas yet on the subject of Redemption they oppose him.

I myself am sorry that Dr Thomas taught error on other subjects and contradicted himself, nevertheless I appreciate he was not inspired.

Sister Hage (Bilsthorpe): I am not sure what she means by “The Review” for which she thanks Brother Roberts, so I cannot comment on it. I only wish it was “The Review of The Slain Lamb Lecture” by F.J.Pearce. This Review of “The Slain Lamb” shows E.Turney’s complete understanding of the subject, also it is in print that Turney told Roberts to his face that Roberts did not understand the subject, and not only so but he would debate with him. If, as Sister Hage says, Turney’s views were his own and not from the Bible, then those of Dr. Thomas must have been his own, since Turney was expounding the views of Dr. Thomas on this subject.

Brother Bairstow (Halifax): This man is completely out of his depth on this matter of flesh as a physical condition and a legal position. Scripture defines the difference, and Paul defines the difference in the very chapter, Romans 7 of his Epistle.

Even Dr. Thomas stated that Paul here was referring to himself in the past as an unregenerated Jew unconverted to Christ and therefore “in the flesh” the exact opposite of “in the spirit,” Romans 8:8-10. How can Mr Bairstow be so foolish to think that in Romans 7:18 Paul was speaking of himself as a converted believer in Christ having no idea of how to perform that which is good? Paul, who after his Baptism received by revelation direct from the risen Christ the messages he was chosen to take to both Jews and Gentiles!

No, my friends, the flesh is only termed unclean in a legal sense and pertains to the conscience, so that legal cleansing under Divine Law means conscience cleansing. Think of all the churches Paul established, how incredible and unbelievable of a man who knew not how to perform that which is good! Yet this is what the Logos wants us to accept as “The Truth.” Paul says, “I am crucified with Christ (Baptism) nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” Was Christ “no good thing” dwelling or living in Paul?

If therefore Stan Snow, you have any reply in favour of what you believes to be The Truth on the subject of the nature of Adam from his creation until his death as a creature of the dust, also the reason for the sacrifice of Christ from the standpoint of the inspired word of God in the Bible record, I would like to have it through whatever channel you choose.

Let me add in conclusion. In some respects the Nazarene teaching has progressed from what E.Turney believed as a Christadelphian, for example, the death Adam incurred by sin which would have involved, not

a waiting for natural decay to take its ordained period of 930 years, but the inflicting of death by the taking away of life when sin occurred. Turney ultimately arrived at the truth of this when writing the booklet "The Two Sons of God," a truth that made the ritual sacrifices under the Law and the Atoning work of God in Christ simple and clear to the unbiased seeker of Truth.

I implore you therefore, to consider these things on account of Him who loved us and suffered, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God.

Brother Phil Parry.

Commentary by Brother Russell Gregory:

I would like first of all to say that neither Brother Phil Parry nor I had seen the others commentaries but that each of us have made our observations on Stan Snow's article entirely independent of the other.

The general impression I have after reading the article by Stan Snow is one of extreme bias. Robert Roberts is portrayed as the "Hero" and Edward Turney as the "Villain." Events are presented in a way which are inaccurate to say the least and statements made which are unfounded.

It is very sad indeed that this type of reporting has continued for so long by Christadelphian writers. They deceive themselves and their readers and seem interested only in upholding Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts even when shown to be in error, than in seeking the Truth of Scripture. Robert Roberts could and did, in writing "The Slain Lamb" misrepresent what Edward Turney was contending for. As one small example will show; Robert Roberts stated that Edward Turney believed Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh; he knew this was not true, yet he wrote it! This is still being said of the Nazarene Fellowship today, and it is still untrue. For years we have endeavoured to put the record straight but have made very little progress against the defamatory remarks made against us and fostered by so many leading Christadelphian writers. Whenever Christadelphian writers face squarely our teaching regarding the Atonement they are unable to counter it with sound reasoning from Scripture, and if they were able to show our teaching was not in accordance with Scripture, we would change it without hesitation.

