

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No 229

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EDITORIAL

Dear Brothers and Sisters and Friends.

Loving Greetings. Recently I read a piece in a magazine about Jesus and the Church entitled "IF JESUS DID NOT EXIST, THE CHURCH WOULD NOT INVENT HIM" by a journalist who was an atheist and he was asking himself the question: did Jesus of Nazareth ever really exist? His reasons for deciding he did in fact exist were pertinent and interesting.

What particularly exercised him was whether the picture we have of Jesus today is close enough to the man who inspired it for us to say we know who he was. The journalist was convinced that we can. Why? Paradoxically, it is because, as he explained the Church founded in His name and the civilisations which have called themselves Christian have departed so fast and so far from Him, and come to stand for so much the opposite of everything Jesus was trying to teach, that He has never from the start been anything but a nuisance and a reproach to the movement He started. Yet, as the journalist rightly says, they have not been able to eradicate Him. Jesus is the fly in the Church's ointment. In the Church's 2000-year history, the character and teachings of Jesus are the bits that don't match with the Church's teaching about him. Our friend describes "an annoying knot of gristle at the very centre of the Christian Church, and it is called Christ. It is indigestible and discomfiting and time and again it is pushed to the edge of the ecclesiastical plate, but it cannot be obliterated. It is not least for this that I, an avowed atheist feel such huge respect for Jesus." This atheist goes on to describe how he sees Jesus teachings and how at variance they are with Church teaching. It is an excellent exposition and I produce what he writes in full:

"If Jesus Christ had not existed, it would most certainly not have been necessary for the Church to invent someone like him. What does the Church want with a man who plainly despised ritual? Can you imagine the man who rode into Jerusalem on a donkey wanting anything to do with bells and smells and frocks, with gilt and silver and semi-idolatry, and repetitive chants and chorused inanities? The man who said he had come to break up families being paraded as a paradigm of family values? The man who had absolutely no interest in politics or administration and preached forgiveness, not "the rule of law," wanting anything to do with the Conservative party or the Third Way?

Can you imagine the man who made very little play of an 'afterlife' wanting to head an evangelical movement which trills continuously of Heaven and Hell? The man who made scant

reference to beauty, except to compare man's artistic efforts unfavourably with the lilies of the field, wanting to head a Church which vaunts itself as a patron of the arts? The man so contemptuous of material values placing himself in charge of the enormous wealth of the Church, or preaching Thacherite entrepreneurialism or socialist materialism?

When we consider all those counterintuitive sayings and parables - the Prodigal Son, the idea that it is no good restraining your actions if your thoughts are bad, the impatience with good works ("the poor always ye have with you") except as a means for personal purification - and when we consider how Jesus keeps saying (from the viewpoint of one with a Thought for the Day to compose) the wrong thing, it becomes ever clearer that he must have been real: if Jesus had been a hoax, the Church could have invented somebody so much more convenient. Every thing about Jesus says: Do what is right and leave the consequences to God. In all this delicious disharmony with the Church that professes to follow him lies powerful proof that Jesus existed."

We can add to our friend's list of injunctions given by Jesus and the Almighty Himself and that the Church studiously ignores. Do not kill. The Church involves itself with war and the military on many occasions. But of course the Church is hopelessly compromised because it is part of the Establishment and the Establishment owes all allegiance to the Government of the day and as we well know both groups are the seats of corruption and criminality.

The wonder of all this is that while professing to love Jesus and follow him, the Church ignores almost everything he said that is contained in the Bible. And the Bible is the only place that records Jesus' sayings and actions, there is nothing about him anywhere else. In order to counteract these little difficulties the Church invents doctrines convenient for itself. Doctrines that have no place in the Bible such as Original Sin, Heaven and Hell as destinations and purgatory, etc. etc., No careful and discerning Bible student has any truck with these potty notions. It is easy to despair about all this, but then we remember that Jesus Himself foresaw the situation: "Many will say to me in that day Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:22v23.

"If ye keep my commandments ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." John 15. 10.

Love to all. Helen Brady.

“HOW ARE THE DEAD RAISED UP AND WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?”

Dr Thomas the pioneer of the Christadelphian community wrote that they come forth from the grave in the same nature they entered into it. This same community believes there is sin in their flesh and that it is condemned, but the Scriptures do not reveal it to me no matter where I look.

If therefore they are under condemnation now, they will be under condemnation when they rise according to Dr John Thomas. Where then is the point of a judgment seeing the condemnation is still present and baptism has not removed it from the flesh?

If my memory is correct I believe Dr Thomas wrote in his booklet "Anastasis"^(*) that the dead will rise in recreated bodies from the dust like Adam's at Creation and they, together with the responsible living at Christ's coming will stand before the judgment seat of Christ as to whether they are approved or not. Here is the confusion. There was no sin in Adam's nature at his creation, so these new created bodies of the same nature would have no sin in them, but the others alive at Christ's coming would by reason of the fact they believe it to be so until changed after the judgment if approved.

(*) This reference reads: “What then is necessary that Paul’s words come to pass? Manifestly, that the saints reappear in mortal bodies; so that, when they have come forth corruptible and mortal, “this corruptible” may “put on incorruption,” and “this mortal” may “put on immortality,” by the Spirit or power of Deity, who quickens.” - Anastasis, page 29. (Editor)

Neither Dr Thomas’ views or theirs who follow his teaching can harmonise with the words of Jesus in John 5:24, “Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation (the second death judgment) but is passed from death (the first death) to life.”

Please note that the death to pass from is the death that came by sin, not the common death by creation from the dust.

Imagine Dr Thomas and Robert Roberts standing side by side at what they believe to be the judgment of separation of the good from the bad. The Thomasites being judged in bodies like Adam’s at his creation, very good and without sin under law at the time. The Robertsites standing in bodies of sin-condemned nature according to Clause V of the B.A.S.F. and would include the “Remnant,” the “Logos” and others of like belief. If Dr Thomas was right, the dead who rise first like Adam at his creation would be living souls in corruptible nature and without sin as was Adam; how then could they be amenable to judgment?

“Anastasis” has been proved wrong by various writers but I don’t think my view as related was mentioned but I have stated it in a previous Circular Letter some while ago. We should not insult the intelligence of the Corinthian believers who were taught of Paul and therefore of God. They believed Paul when he said the dead shall be raised incorruptible and the living changed, but Paul was not writing this to those with present day Thomas’ and Roberts’ beliefs; they rightly divided the words of Paul based on the Scriptures of the Prophets. I ask, How can you daily readers of the Bible pass over the faith of Job 14:12-14; Isaiah 64:4, Isaiah 26:18-21, Daniel 12:2,3 and the large list in Hebrews 11, all awake to everlasting life having obtained a good report through faith? I have great respect for Dr Thomas where truth is to his credit but sadly he made many mistakes in his books but I cannot respect Robert Roberts to the same extent.

I am sure that those who read and respect our Circular Letters will not be gnashing their teeth at what I have written, but it could certainly induce them to remind others of the confusion caused by the precepts of men uninspired. That humble shepherd Edward Turney tried to lead the sheep to better pastures but the wolf was already there in sheep’s clothing to bar his way by misrepresentation in calling Edward Turney the wolf. (The Athenaeum Rooms – “The wolf shall not enter here” – R.Roberts).

Now concerning the question “How are the dead raised up and with what body do they come?” the Corinthian believers had been taught by Paul and needed not to ask such a question as faithful servants of Jesus and not only so it was the first resurrection at the coming of Jesus they were referring to – the blessed and holy on whom, the “second death” hath no power. Paul says they rise incorruptible; Jesus says “Lo, I come quickly and my reward is with me to give to every man according as his work shall be.” This indicates future work serving Jesus in his Kingdom as a gift or reward through faith; the one receiving it is already incorruptible with the others of faith. It reminds me of the parable of the talents – “Have thou authority over one, five or ten cities.”