If Stan Snow had read the Nazarene Fellowship literature he claims to know so much about he would know that it was Edward Turney who challenged Robert Roberts to debate before the brethren and sisters in Birmingham in 1873 and it was Robert Roberts who refused take him up. Indeed Edward Turney asked Robert Roberts to meet him in debate on several occasions but he would never accept the challenge. Robert Roberts was an accomplished orator and could sway his audience with high sounding and pious words and as a newspaper reporter by occupation, in writing he could do the same; he knew how easy it was for the unthinking to be talked over to his point of view.

Reading through the letters to Robert Roberts written during August to October in the 1873 "Christadelphian," fills my heart with sorrow to see how he was praised for his lecture "The Slain Lamb;" how his readers were taken in by his misleading use of words; his arguments sounded plausible but were often contradictory and badly reasoned through. He had a way of writing what his readers wanted to believe - that what they had always believed was alright. But his own contradictions and those of Dr. Thomas should have warned them there was something wrong, for Scripture teaching does not contradict itself.

Turning to specific points in Stan Snow's article, regarding paragraph 3, I quote Robert Roberts own words where he wrote:-

"Our friend (David Handley) imagines there was a change in the nature of Adam when he became disobedient. There is no evidence of this whatever... and the presumption and evidence are entirely the opposite way. There was a change in Adam's relation to his Maker, but not in the nature of his organization... The phrase "Sin-in-the-flesh" is metonymical. It is not expression of a literal element or principle pervading the physical organization. Literally sin is disobedience, or the act of rebellion."

This view of Robert Roberts echoed that held by Dr. Thomas years earlier and it was this view which Edward Turney developed further in his lecture, "The Sacrifice of Christ," in 1873. By which time Dr. Thomas had died and Robert Roberts and David Handley had reversed their positions with David Handley

believing what Robert Roberts had told him, while Robert Roberts himself reverted to the Church doctrine of Original Sin.

We ought to remember that at this time there were many people expressing new views regarding Bible teaching and Dr. Thomas was not alone in his searching for better understanding for he lived in an age of great activity and research into Bible truths. Consequently we find that there were many denominations springing up, all with a measure of "Truth." Whilst it may be said that Christadelphians had more of the Truth than others it cannot be assumed that they had all the Truth, nor that their understanding of all Bible teaching was complete. We have high regard for the work of Dr. Thomas in respect of his efforts and for the keeping of his promise in devoting himself to his quest for the Truth, and in his searching he was well blessed, but the uncovering of the Truth in these last days has been progressive and we cannot make the claim that we have it all; but neither does it mean that we should settle for what Dr. Thomas and Robert Roberts believed as the Truth over 100 years ago.

Regarding the 4th and 5th paragraphs; the report of events leading up to Edward Turney's lecture, I would like here to quote at length from the Introduction to Turney's book, "The Sacrifice of Christ":-

"If envy and malice had not been hard at work to misrepresent my mode of procedure, there had been no occasion for this explanation as to origin of my lecture in the Temperance Hall, Birmingham. It is the consequence of the extraordinary behaviour of Mr Roberts and his repeated mis-statements, that I feel it incumbent upon me to inform the brethren why I went to Birmingham on such an errand. Some days before the 22nd August, I received letters from brethren in Birmingham desiring me to go there and give some explanation of this "New idea" concerning Christ.

I was informed that many were anxious to hear me. Mr Roberts, it was stated, was doing his best to suppress my writings on this subject which I also knew to be true. There is a time, however, for everything. But, Mr Roberts, it would appear not being able to "discern this time," and perhaps forgetting that the Holy Office of the Inquisition is now closed, his attempted revival of literary proscription answered my purpose not amiss, urging forward that very publicity and freedom which seemed to bring on him "wailing and gnashing of teeth."

The invitation to which I have referred was not of my seeking: in fact it was quite unexpected, and when it did come I had very little idea whom I should meet. After accepting the pressing request of the Birmingham brethren, Dr. Hayes and Bro. Farmer agreed to accompany me."

Edward Turney goes on to report of his first meeting at which about twenty brethren and sisters had gathered. This meeting eventually "broke up a little before midnight," He then continues:-

"In a few days afterwards I received several letters from brethren present stating that the meeting as a whole were convinced that what I had taught was true and scriptural... An urgent request was made for me to deliver a lecture to as many of the Birmingham brethren as could be got together on the subject of "The Sacrifice Of Christ." I was distinctly informed in writing that I must consider the meeting entirely in my hands- This being so I requested Dr. Hayes to take the chair, and he consented.

I was also informed in writing that it was chiefly that portion of the Birmingham meeting who had come to me on 22nd, that would pay for the Hall... but the reader will very likely ask, why this lecture was not delivered in the Athenaeum Rooms, seeing that the brethren alone were allowed to be present? This is the answer. Mr Roberts holds the Athenaeum Rooms in his own name, though he does not of course pay all the rent himself. A number of brethren wished him to grant them the use of the room, and were so anxious that, as before stated they preferred to pay for the use of it. What was the reply of this good and valiant man, this mighty warrior who is ever ready to let m a foe in order to display his prowess in putting him to flight? Oh, this was quite another matter! "No! never! Not while I hold the place shall the wolf enter here."

Edward Turney then further reports:

“Up to the moment of going on the platform I was told that the meeting was mine: and that the man who courageously bolted the Athenaeum doors against me was doing his utmost to “neutralize” the effect of the lecture. He had for nights been declaiming against me, and against my doctrine. And although he knew perfectly well that he and his friends had not taken the Temperance Hall and would not have to pay for it, he had the singular audacity to request that the brethren would grant him the privilege of putting all the questions to me on Thursday night assuming that questions would be allowed. Yes, says he, there was an overwhelming majority for this. No doubt.

But did this overwhelming majority hire the Hall, and pay for it? Did this “overwhelming majority” invite me to deliver the lecture? And was it not my would-be interrogator that had refused me a door of utterance? Will any sensible person not see that under these circumstances it was not exactly strange that at my lecture I deliberately ignored the authority of the man who kept out the “wolf.” What else should he expect, except a severe rebuke for his incivility, if I condescended to notice him at all?

During the lecture I was occasionally compelled to administer a reproof. The whole assembly conducted itself in a most exemplary manner for the whole of the two hours and a half, but the Editor disgraced himself about a dozen times by attempted interruption. Now in conclusion of this explanation what does Mr Roberts say of the meeting of the 22nd August and the lecture on the 28th? He says that I ran away from him at Nottingham. He insinuated distinctly that I knew he would be absent from Birmingham on the 22nd, and therefore I took the opportunity of holding a hole and corner meeting, as one of his partisans styled it, and that the lecture of the 28th was an underhand affair. Is it worthwhile for me to put myself to the trouble of saying that these statements are entirely untrue? They are only put forth to make a show of courage; but it is doubtful from the evidence soon to be before the reader whether they are not after all, but the empty boasts of faint-hearted conceit.”

With this evidence before us we can see from those present in 1873 how they looked upon Robert Roberts as a “dictator” and not always moved by the spirit of love. But even today he is regarded as “infallible” by some.

Regarding paragraph 6, every point of Turney’s is scriptural and a right understanding of Genesis 2:17 proves it. This has been thoroughly dealt with in our booklet, “The Usage and Meaning of ‘Muth Temuth’ and ‘B’Yom’,” and readers may wish to refer to my letter in reply to Brother E.R.Harding printed elsewhere in this Circular Letter.

Paragraph 12 is extraordinary! “Robert Roberts has been the means to prevent its (the Truth’s) annihilation under attack from the Satan.” How differently we see people. In the previous paragraph we have the boasting of an arrogant man, a self-styled “Saviour,” come to “stem this tide of corruption which is sweeping away of the brethren.” This reminds me of the self-styled “Watchman of the ecclesia” who instigated my removal from the Erdington Ecclesia; I was upset at the time but now see it as a great blessing of God and for which I cannot find how to give sufficient expression to my gratitude. How is it that those who exceed their authority are looked up to? Was Robert Roberts God’s chosen Oracle to prevent the annihilation of Truth?

Paragraph 13 is a portion of a letter written by a Brother Smith of Edinburgh and it reveals his lack of understanding of Hebrews 7 and assumes that Jesus Christ was in the position of an High Priest under Mosaic Law and needed to offer for Himself though denied in Hebrews 8:4.