I said earlier that the epistles were written to true believers. Jude exhorts such to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints but this is impossible if one does not know and understand the doctrine which motivates that faith. Of those that do, Jude says it is them that are sanctified by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ and called. Jesus said, “My doctrine is not mine but His that sent me.” That is the doctrine taught by his apostles not the doctrine which presents people before a judgment seat in sinful condemned flesh when it is character that is important, not physical flesh. Thus Jude addresses the sanctified ones “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever.” Amen.

To my fellow Nazarenes I repeat with Jude's words "Keep yourself in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference. And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire..."

I hope there are still some who will allow us to pull them out – our hands are stretched out still. Make it a New Year's resolution to hear us.

Love in Jesus to Brethren and Sister's and Friends.

Brother P.Parry.

P.S. The imbalance of Christadelphian teaching and error seems to be cropping up from time to time. The worst is in the B.A.S.F. which has resurrected dead, faithful and unfaithful before the judgment seat of Christ, the unfaithful rejected and consigned to the second death which is one thousand years after this judgment. In other words, the rejected Christadelphians live a further one thousand years in corruptible bodies until the second death. How can this be harmonised with 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"?

THE CURSE OF THE LAW.

Sundry objections having been raised to statements made in an article on the above subject, which appeared in the first number of this Periodical, we gladly avail ourselves of the present opportunity of explaining and vindicating what, was therein advanced.

1. No proof has yet been offered that it was a transgression of the Mosaic Law to hang or be hung on a tree; on the contrary, it is in effect admitted that there is no such enactment.

While we are not contending for a particular "form of words" in the case, we do object to the phrase, which has been so repeatedly made use of in the course of this controversy, namely, "The Mosaic Curse," just as if there was but one curse under the Law of Moses, and that curse was death. This fallacy is the basis of the objector's arguments and vitiates all his reasoning: he has not proven his premises.

In the case of Jesus the curse was not something that followed the hanging on a tree, but it was by His being placed in that ignominious position that He was "made a curse." The same remark applies to those who were hanged on a tree after being slain. The curse did not result in the hanging, but the hanging was the curse. "He that is hanged, is accursed of God." Deuteronomy 21:23. (margin, the curse of God).

To speak of a man who occupies that position, as "accursed" is therefore not equivalent to saying that a man was cursed, as the result of hanging on a tree. Neither is there the parallel between the curse in the case of Jesus, and that of those referred to as cursed in Deuteronomy 27, which it is sought to establish. In that chapter the curses are denounced against those who should break the law by committing some offence, and thereby render themselves liable to a penalty which varied according to the degree of guilt. Jesus had committed no offence, neither did He break the law by hanging on a tree. The placing of Him in that ignominious position was the act of His enemies, and thereby was He "made a curse," or an accursed one; though really not a malefactor, He was treated as if He had been the vilest of criminals. And if Jesus had not been thus ignominiously treated He could not have been accounted a person accursed, for being innocent of transgression, the law had no hold upon Him and could not condemn Him, inasmuch as He was obedient in all things even unto death. That Jesus was "made a curse" by hanging on a tree is clear from what the Apostle says in Galatians 3:13, for he there quotes the passage from Deut. already referred to as proof that such was the case.

Again, the curse denounced against the man who shall rise up before the Lord and build, the city Jericho, and the curse denounced upon “every one that hangeth on a tree” are not analogous. The objector has here failed to perceive the distinction which exists in the words used in the two cases, and has thus confounded things that differ. Jericho and all its inhabitants (with the exception of Rahab and those that were with her in the house) were separated or devoted to destruction on account of their iniquities, cursed in this sense. In Galatians 2:13, the Apostle uses the Greek word *καταρα* signifying simply curse, execration. “No man (says the Apostle Paul) speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed.” 1 Corinthians 12:3. In which place the word used is not *καταρα* but *αναθεμα*, answering to the Hebrew word *cherem*, which signifies to destroy utterly, also to separate anything absolutely from its common use or condition and to devote it to Jehovah, so as to be incapable of redemption. Jesus was not accursed in this sense, except indeed by those who did not speak by the Spirit of God. A penalty followed the curse in one case but not in the other. The man who should build Jericho was not only denounced as accursed, but adds Joshua, “he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.” Josh. 6:26. This terrible threatening was literally fulfilled in the days of Ahab, as recorded in 1 Kings 16:34. “In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son, Segub, according to the word of the Lord which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.”

The attempt to prove that Jesus infringed or broke the law is a complete failure; while to admit that He was an accursed one by the mode of His death is a totally different thing to believing that He came under the curse of the law by transgressing it. The death of Jesus was sacrificial and resulted neither from Adam’s sin nor from any transgression of His own. He voluntarily surrendered His life in obedience to the will of His heavenly Father, as He said: “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.” John 20:17, 18.

As to the charge of inconsistency, being based on false premises, it is of no account whatever.

2. In this paragraph the same mistake is made by the objector as in the former one. The man hanged was not cursed as the result of being hung, but the curse consisted in the hanging on account of the ignominy which attached to it. So great was this, that the body must be taken down and buried the same day. It is quite true that the curse fell on the one who was hanged and not upon the hangman, but this does not prove that the curse was the result of the hanging, neither does it prove that the curse was death. Hanging on a tree was extra to the sentence of death on a criminal as proven, by what is written in Deuteronomy 21:22, “And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree...” In the event of his being hung on the tree his body must not be allowed to remain all night upon the tree, but if put to death in some other way, burial the same day was not commanded. The curse applied in the one case, but not in the other. It is clear, therefore, that the curse was not death. The form of execution might be hanging on a tree, nevertheless the curse consisted, not in being put to death, but in the mode in which death was inflicted. But of this we shall have more to say when we come to the 4th paragraph.

3. It is indeed difficult to understand how Jesus could obey the will of God by infringing His law, and the difficulty has not been removed by the quotation made from Elpis Israel. The fact is that Jesus did not infringe the law of God. To say that He did is to make Him a transgressor and to bring Him under condemnation, which, in view of the many emphatic declarations contained in the Scriptures that He was without sin cannot for one moment be admitted. The supposition put forward does not meet the case of Jesus. He was not placed in such a position as to be compelled to break one law in order to pay obedience to another. Before the position assumed can be of any force it must first be proved that hanging on a tree was a transgression of the law of Moses. We repeat that the objector has not proven his premises.

It is not written, Galatians 3:13, that Jesus suffered the curse of the law, the statement there is that He was “made a curse,” which applies not to His death but to His hanging on the tree. Neither does the law say cursed is he that dieth on a tree, but cursed is he that hangeth on a tree.

The objection to the phrase “passive act” is not taken away by the statement that Jesus was “mentally active” nor is the expression “passive operation” any improvement on the phrase “passive act,” both are alike self-contradictory, illogical, and absurd. In the matter of crucifixion Jesus was passive and His enemies were

active. He might have resisted, but He did not resist either by word or act. “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of Angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?” Matthew 26: 53,54.

4. That hanging on a tree applied to the dead as well as the living is perfectly clear, and has already been proved. It is not an assumption but a fact, and here are some further illustrations in point. The five kings of the Amorites were delivered into the hand of Joshua by God, and therefore they were under sentence before judgment came upon them. Joshua slew them before they were hanged on trees, thereby shewing that the curse was not death, but hanging on a tree. (Joshua 10:5, 8, 10, 24, 26). These kings were not Jews, and not being under the Law of Moses could not be held as transgressors of it. The curse came upon Gentiles as well as upon Jews. Rechab and Baanah his brother were slain before they were “hanged up over the pool in Hebron,” nor were they slain irrespective of sentence against them, for David “commanded” them to be put to death. In this instance also it is manifest the curse was not death. (2 Samuel 4:9, 12). From the foregoing passages it is clear that the hanging on a tree was consequent on the sentence of death, or the being devoted to destruction. It was something additional, and therefore the curse itself could not be death. Were the curse in question death, the passage in Deuteronomy 21:22 would be made more forcible if it read, Cursed be every one that dieth on a tree.

That Jesus was hung on a tree before His death is most readily conceded. But the question is, was He cursed to death by the law as a transgressor? We answer, No, the curse in His case was not death but hanging on a tree. And this curse coming upon Him while alive only served to make the ignominy of it the greater.

5. To the charge of contradiction we plead not guilty. There may be an apparent but there is no real contradiction, the “extraordinary conclusion,” so called, is sufficiently explained in the answers to the eleven questions given below. It is asked,

1. Does not Galatians 3:10, show that all Jews were cursed by the law through not keeping it in every point?

Yes, all Jews except Jesus, who having kept the law in every point, could not be cursed by it as a transgressor.

2. Did not the full curse of the law come upon every one who failed to fulfil the Law in every point? (James 2:10).

This is in substance the same as the foregoing, and may be answered in the same way.

3. Was not the full curse of the law death?

Yes.

4. Was not then the curse, from which Jesus had to redeem the Jews, death?

Not Jews only, but Gentiles also. Galatians 3:22. Romans 11:32.

5. Would submission to a curse, anything short of death, have redeemed Jews from the curse of death?

It was necessary that Jesus should die in order to redeem both classes and not the one class more than the other.

6. If the curse of the law which Jesus underwent was that of hanging on a tree, how could that have redeemed Jews from death?

If Jesus had not been hanged on a tree He could not have been accounted an accursed one, or, “made a curse,” but it is not contended that the bare fact of His hanging on a tree redeemed any one from death.

7. If Jesus was cursed by the law as the result of being hung on a tree, why does the Apostle follow the statement that He was “made a curse,” by saying, “For it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree?” Is not this intended to explain by what, means the curse came?

Jesus was cursed, or “made a curse,” by the law in the way mentioned above, but this curse was not death. The quotation from Deuteronomy is in perfect harmony with our position, and destructive of that assumed by the objector.

8. Does not this show that Jesus was cursed simply through being hung on a tree?
No, because if He had not been previously accused and condemned He would not have been placed in such an ignominious position.
9. What other curse than death followed His hanging on a tree?
Death certainly followed His hanging on a tree, but His death was sacrificial and not the result of His being cursed by the law as a transgressor.
10. Was not the curse of the law suffered by Jesus, death?
Answered above.
11. And as this curse came upon Him while alive, was not His life claimed by the Mosaic Law before He died?
No.

Ergo, He did lay down a life free from condemnation.

S. G. HAYES.

Exhortation

“Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, that he was born blind, but that the work of God should be made manifest” (John 9:35).

It is a strong point with many that all the suffering, disease, and even death is the result of Adam’s sin, and that apart from that catastrophe all would be well, living in peace and tranquillity.

God made man upright and of very good human nature; He also gave him a soul of vast desires that burn within with restless fires, tossed to and fro his passions from vanity to vanity - and still all these gifts to man are not sin.

He must first take of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and overcome these passions by obedience to God’s command “Thou shall not...”

From what we know human nature the trial was too severe for Adam and Eve. He was a free agent, and as it was possible to obey the sin was his own; that sin did not change his nature. We can only conceive that it makes him a Godly man; his eyes were opened and he knew good and evil.

The fact that a good righteous man in the person of Abel was born to Adam and Eve soon after the offence disproves, in a measure, the ‘original sin’ theory that men could, having learned good and evil, live and be commended by God for their righteous acts.

No one need sin if they master the passion that lead to it – “When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin.” To look upon it and meditate upon it in the heart is the way in which sin is conceived and brought forth in the act.

Joseph’s courage is a unique example. “How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?”

Doubtless Adam was a better and humbled man after the fall – but what of the sin and suffering, disease, and blindness and imperfection, in human nature: would these things be if Adam had obeyed God?

God purposed first of all there should be the natural wherein man would experience good and evil, for in no other way would man develop a character acceptable to God. So we look upon evil, suffering and deprivation as a God-send for our good. What would have happened if there had been no sin? We are not told in Scripture, but we do know that no one sinned because the man was born blind.

Moses said “I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue. I am not eloquent.” “Who hath made man’s mouth and who maketh the dumb or deaf, or the seeing or the blind? Have not I the Lord?”

Why blame all these things on ‘original sin’?

If we can only receive all these of nature in the right perspective, we would see how necessary to the building up of character are things that seem to be against us. No doubt sin is the greatest evil, but there is a way in which God has consigned all men to disobedience that He might have mercy on all.

For an answer to this we should all study the Federal Principle and the gift of righteousness, that no flesh should glory in His presence - in all this the wisdom and love of God to man is shown and to be admired.

The sentence of death upon Adam was immediate and real, but there was a binding again in the lamb that was slain.

In Adam all are dead; in Jesus Christ all who will may live – “I pray you” says the apostle, “be reconciled to God.”

It is a false notion and a fool’s paradise to put all the blame of our own actions upon the false idea that owing to ‘original sin,’ which is also false, we must necessarily do wrong.

The notion is against all commands to do right; to be holy and to be dead indeed to sin.

Man must ever be responsible for what he believes and does; man is man and master of his fate - if this be illusion, why not everything? Doubly so in the light of what has been revealed in the Bible.

Fred Skinner.
(Sept. 1956)

An Exceeding Great Christadelphian Error.

Jesus said “If the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness.”!

With Dr Thomas off the scene in 1871, who with Edward Turney could have combined to prevent it, had Dr Thomas lived in 1873. It is quite possible the great shroud of darkness may not have covered the Christadelphian community, but even so there were some exceptions with the same ideas as Edward Turney. But that is not surprising to me for I came to the same conclusions, not from having heard of Turney, nor Robert Roberts “clean flesh” false accusation and this is how the false doctrines of Clause V of the B.A.S.F. came about, and darkness covered the people.

The idea of the common natural death being the penalty for Adam’s disobedience to God has always been in the majority on account perhaps of some thinking Genesis 3:17-19 was the “death penalty” for the sin. Yet Adam called his wife’s name Eve, meaning “the mother of all living” not the mother of all dying, and she and Adam were spared the taking away of their natural life, and Adam understood this through what

God did for them by the shed blood of the lamb. But please note, the life in the blood of the lamb was not the life in the blood of a human being which had been forfeited by sin; the lamb was not under law for obedience and could not be classed as a sinner. This was the position of Jesus when He died on Calvary's Tree, the Just for the unjust or as I would rather put it, 'The Just for the unjustified.'

Having said that I would now analyse clause V. It states that God placed Adam in the garden of Eden under a Law whereby the continuance of his life was contingent on obedience; "Adam broke this Law and was adjudged unworthy of immortality, and sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken; a sentence which defiled and became a physical law (or organisation) of his being (nature) and was transmitted to all his posterity."

The Genesis record does not say that he was adjudged unworthy of immortality but it does logically imply that he was unworthy of continuance of life, which is true and also God did not defile Adam – his own guilty conscience defiled him, in character, not in physical nature. This is the doctrine of Apostate Rome of hereditary compulsive sin, a misconception and a misapplication of St Paul's fifth chapter of Romans.

Another Clause (VI) of the B.A.S.F. states "That God, in His kindness, conceived a plan" whereby He could "rescue the race from destruction..." To use R. Roberts words of Edward Turney – "What a marvellous piece of newborn wisdom!"

In Clause V Robert Roberts has consigned Adam and his posterity to destruction believing natural death to be the penalty for Adam's sin. This being so, how can the dead avail themselves of any hope of rescue when they are not alive to know how it is to be accomplished? The truth is that God's plan was already conceived before Adam was placed in the garden of Eden and was centred around His only begotten Son, a second Adam who would perform His will and was foreshadowed in the types and rituals from Eden to Calvary (Jesus, the Lamb of God) whom Clause V asserts must die to cleanse His own defiled condemned nature!

An ex-Christadelphian (whom I now doubt to be such) writes to me and insists that Adam's sin was not covered but he seems to ignore the fact that the covering of skins obtained by the shedding of the blood of the lamb was a provisional covering until the Seed of the woman, Jesus, should appear on the scene at the appointed time to confirm or ratify by His own shed blood the types and rituals which foreshadowed Him in Eden, the Law and the Prophets. Certainly, if natural death by decay was the penalty Adam incurred by disobedience, then his sin was not covered; he suffered that 'penalty' and all upon whom it was transmitted experience the same, and may I add, Baptism into the death of Christ does not change anyone's nature whether defiled, condemned or otherwise. The Christadelphian view and that of my friend prevents Jesus being a substitute, but the fact is, Jesus was a substitute for the death that came by sin; an inflicted death by the shedding of blood, for we are instructed by the Word of God in this case, is no remission of sin, without it and Jesus did not die a natural death.