The next letter, paragraph 14 is from a Brother McKillop of Leith, and whereas he states in the part of the letter reproduced in Stan Snow’s article, one portion left out shows that “the doctrine hatched in Maldon” had actually been around for some years! I quote from the letter as follows:- “The heretical contagion has not made any havoc in this region, and has not affected us as an ecclesia, and no doubt this is due to the controversy which took place here some years ago on the same subject, and which ended in a thorough ventilation of the whole matter.”

So why do not the Christadelphians give a “thorough ventilation of the whole matter” today? For our part we would insist on keeping purely to Scripture without reference to man’s doctrines and we would ask

them to do the same. Can they admit to the correct understanding of Romans 8:3 regarding “sinful flesh”? Can they refute what we claim as the right understanding of Genesis 2:17 meaning the literal day and the literal slaying; and of Hebrews 7:27, that this cannot be made to contradict Hebrews 8:4 and other Scripture. We challenge all who will on these three points of Scripture, for the wrong understanding on these three points is the sand on which Christadelphia has its foundations.

Regarding Sister Hage’s letter the “matter which is difficult at first...” was “how could Jesus be a sinner when he did no sin?” and she accepted Dr.Thomas’s answer to her that “Jesus was constitutionally a sinner.” But Jesus Christ cannot be considered a constitutional sinner until Sin-in-the-flesh is proven; till then adherents to this doctrine are deceiving themselves.

The next letter, that of Brother Bairstow of Halifax, again shows lack of understanding, this time with regard to Romans 7 and how the Apostle Paul was speaking of himself before he came to Christ. I am not sure whether we should sympathize with brethren of over 100 years ago in their lack of understanding but today such ignorance amongst would-be teachers of Truth is shameful. Let me quote here what Dr. Adam Clarke has to say: -

“It is difficult to conceive how the opinion could have crept into the Church, or prevailed there that the Apostle speaks here of his regenerate state; and that what was, in such a state, true to himself, must be true of all others in the same state. This opinion has, most pitifully and most shamefully not only lowered the standard of Christianity, but destroyed its influence and disgraced its character. It requires but little knowledge of the spirit of the Gospel, and of the scope of this Epistle, to see that the Apostle is here either personating a Jew under the Law and without the Gospel, or showing what his own state was...while without Christ.”

Paragraph 17 also displays a lack of understanding and Dr.Thomas is very much at fault here with the use of these quotations from Job. I quote now from our booklet, “To The Law and To The Testimony” from the section headed “The Misused Texts of Job” -

“Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?” - Job 14:4

“What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?” - Job 15:14.

“How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?” - Job 25:4.

These verses are also used to bolster up the Sin-in-the-flesh theory which brings Christ under the Adamic curse and condemns Him to death on account of the nature in which He was born. Surely this amounts to “counting the blood of the covenant, wherewith we were sanctified, an unholy thing.” It is argued that when Adam was created, his nature was very good, or clean, but that when he sinned his nature was changed, becoming physically defiled and unclean, and that as Jesus partook of the same flesh as Adam therefore His death was necessary to cleanse Himself from the nature in which God made Him. It has been proved conclusively in works which will be freely sent to anyone interested, that there is no support for this blasphemous assumption anywhere else in the Bible. Is there any proof in these passages from Job?

Firstly, it ought not to be taken for granted that the word clean refers to the physical flesh. Reference to any concordance will show that there are about 100 passages containing the word “clean,” eight of them in the book of Job and not once does it qualify the word “flesh.” Scripturally the word “clean” is used in a legal or moral sense and does not describe a quality of human flesh. People are clean or unclean by Law, without any alteration of the literal flesh.

This is sufficient of itself to dispose of the Sinful Flesh theory as unscriptural and one which ought to be cast out of minds supposed to be freed from apostate theology,

The right answer to these statements of Job is that all born of the will of the flesh are sinners or unclean when legally included in the bondage resulting from Adam's sin, which bears rule over them unto death, i.e., the doctrinal death appointed unto all men; and before they can become legally clean they must become the subjects of the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus- It is imperative that all, by faith and obedience, participate in Adam's redemption under the Ransom provided for man's salvation, by which they are set free from the Adamic condemnation and made clean and righteous.