To those who believe the Clause V theory, resurrection does not alter this view one bit, but the dying in symbol by baptism into Christ's death and rising in newness of life in Him certainly does and gives a hope both sure and steadfast and enters into that within the veil wither the forerunner even Jesus has entered as High Priest making intercession for His own household. Think on these things and whether you accept the Nazarene view or not, it will make no difference to their faith, and salvation but it could to yours.

One other important point is Clause IX of the B.A.S.F. It speaks of Jesus rising after suffering the death required by the righteousness of God. Please note – the death Jesus suffered was inflicted by the shedding of blood, therefore this was the mode of death Adam would have suffered as a sinner. Jesus was not a sinner but suffered that death for Adam. Jesus did not rise from a death by decay and corruption; He saw no corruption and His death was not required by the righteousness of God, but Jesus suffered it willingly for Adam and all concluded under Sin. There are many more errors I could point out, even as Stephen the Martyr of Jesus did and was stoned to death.

Yours Sincerely in the patient waiting for Christ, Phil Parry.

Forum Posts

Some 'posts' from Bible Truth Alive forum:-

Julian asks: Just a thought.... if the devil was destroyed by the death of Jesus, how come some say he/it is still a problem?

How did Jesus destroy the devil by his death? Any thoughts? Love in Jesus, Julian.

Russell writes: Dear Julian, You ask, "How did Jesus destroy the devil by His death?"

Jesus didn't destroy the devil but its power over the faithful –

Hebrews 2:14,15 - "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

When Jesus laid down His life He paid the penalty of sin for the faithful and so ended the power of the devil to destroy them in death; the bondage of sin and the reign of death ceased to have any hold; no longer did the law of sin and death reign over those in Jesus "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:" 1 Timothy 2:9-10.

Death is the last enemy to be destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:26) and then it can be said that Jesus destroyed the devil but until then it is only in prospect.

I hope this helps. With Love in Jesus. Russell

Julian writes: Hi Russell. Yes, it does help. I agree with you, but wanted to investigate this destruction of the 'devil' -

Hebrews 2:14,15 - "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

It says destroy HIM that had the power..... what does that mean then?

Love in Jesus, Julian.

Russell writes: Dear Julian, It is the law of sin and death which has the power of death. And this is the law (here personified as the devil) that Jesus destroyed for all those who come to Him in Spirit and truth.

I say the law is here personified as the devil because death is not what God wants. 2 Peter 3:9 – "The Lord is... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

I see no satisfactory alternative to this in Scripture.

With Love in Jesus. Russell

Julian writes: That's the answer I was looking for. Thanks Russell.

Just one point.... Jesus was the fulfilment of the law, and surely what he put to death was the power of sin over us BECAUSE we are found guilty BY it (by the law), to condemn us to destruction?

Is that saying the same as you? Love in Jesus, Julian.

Mike writes: Quote: "he might destroy him that had the power of death."

Reply: What was destroyed by his death? That which tempted him, the devil. When he took his last breath, the “man, Jesus” died. It really couldn’t be any simpler.

Quote: 2 Peter 3:9 – “The Lord is... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

Reply: If this refers to the simple “end of life,” then all have failed, even Jesus, who died (notice “perish” or death is contrasted with repentance). Of what did Jesus need repenting? Still, it was necessary for him to die, both for his own completion, as well as for our example.

Julian Wrote: “surely what he put to death was the power of sin over us.”

Reply: Be careful here, that is nearly akin to saying that we can not sin and therefore die; for even Paul himself didn’t believe such a thing (and 3 fellows were ousted from the church for teaching it), for daily he had to “pummel his body” so that “in teaching others he might not fall”. Sin still has the same power to kill forever. It is the path Jesus walked/lived that must be concentrated on. That was our example. Each has their own abilities or handicaps and each can only do their best. But it is not good to assume we have “made it” and are “covered”. Far from it. We all must go up the mount and eventually “see God face to face”, which requires our death, as the Scriptures tell us several times.

Mike.

Julian writes: Hi Mike. No, no, I am not saying we are immune from sin, but rather that it no longer RULES us. Sorry if that was not clear. Jesus overcame, he says this in revelation, and in doing so SHOWED us that it is POSSIBLE to overcome sin in our life.

That we often fail were he succeeded is WHY we require the covering. He did NOT require it, right? We do, because we will fail.

Love in Jesus, Julian.

Mike writes: He did not require to have sin covered because he did not sin. This is how he became the actual “mercy seat” or “throne between the cherubim.”

But, he still needed to have human desire to “take the short cut” removed from him. We know he had such thoughts as we see a glimpse of them now and then: “Father if you would, let this cup pass from me...” It is understandable, so this is what had to die. And he, at the time, was one of very few that acknowledged this. Most still do not, sadly.

Mike.

Russell writes: Dear Mike, Are we to believe then that Jesus destroyed the devil/temptation only for Himself and destroyed nothing for us? What did Jesus accomplish by dying for us?

You wrote “It was necessary for him (Jesus) to die for his own completion, as well as for our example.”

Can you please explain - a) what you mean by “dying for His own completion” bearing in mind there will be those who do not die when Jesus returns but will be changed in the twinkling of an eye - why was it necessary for Jesus to die when it is not necessary for some others? And b) Why was it necessary for us to have Jesus as our example when it was not necessary for 4000 years before He was born - those mentioned in Hebrews 11 did not need His example, so why should it be necessary for us?

Why does Julian need to be careful in saying “surely what he (Jesus) put to death was the power of sin over us”? Sin still has the same power over sinners as ever it did but that is beside the point. Jesus died that sinners might be forgiven and their sin no longer counts against them for they are faithful. Do you not agree with this?

What is the point of baptism unless it puts sinners in a relationship with Jesus who will forgive them for their faithfulness and their sins have been laid upon Him (Isaiah 53:6)?

I am sorry to have to ask these questions when you are so busy with other matters but your post leaves too many loose ends.

With Love in Jesus. Russell.

Mike writes: Quote: “Are we to believe that Jesus destroyed the devil/temptation only for Himself and destroyed nothing for us? What did Jesus accomplish by dying for us?”

Reply: Why does everyone want to concentrate on a few hours of the man’s life? He gave his whole life for our example. All of it, not just a moment in time.

Quote: “Can you please explain - a) what you mean by “dying for His own completion” bearing in mind there will be those who do not die when Jesus returns but will be changed in the twinkling of an eye - why was it necessary for Jesus to die when it is not necessary for some others?”

Reply: It is necessary for all to die, after one manner or another. For this mortality must put on immortality. But one can not unless his old man dies. This is the death of mortality; when the last death occurs and God is all and in all. This is a life long process. If one is not “dying” during their life, he/she will remain dead at the end. Jesus put to death perfectly that which he fought all his life. We are to follow that example.

Quote: “And b) Why was it necessary for us to have Jesus as our example when it was not necessary for 4000 years before He was born - those mentioned in Hebrews 11 did not need His example, so why should it be necessary for us?”

Reply: As Jesus said himself, they had his example: “And Abraham saw my day and was glad of it.” Too many do not see that there is more about Jesus in the Hebrew text than in the Greek. That is how the one man could preach of Christ and not know he had yet come! But, God explains why at this time: a time when all but a few had given up on anything Godly. Believing in gods and sub-gods and demi-gods and demons and the like. He came at the right time. The time predicted by God through Daniel.

Quote: “Jesus died that sinners might be forgiven and their sin no longer counts against them for they are faithful. Do you not agree with this?”

Reply: Now you are saying that Abraham was saved retro-actively? Or did he live “by faith” as the Hebrew text and Paul speak of?

No, I do not agree that sinners could not be forgiven before Jesus came. God says just the opposite. How often was Y’israel forgiven for their trespasses? God can forgive whom He will when He wishes to, by the principle He sets up in Ezekiel.

Quote: “What is the point of baptism...”

Reply: It is one’s consummation of a covenant/contract that they will live as best they can for God and also to bury/kill the old man (buried with him). It becomes null and void if we break faith i.e. break the contract. For then we have not buried/killed our old man after the example set before us. This is how Jesus did it: he endured for the hope before him.

But as I wrote in my last post, most deny having to do anything, they want Jesus to do it for them, and this is the sad part, for we each must take up that cross and follow behind his example.

Shalom. Mike

Russell writes: Dear Mike, Regarding the ‘devil’ that Jesus destroyed, you responded by asking why I should concentrate on a few hours of His life when He gave His whole life for our example. The answer is that Jesus’ crucifixion was the zenith of a life of perfect obedience to the law under which He lived. Had He not achieved perfect obedience to the law His crucifixion would have been meaningless. But His crucifixion was not required by the law; Jesus lay down His life voluntarily for us and not because the law demanded it, nor yet for His own salvation and this is why He could say “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.”

However, if Jesus merely destroyed that which tempted Him when He died then the same applies to every man and woman who has ever lived simply because there is no consciousness in death so one can no longer be tempted. I don’t call that achieving anything and it seems to me that to end temptation the sooner one ends one’s life the better and it certainly has nothing to do with why Jesus allowed Himself to be crucified.

Jesus needn’t have offered Himself as the Lamb of God for He said of Himself – “except, a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” (John 12:24). This obviously refers to His crucifixion. The “joy set before” Jesus was that He “should bring many sons to glory.” The offering of Himself as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world was the ‘zenith’ of His life of striving to serve His Father in love, a life He Himself described by saying “No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.” (Mark 3:27).

In response to my question “What do you mean by dying for His own completion?” you said that we all have to die after one manner or another. Accepting your understanding of ‘mortal’ as synonymous with ‘corruptible’ then I cannot agree that we are dying while we are living. Certainly Paul said “I die daily” but he was not referring to his demise but to his fight of faith in putting into subjection his own will in order to do God’s will, as Jesus did and as we ought. This is a life-long process in which Jesus was our supreme example. But you have avoided answering my question as to how the crucifixion of Jesus was necessary for His own completion.

Yes, all the faithful who lived before Jesus crucifixion were saved retroactively (as you express it). This is Bible teaching – Hebrews 9:8-28 explains this in some detail but is rather long to quote here. Also confirmed by Paul in Romans 3:24, “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”

I did not say that sinners could not be forgiven before Jesus came. The Ninevites were forgiven as we read in Jonah 3:10, even though they were outside the covenant with Israel. What I do see in Scripture is that before Jesus sin was covered over - but it was not taken away until the death of Jesus.

Your reason for baptism lacks the essential part of what the covenant relationship does for the faithful; it takes them out from under the law of sin and death and places them under the law of the spirit of life in Jesus. This is what Jesus death achieved. And quite obviously it does not release the faithful from their duties.

With love in Jesus. Russell.

Mike writes: Quote: “why I should concentrate on a few hours of His life when He gave His whole life for our example. The answer is that Jesus’ crucifixion was the zenith of a life...”

Reply: His death is not his life. He gave his life. We are to live as best we can in the same manner, i.e. as he said, following him. Do you really think he means for you to follow his example and have yourself crucified? In taking up your cross and following him, you live as he did. He bore that cross daily. No, he wants you to look at his life and emulate it. What is always missed is that Jesus knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that to be relieved of his internal temptations, he had to die. The life he gave was 33½ years long. It took less time to die. Jesus didn’t say on the cross, “I am saving you!” No, he said, “God forgive them for they do not know what they do.” And he also said: “It is finished.” Not his death, but his life.

Quote: “However, if Jesus merely destroyed that which tempted Him when He died then the same applies to every man and women who has ever lived simply because there is no consciousness in death so one can no longer be tempted.”

Reply: You left out that Jesus did it without sinning. Leaving that out of the equation could be misconstrued as descriptive. There is no other man, whose life was a perfect example for us, so that even his death was. And yes, being human, he had to eliminate the old man, and the final crushing comes in death.

Quote: “Certainly Paul said “I die daily” but he was not referring to his demise.”

Reply: Oh but he was. The demise of that part of him the tempted him. We either do this or we die forever

Quote: “Yes, all the faithful who lived before Jesus crucifixion were saved retroactively.”

Reply: That is not what God says in His bible. He says Abraham was saved by faith. God counted it to him as righteousness (being right before God) long before Jesus came.

Quote: “the covenant relationship does for the faithful; it takes them out from under the law.

Reply: This phrase is an oxymoron. A covenant is a contract, executed by law. The covenant, or law of grace, has been from Adam on, it was just ratified by Jesus.

Shalom. Mike.

Russell writes:

Dear Mike, There are a number of points of disagreement between us as when you say Jesus gave His life, not His death. It is surely obvious that Jesus life was an example to all of us, but when we talk of Him giving His life we refer to His crucifixion when He offered Himself to be the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. “The cup which my Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?” – John 17:11.

Then you say “What is always missed is that Jesus knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that to be relieved of his internal temptations, he had to die.” If this were true then Jesus had no free will in the matter of laying down His life for the sheep and it makes nonsense of His saying to His Father, “Not my will but thine be done.” (Luke 22:42). However, in John 10:17,18, we read, “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.” If Jesus lay down His life of Himself then He is saying it was of His own will that He lay it down and He therefore had the choice of not laying it down.

Jesus did not have to die in order to be released from temptation. He needed to be changed to Spirit life and this did not require His death, let alone His crucifixion. There will be many who will not die but will be changed to Spirit life at His coming. (1 Corinthians 15:51). Death is not necessary for them and it was not necessary for Jesus.

There is one point I wish to emphasize here and it is this - neither the imitation of Christ’s life (even if we were to do as perfectly as He did), nor the influence of His life upon ours which should help us to do as He did; can give salvation, but only His willing sacrifice.

You quote Jesus as saying while on the cross, “It is finished” to show that He was referring, not to His death but to His life. But what Jesus said was “It is paid.” This was referring to the blood that He shed to buy the faithful – Acts 20:28, “the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” In support of this compare John 19:30 with Matthew 17:24 where we read “they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?” We find that “finished” and “pay” are the same Greek word *‘teleo.’* This means that Jesus was referring to His death as the purchase price He paid for the human race, not His life. I am well aware of the many ways in which *‘teleo’* is used but you cannot use it to prove your favoured understanding.

You quoted me correctly where I said - "However, if Jesus merely destroyed that which tempted Him when He died then the same applies to every man and women who has ever lived simply because there is no consciousness in death so one can no longer be tempted." But you replied - "You left out that Jesus did it without sinning." No, Mike, I didn't leave it out; I said earlier in the same post that "Had He not achieved perfect obedience to the law His crucifixion would have been meaningless."

Again I said - "Certainly Paul said "I die daily" but he was not referring to his demise." To which you replied - "Oh but he was. The demise of that part of him that tempted him. We either do this or we die forever."

Mike, you are playing with words. In 1 Corinthians 15:31 Paul is not talking of his decease. He did not literally die daily; he died only once - at the end of his natural life. Paul was not referring to his decease but to his fight of faith in putting into subjection his own will in order to do God's will, as Jesus did and as we ought.

Again I said "Yes, all the faithful who lived before Jesus crucifixion were saved retroactively." While 'retroactively' is your choice of word, not mine, it nevertheless expresses Bible teaching for John the Baptist said of Jesus "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Without that "sin of the world" being taken away by Jesus, neither Abraham nor anyone could be saved however faithful because this is not the way God's plan of salvation is shown to work. While it is God's good pleasure to give the Kingdom to the faithful, it was for Jesus to open the door so they could enter.

Finally, I'm sorry you don't see that baptism is a covenant which takes the faithful out from under the law of sin and death and places them under the law of the spirit of life in Jesus. You are of course at liberty to say that such a concept is "pointedly foolish," or "contradictory in terms" as I understand 'oxymoron' to mean, but it is better to be "in Christ" than to remain "in Adam" as those "in Adam" are not under the covenant of grace - "as in Adam all die." 1 Corinthians 15:22.