That this is rightly dividing the word is abundantly evident in regard to the 2nd and 3rd texts from the parallelism:-

CLEAN : RIGHTEOUS

CLEAN : JUSTIFIED

If unclean flesh were involved there would be no point in the statements; and in regard to the first, the answer is that what man could not do, God did, by bringing forth His own Son to redeem those who as children of Adam, are born under the Law of Sin. "Now are ye clean through the word I have spoken unto you." How simple and harmonious is this with Paul's statements: -

"God hath showed me that I should not call any man (much less our Saviour) common or unclean." Acts 10:28.

This shows what poverty of argument there is to those who would endeavour to seek support from Scripture for "sin-in-the-flesh.

The oft quoted statement of Dr.Thomas that "sin could not have been condemned in the body of Jesus if it had not existed there," is sadly, an absurdity in itself, for sin was not condemned in the body of Jesus. Jesus condemned sin by being sinless and thus proving that human beings could resist all temptation if they will. He showed it could be done, for this He did while in the likeness of our flesh, and we too, can be perfectly obedient; the fact that we are not is our fault because we don't try hard enough. Indeed perfect obedience is what Jesus Christ asks of us - "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." Jesus overcame temptation by a means open to His humblest followers - the intelligent use of the Word of God - "It is written..."

We have shown many times and in many ways that flesh is not essentially unclean. Romans 8:3 reads: "...God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, condemned sin in the flesh." But "sinful" is not what the Apostle Paul wrote! A man can have a sinful character, that is to say he has a bad character but that does not make his flesh bad, or full of sin. But this word "sinful" in Romans 8:3 is not a true translation. A true translation of this sentence would read "God sending His Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin," that is, flesh belonging to sin, or the possession of sin. The Christadelphian theory reminds me of the story of Mr Green, the farmer, who lost a cow. Some Christadelphians found a green cow and immediately said "Eureka, we have found the green cow which the farmer has lost!" Ever since they have been mesmerized by this vision of their "Green Cow", "Sin-in-the-flesh". Some of us can see their error, that "Green" applies to the farmer's name and not to the colour of the cow, others, even when this fact has been pointed out, still pretend they know best!

The action of Robert Roberts reported in paragraph 2 proves it was he and not Turney who caused the division. He, Dr.Thomas, David Handley and many others had wavered for perhaps 15 or more years on this subject and if the matter had been talked through as it should have been, and properly aired before all the brethren and sisters instead of being suppressed and false reports given out, all would have ended well for the Truth, but the Christadelphians from the time of Robert Roberts have ever given false reports on the clean-flesh controversy and have done their level best to prevent their followers from knowing the truth of the matters contended for.

It is over 120 years since the incitement of this division by Robert Roberts and ever since there have been one or two here and there who have seen through the falsity of his teachings embedded in the Statement of Faith. During this 120 years many booklets and pamphlets have been written and circulated for the benefit of those with eyes to see and ears to hear the Spirit's teaching.

We appeal to all our Christadelphian friends to earnestly reconsider their position in relation to Bible teaching and the Statement of Faith. Have you considered why most of the Bible references given to support each Clause are, in fact, no support at all? Have you asked each other or the “elders” of your ecclesias where to find proof of “Sin-in-the-flesh,” or of Jesus Christ having to die for Himself, or of rising in corruptible bodies, or even giving a cogent reason for Christ’s crucifixion?

I urge you all to take to heart the message of Malachi 3:16-18; “Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of host, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”

Russell Gregory.

Stop Press 29.11.96

Dear Russell, Warm Greetings in Jesus’ Name. Sister Rene and I would like to express our sincere appreciation through the Circular Letter (if not too late), for your untiring efforts in the cause of spreading the Truth of the Gospel in various methods you have used and which have proved expensive. May the Lord bless your continued work and labour of love in His vineyard for which there is great reward.

Phil Parry.

“Now the God of peace...make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”