With love in Jesus. Russell.

A Response to Robin Todd's Post reported in our last C.L. pages 8 and 10.

Dear Bro. Russell, When I read Robin Todd's remarks in the C.L. it reminded me of Jenkins', the Bishop of Durham, whose words amounted to a bin full of rubbish compiled from his own imagination and basis. Jenkins rejected the bodily resurrection of Jesus and it remained for people to just believe that Jesus was merely alive in their thoughts and the grave contained a bag of bones. Perhaps someone can remember it better than me and report it to Russell.

But what came to my mind then and also now is Robin's case; are the words of Isaiah "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah 8:20).

Now when Robin speaks of Adam being created imperfect he is not speaking according to God's word in Genesis for it states "God saw everything he had made and behold it was very good." This of course applied to the physical organisation of animal and human but please note the development of human character under God's Law did not alter his "very good" physical flesh which is another doctrinal blunder of Christadelphian teaching uncorrected and not understood by their members.

When Robin states "Sin is lawlessness" he may be quoting the English Dictionary but where the sacrifice of Jesus is concerned the true meaning of Sin is "transgression of Divine Law" which is expressed in a certain dictionary Bro Russell quoted to me. (The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary). Of King David's view in Psalm 119 there can be no criticism of God's Law, for he says, (verse 97), "O how love I thy

law! It is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me.”

We must remember the Law had its purpose; St Paul realised it was a schoolmaster to bring those under it to Christ. Jesus said the great commandment in the law, the first, was to love God with all the heart, soul and mind, and the second was like unto it – thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. There we have it as taught to a redeemed people freed from bondage by the life in the blood of a lamb typifying Christ as the Lamb of God, who on Calvary ratified the law in all things. Thus he said, “think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.” Make no mistake, the attributes of love in the law still remained, but please note The Love of a Just God who is also merciful but not to the extreme, as some evangelists think and teach and which Robin should note.

The love of God is shown abundantly in St Paul’s chapter 5 of his letter to the Romans. He shows that love and mercy from the time Adam sinned in the fact that God in His foreknowledge knew that Adam would disobey and that a second Adam would be obedient to His will and purpose by laying down His life in Adam’s place. Therefore Adam was able to produce people to replenish the earth, some good and some evil. The good with the option of accepting God’s way of redemption in Christ even the free gift of justification and righteousness – Romans 5:17; the evil also having the same option. And so Paul says, in Galatians 3:22, “For the scripture hath concluded all under sin (the offence of Adam) that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” And so in Romans 5:20, Paul says, “Moreover, the law entered that the offence might abound” in order to show in the types and rituals from Eden until the present, the federal position of being under Sin and the federal position under righteousness.

Paul could say “The commandment was holy, just and good” and in the same sense it was a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.

Having seen and understood the teaching, I feel that I want to exclaim with Paul “O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and foreknowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of God? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed to him again. For of him and through him and to him, are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen. (Romans 11:33-36).

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all who love him in sincerity. And to those who look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin which was laid upon him at Calvary unto salvation.

Brother Phil Parry.

Exhortation

Forgiveness - Micah 6:8 Matthew 6:14,15

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Loving Greetings in Jesus’ Name.

I think ‘forgiveness’ is one of the most necessary, and yet the hardest virtues to cultivate - more especially for the children of God. All those, more or less, who strive to serve God and keep His commandments have suffered many injustices right down through the ages, and will do until the coming of our Lord Jesus.

It is easy to say we forgive, but to do so right from the heart, to have no ill feeling whatever towards those who have deeply hurt us, to feel nothing but love toward them when we see them is a different thing, which we only know personally. To be able to “turn the other cheek” immediately to those who hurt us unjustly, requires a great effort of control.

This virtue, although hard to cultivate, gives the greatest satisfaction once we have gained the necessary control. The greatest example of self control in the whole of the Scriptures is of course the example set by

the Lord Jesus Himself. What a wonderful thing it would be if we could think and act as He did towards His enemies all through His lifetime. This great Son of God, who was just an ordinary man in His lifetime, yet who possessed unlimited power from God, who could have called Legions of angels to His assistance to wreak vengeance on His persecutors, never once gave way to temptation.

From whence came His strength? His great strength came just by faith. Absolute and complete Faith in the commandments and promises of God. By His great faith He overcame all things.

This same power is also available to all those who wish to follow His example. To believe absolutely and completely in God the Great Creator and Sustainer of all things, and who cannot lie. This is the Faith which our Lord said could remove mountains; this is the faith we should have. Once our belief is complete we have an anchor to hold on to, while we strive the self-control which is so necessary.

We must overcome vanity and learn to place all things in His Power. This is a lifetime's work for the would-be Sons of God. Like Peter, we shall fall; like Peter, we shall be saved by Christ and forgiven and reinstated "Sons of God," Heirs of Eternal Life.

These are the promises of Him who said, "where is your faith?"

With love to all, Your Brother in Christ, A.Hodges.

Extract from "The Christadelphian Lamp" for November 1873:

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our correspondent D. C. says, I am not very clear about that scripture which saith "As in Adam all die so in Christ shall all be made alive." "Is not the one all as equally universal as the other?"

Here it has to be noticed that the all who die in Adam die in virtue of being his descendants. Jesus Christ had no descendants by ordinary generation. Connection with Him or relationship to Him is predicated upon faith in what He has accomplished, and obedience to what he has commanded. If there had been no purchase made, if no ransom had been given, if no property had been established in the Adamic family by Him, there could not have been any basis for faith and obedience. In other words, if there had been no foundation laid there could be no superstructure reared. But the laying of the foundation is not the rearing of the structure. To discharge the debt of a prisoner cannot benefit him if either he is not aware that it has been discharged, or, if after he is told it has been discharged, he refuses to credit the message. In the first case he would perish for lack of knowledge and in the second for rejecting the testimony that his debt was paid. Jesus Christ, in giving Himself a ransom for all, established a property in the 'all.' They became His by right of purchase; but none of them had acquired any property in Him. Jesus Christ, having by the act of self-sacrifice acquired a property in the all who were dead in Adam, acquired also the right to make any use of His property He pleased.

Now, the use He has proposed to make is to raise all who are disposed from a state of death to a state of life, from one of mortality to one of immortality. Out of the 'all' who were dead, therefore 'all' who accept the gift of life upon the conditions which Jesus as the giver has made are thereby put in Him, and all of those who are thus put into Him are found of Him at His coming without spot or fault of any kind, shall be made alive, and no one else. To suppose the all in Christ to be co-extensive with the all in Adam is totally to mistake the Apostle's meaning, and to ignore the principle of faith and obedience. On the other hand, to suppose that all who think that they are in Christ because they think they have complied with the conditions which He has laid down, is to ignore His right to call His professed servants into His presence that He may determine who of them have obeyed His instructions that He may reward every one according to his works.

The all in Christ who are to be made alive is limited to those who are approved by Him as the blessed of His Father who are invited to inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. Your supposition, as expressed in the question, "If Adam forfeited or lost life for all, did not Christ give His life a ransom for all," is that Adam lost eternal life for all, and that Jesus Christ brings all the Adamic family back to possession of eternal life the same as Adam lost. But this is not the case; Adam never had eternal life to lose. He was in circumstances where he could have gained eternal life upon a principle of faith and obedience, but failed to retain those circumstances by disobedience.

Jesus, the second Adam, was born in the circumstances where He could gain eternal life for Himself. He continued in these and at the end gave His life a ransom for the human family that they might be brought back to a position similar to that which was lost by the disobedience of the first Adam. The supposition of being in debt £10, and a friend of yours discharges it in your stead or for you, is based upon the same idea answered above. Adam was without the capital of eternal life to begin with, he contracted the debt, death; Jesus, the second Adam, began life with capital similar to the first Adam, and gained the additional capital of eternal life. He discharged the debt contracted by the first Adam, by giving His natural life which He got at the first. But the discharging of the debt of the first Adam could not also give him possession of the acquired capital of the second, but simply put him in a state of freedom from debt, similar to what he was in before he contracted it. And thus it is that the first Adam, when typically redeemed in Eden and his descendants, when actually redeemed by the great Anti-type of all the sacrifices were only brought to a salvable state in which they have to exercise faith in the Lamb of God as the only sacrifice, and obedience to Him as the only Lord who bought them, with His blood. Forgiveness of sins has reference to sins which have been committed since the sacrifice was offered, or to sins committed by a believer after having obeyed the truth. All men everywhere are now under law to Jesus Christ as the Lord who bought them, and die either because they have not the means of knowing Him, or because they do not obey the truth that He has come and brought life and immortality to light by His Gospel.

S. G. HAYES.

News From The Middle East **From Internet sources**

Shortly after the Annapolis conference in November which re-launched peace efforts after seven years of deadlock, the Palestinian Legislative Council, (which is dominated by Hamas) introduced a law to make any concessions on Jerusalem illegal. The new law states that Jerusalem is an Islamic city and it is totally forbidden for them to give up any part of the city or even to enter into negotiations regarding it. Anyone who violates this proscription would be prosecuted as a traitor and the crime treated as high treason.

It seems the purpose of this law is to embarrass Mahmoud Abbas, the Chairman of the Palestinian Authority who is being asked to agree a two state solution to gain peace between Israel and the Palestinians. However, Mahmoud Abbas said that he did not go to Annapolis to make concessions, but "There are some people who are trying to distort the truth... They are saying that we went to Annapolis to sell our cause, negotiate and sign agreements. But we went there to convey our principle and fixed positions." He said that the delegation to Annapolis faced many problems such as the demand for Israel to be recognised and for the Palestinian state to have temporary borders, which he feared may become permanent.

Some weeks later those in opposition to Hamas on the Legislative Council planned to isolate Hamas by forming a separate West Bank parliament controlled by Fatah leaving Hamas in control of the Gaza Strip parliament. This is also likely to hamper efforts by some Arab countries to patch up the differences between Fatah and Hamas though the Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas has told the council members he "fully supports" early parliamentary elections.

In December a rally was held in Gaza City marking the 20th anniversary of Hamas. At the time it was generally considered that Israel might enter the Gaza strip with a view to ousting Hamas who took control of the Gaza Strip last June and who have since then fired thousands of rockets and mortar shells into Israel. The Hamas Prime Minister, Ismail Haniyeh, assured the crowds in Gaza City that Hamas would never recognise Israel, while other speakers warned Israel that any attack on their part would see that “the Gaza Strip would become a graveyard for Israeli troops.”

A T.V. message given by a Hamas group leader gave the chilling message that Hamas will not abandon violence – “This is our real choice, our trump card which causes the enemy to succumb to us... Our people are able to launch a third and fourth intifada until the dawn of victory arrives!”

However, Israel’s Defence Minister Ehud Barak, expresses confidence in the Israeli Defence Forces - “If another war suddenly breaks out, we expect that it will end in victory, with the minimum amount of casualties, and minimum injury to the citizenry.”

The Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Olmert, told ministers at a cabinet meeting that if the Palestinian Authority does not fight terror (of Hamas) there can be no progress towards peace. The Palestinian Authority must fulfil its obligations – “As long as the Palestinian Authority doesn’t implement the measures demanded of them, in the way which is demanded of them (as agreed in the ‘Road Map’) in order to act against terror organizations, the state of Israel will not be able to make any changes on the ground.”

Before arriving in Israel in January President Bush made it clear that one of his chief aims of coming to the Middle East was to propose a security plan to counter Iran’s aggressive ambitions. In an interview, President Bush said if he were an Israeli he would take the words of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who has called for Israel to be “wiped off the map” very seriously. He also promised that the U.S. will defend Israel “without ifs or buts.” President Bush said he will work with Middle East allies a security plan to counter Iran’s “aggressive ambitions” during his visit to the region. He did not give details about the plan, but Arab diplomats said they expected the U.S. to offer closer military cooperation with moderate allies in the Persian Gulf, Egypt and Jordan.

The president urged the international community to keep up the pressure on Iran despite a recent US intelligence report saying Teheran suspended nuclear weapons development in 2003 and had not restarted it. “It’s important for the people in the region to know that while all options remain on the table, I believe we can solve this problem diplomatically, and the way to do that is to continue to isolate Iran in the international community.”

President Bush, arrived in Israel 9th January to begin his Middle East tour. After two days of talks with Israeli and Palestinian leaders, he set out a clear blueprint for a Palestinian state, specifying the need for modifications to the 1967 lines and indicating a rejection of the Palestinian demand for a “right of return” for refugees. He stressed that a final agreement would not be implemented until both sides fulfilled their ‘road map’ obligations and Gen. William Fraser will monitor each side’s implementation of the road map obligations.

In setting out his plan, George Bush said “There should be an end to the occupation that began in 1967... The agreement must establish Palestine as a homeland for the Palestinian people, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jewish people... These negotiations must ensure that Israel has secure, recognized, and defensible borders, and they must ensure that the state of Palestine is viable, contiguous, sovereign and independent... While territory is an issue for both parties to decide, I believe that any peace agreement between them will require mutually agreed adjustments to the armistice lines of 1949 to reflect current realities... I know Jerusalem is a tough issue; both sides have deeply felt political and religious concerns. I fully understand that finding a solution to this issue will be one of the most difficult challenges on the road to peace, but that is the road we have chosen to walk.”

Among the elements acceptable to Israel were President Bush’s rejection of the Palestinian claim of a “right of return” to Israel, by saying that a future Palestinian state would be a homeland for the Palestinians, just as Israel is a homeland for the Jews. Also the flexibility of borders in any final settlement seems to

imply that Israel can hold onto large areas of settlements they have made in parts occupied since the 1967 war.

A few days before President Bush's visit to Israel, Hamas began using more powerful rockets against Israel from the Gaza Strip. The upgraded Kassam rockets, which have range of about twenty miles, amounts to an escalation in terror activities from the Gaza Strip. In the following days Gaza terrorists fired dozens of rockets and mortar shells into Israel aimed at Ashkelon and Sderot.

Israeli Prime Minister said, "We will continue to respond, to plan, and to attack those responsible for terror in every corner of the Gaza Strip," adding that the Defence Minister has been instructed to intensify the Israeli military response to rocket attacks which resulted in heavy fighting in the Gaza Strip.

In response, a Hamas leader said that the IDF operation was the result of US President George W. Bush's visit - "This crime is the ugly fruit of Bush's visit to the region. He has incited the Zionists and has exerted pressure on the Palestinian side to become more hard-line against Palestinian dialogue."

Owing to the increased number of rocket attacks, Israel reduced supplies of oil to the Gaza Strip and closed the borders crossings. While this move raised concerns among humanitarian groups, in actual fact Israel continued to supply 70% of their usual amount of oil, but even while they had more than a weeks supply, Hamas immediately closed down important power stations, cutting off electricity to large areas including hospitals, blaming Israel for the crisis.

Hamas gunmen blew up large parts of the wall at Rafah crossing, separating the Gaza Strip from Sinai, enabling tens of thousands of Palestinians to cross freely into Egyptian territory. Palestinian and Egyptian sources estimated that some 300,000 Palestinians entered Egypt during the first day.

Egypt hasn't sealed the crossing and Israel fears that Hamas forces have entered Sinai to attack Israel from there.

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, voiced his concern of a mounting humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Ban when speaking with President Shimon Peres and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni in Switzerland though qualified his statement, asserting that Israel had the right to defend itself. Peres replied that Israel would not allow the situation in the Gaza Strip to deteriorate to hunger and would not collectively punish the population there. Livni made it clear that Hamas could not be a part of the negotiations.

UNRWA, the United Nations agency aiding Palestinian refugees, urged Arab Gulf countries to provide about \$9.8 million in aid money for Gaza. The money would buy food, medicine and other supplies for Palestinians - especially children and pregnant women - suffering under the blockade of Gaza, said a representative for UNRWA's commissioner general. It would also fund fuel for hospitals and cash assistance to the needy, he said.

The Israeli Deputy Defence minister, Matan Vilnai, said that Israel wants to relinquish all responsibility for the Gaza Strip, including the supply of electricity and water, now that the territory's southern border with Egypt has been blown open. "We need to understand that when Gaza is open to the other side we lose responsibility for it... so we want to disconnect from it... We want to stop supplying electricity to them, stop supplying them with water and medicine, so that it would come from another place. However, Israel will continue to be responsible for the flow of such supplies into the Gaza Strip until an alternative is found.

The chaotic situation in Gaza sent the IDF and the Israel Police on high alert along the Egyptian border with strengthened security as it is feared many terrorists will have crossed into Sinai to attack Israel from there.

The National Security Council's counter-terrorism bureau issued a warning recommending that Israelis avoid visiting Sinai and that any Israelis currently there "leave forthwith" as "Warnings of terrorist attacks in Sinai have recently intensified... Terrorists in Sinai are working to abduct Israelis in Sinai and convey them to the

Gaza Strip. The currently open border between the Gaza Strip and Sinai makes it easier for terrorists to move back and forth.”

The Israeli High Court of Justice called an emergency session to discuss the situation in the Gaza Strip following the blockade imposed on the territory but the state have now resumed diesel supplies to Gaza City power plant “according to levels set prior to the blockade imposed earlier this month in order to meet the basic humanitarian needs of the civilian population.” This move followed appeals filed by human rights to the High Court.

The state however, told the court that if rocket attacks increase again, Israel will consider limiting the supplies once again. The petitioners felt that the state’s offer was insufficient and demanded an end to all facets of the blockade. After both sides presented their cases in court, the session was adjourned without a ruling and no date was set for the court’s decision.

Other Items of news:-

Israel Aerospace Industries, a world leader in aerospace technology, successfully launched an “Advanced Synthetic Aperture Radar Satellite” into orbit from the Indian Launch pad in Srihaikata. This “TecSar” has the ability to create high-resolution images of objects on Earth day and night, even in cloudy weather conditions - a capability not available in Israel’s Ofek satellite series. The TecSar is reportedly capable of imaging with a resolution of up to 10 centimetres. It is by far the most advanced Israelite satellite

In addition to the Ofek 7, Eros B and the Amos 1 and 2 (both communication satellites), Israel operates the Ofek 5 spy satellite, successfully launched in May 2002. IAI plans to launch the Amos 3 in the coming months. The decision to launch the missile from India was reached three years ago during a visit there by then-Defence Ministry director-general Amos Yaron. It is part of growing Indian-Israeli cooperation, which is scheduled to eventually lead to the launching of two more satellites. The launch of the TecSar was the first of three agreed launches of Israeli satellites aboard an Indian missile.

A 17-year-old Arab was arrested 1st January, on suspicion of hacking into and sabotaging thousands of Web sites. The suspect allegedly wrecked sites belonging to the Likud Party, Maccabi Tel Aviv, shopping sites and sites used as servers by various other companies. Police described the alleged offences as “Internet terror,” accusing the teenager of working with several associates from Turkey and Saudi Arabia to specifically ruin Israeli Web sites.

Last year, pro-Palestinian hackers shut down approximately 700 Israeli Web domains of well-known companies and organizations, including Bank Hapoalim, the Rambam Medical Center, Bank Otsar Ha-Hayal, BMW Israel, Subaru Israel and Citroen Israel, real estate company Tarbut-Hadiur and the Jump fashion Web site all found their Web sites shut down and replaced by the message: “Hacked by Team-Evil Arab hackers u KILL Palestinian people we KILL Israel servers.”

Ten Israeli families in Sderot, near where most of the Kassam rockets land, are to sue the Egyptian Government for NIS 260 million (Israeli New Shekel) in damages for family members who were killed or seriously wounded by Kassam rockets fired from the Gaza Strip. They hold Egypt responsible for the casualties for the transfer of weapons, money and fugitives into Gaza had become an industry “under the patronage and encouragement of Egypt, in full cooperation between the Egyptian armed forces and the terrorist organizations, in which Egypt has granted clear and highly valuable logistical help to the terrorist organizations.” “As a result of this help, the terrorist organizations had smuggled into Gaza hundreds of tons of explosives, tens of thousands of automatic rifles, millions of bullets and other ammunition, hundreds of rockets, including those with a longer range than the rockets produced in the Gaza Strip itself, such as the Grad, which can reach 20 km; rocket-propelled grenades and launchers, hundreds of armour-piercing rockets and dozens of anti-aircraft missiles. Egypt was therefore “directly, deliberately and maliciously responsible for the terrorist attacks and for the harm done to the plaintiffs as a result of these attacks.”

Egypt became responsible for patrolling the Philadelphi Corridor following Israel's disengagement for the Gaza Strip in 2005, and Egypt had provided "free passage" for terrorists across the 12 km. long corridor that constitutes the border between Sinai and Gaza. As a result, the terrorist organizations have been able to create a military infrastructure, dispatched terrorists into Israel via Sinai and smuggled terrorist experts via the Philadelphi Corridor into Gaza. At conservative estimates, 28 tons of dynamite having been smuggled from Egypt into Gaza in 2006, compared with six tons in 2005 when the IDF patrolled the border; fourteen thousand rifles were smuggled into Gaza in 2006, compared with 9,300 the previous year. These figures indicate that what is going on is far more than simple smuggling. It involves such complex and huge-scale logistics that it cannot be considered mere smuggling and therefore could not be done without Egyptian complicity.

Balloon for each Kassam on UN doorstep. As the United Nations Security Council debated a response to the situation in the Gaza Strip and Sderot, Israel's New York Consulate held a protest in front of UN headquarters in which they placed 4,200 red balloons on the UN's doorstep. The number of balloons signified the 4,200 Kassam rockets fired into Israel from Gaza since the 2005 disengagement from the Strip. The display was meant to raise world awareness to the fact that Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip are part of an effort to end the rocket attacks, the consulate said in a statement. "Up until this day, every attempt to raise the issue and make it part of the American media's agenda has been unsuccessful," Consulate Spokesman David Saranga said. "The suffering of Gaza residents has received increased attention recently. The display is intended to emphasize the suffering of the residents of Sderot [and to] illustrate the incessant Kassam rocket attacks, as well as to call on the international community to stop ignoring what is happening in Israel.

At the end of December, France broke off ties with Syria. The French President Nicolas Sarkozy said he had "reached the end of his tether with Assad" in particular with Presidential elections and political assassinations in Lebanon. "I spoke to him three times recently, and I spoke with him clearly and honestly. I took the risk and spoke with him when no one else would," "I took the initiative and said to him: Lebanon has a right to have an autonomous president who will have a national unity government. You must use all the means and abilities at your disposal to influence the attainment of this goal!"

On the 1st January Egypt and Iran began moving towards normalizing diplomatic relations which were cut off when Egypt signed a peace agreement with Israel in 1979. A senior Iranian envoy said, "There is no major problem and everything is moving forward." This in spite of Egypt's protest about the name of a street in Tehran honouring the assassin of Egypt's former President Anwar Sadat in which street there is also a large mural of the assassin which Egypt has asked to be removed.

As long ago as last May, the Iranian President offered to restore ties with Egypt and since then agreement has been reached to open respective embassies.

Egypt has, for many years, been a strong ally of the U.S.

Iraqi PM rushes more troops against al-Qaida stronghold in Mosul. After two days of deadly bombings this week, the government said Friday it would dispatch several thousand more police and soldiers to Mosul, Iraq's major northern city, to crush the al-Qaida stronghold there. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said the government counteroffensive would be "decisive," although he gave no details on troop strength or when the addition forces would arrive. "Today, our troops started moving toward Mosul ... and the fight there will be decisive," al-Maliki said during a speech in the Shiite holy city of Karbala. Al-Qaida and its supporters would find themselves without a major base of operations if ousted from Mosul, which occupies transport crossroads between Baghdad, Syria, Turkey and Iran. But a drawn-out fight also could serve to rally insurgents and expose potential security weaknesses where US troops are thin and poorly equipped Iraqi forces must assume a front-line role.