

# The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No 233

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## Editorial

Dear Brothers, Sisters and Friends, Loving greetings.

Hadrian, of Hadrian's Wall fame, was a Roman emperor. The wall bearing his name was originally 80 miles long, stretching from Wallsend on the Tyne to the shore of the Solway Firth in the north of England. In the early days there may have been more than 10,000 soldiers posted along its length, huddled in the forts and 80 fortified milecastles or gateways, keeping watch and trading with the locals.

The wall and the soldiers were there in an attempt to separate the barbarians from the Romans. It was a tough wall: 45 miles of local limestone in the east and the rest cobbles and turf. The gateways, or milecastles allowed for tax, trade and controlled immigration. In the decade it took to build, the wall gave the soldiers a sense of purpose, a keep-fit regime, even a chance for self-expression: the 3 Roman legions involved all built their milecastle forts to a slightly different design. No one knows if the soldiers marched on top of it or at its foot, or whether Hadrian actually visited it.

Immediately Hadrian was named emperor, he had four senatorial rivals put to death. This act revealed a capacity for thorough-going brutality that recurs throughout his reign and it reached its epitome, in his suppression of the Jewish revolt of 132-135AD. From the moment of his accession Hadrian had trouble with the Jewish Diaspora, who appeared in place after place, to be connected to factions hostile to Rome. Hadrian offended and provoked the Jews over and over again. Rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, destroyed in 71 AD was forbidden, and the very name of Jerusalem abolished, to be replaced by Aelia Capitolina - Aelia was Hadrian's family name. At last and possibly in response to his ban on circumcision, the Jews organized a sustained and disconcertingly successful revolt. Bar-Kochba (also known, as Shimeon bar-Kosiba) appears to have been the national commander of the rebel forces from the beginning, though there is no record of his origin, background or age. The uprising was well organized and the Romans were taken off guard. Bar-Kochba's guerrillas started to close in on Jerusalem and the Roman governor, Tinius Rufus, decided to evacuate the Legion that formed the garrison of the city. The Jewish rebels joyfully occupied it. Judea was declared independent and that year proclaimed Year One of the Redemption of Israel. Special coins were issued carrying the words 'Shimeon, Prince over Israel.' Bar-Kochba set about organizing an administration, a tax system and local governors.

Rome took alarm at the sudden crisis in its small Judean province, with its implications for the whole empire and so the military governor of Britain, and Hadrian's best general, Julius Severus, was ordered to Judea to tackle the problem. Legions were put into the field against brilliantly deployed guerrillas.

Thousands of Roman soldiers died and for three years at a huge cost to life, the Jews fought on. Their villages were burnt and the people retreated to caves. There they perished. But thanks to extremely dry conditions, what they took with them has survived: sandals and baskets, mirrors, pots and knives. Like all refugees, they took with them keys of the houses they had been forced to abandon, confident of returning once order was restored. In one cave in a brown leather pouch wrapped in sacking were the personal papers of a woman called Babata, daughter of Shimeon ben-Menachem. The 35 papyri in this bundle consist of her marriage contract, deeds of title to property and legal documents from the period immediately before Bar-Kochba.

Faced with slow and relentless pressure from Rome's large military machine, the Jewish forces had to yield ground steadily. Jerusalem was lost, and Bar-Kochba and his remaining supporters were finally driven into the fortress of Bethar, a few miles to the south-west of the city. The Romans built a siege wall around it, and in the summer of 135 they broke through into the fortress. Bar-Kochba and all his men were slain.

The end of the uprising in such a way brings to mind Nazi Germany and the ghastly fate meted out to Jews in the Warsaw ghetto at the close of the last world war. It seems that nothing changes and history is doomed to repeat itself with all its horrors.

Love to all. Helen Brady.

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## The Heart

Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the issues of life".

In connection with this proverb ponder upon John 17 v 3, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent;" and

Mark 12 v 30, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment;" also

Proverbs 23 v 7, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he;" and

Matthew 6 v 21, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

With the natural life all the attainments and virtues are a manifestation of what lies within the heart and so it is said to be the source of understanding, love, courage, grief or pleasure.

So many ways of speaking are derived, as 'an honest and good heart' that is, a heart studious of holiness, being prepared by the Spirit of God, to entertain the word with due affection, disposition and resolution, as Luke 8:15, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

To 'incline the heart to God' to beseech Him at all times and cause our hearts trend towards God as a matter of continual practice. God desires that all should turn to Him and live, and to this end we read God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. To attain to this life we must accept what God has given, Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and we accept Him with our heart, the seat of affection which must be warm and real, with fire and zeal.

If we keep our heart before God in this manner, He is faithful who has promised, and His promise is Life, being redeemed by Jesus' precious blood.

Anon.

## An Exhortation

# RENDERING THANKS TO GOD.

I wish to consider briefly the life of Hezekiah, one of the kings of Judah. Let us first read a few verses from the second Book of Kings and the second Book of Chronicles:-

2 Kings 20:1-7, “In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amos came to him, and said unto him, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord. And I will add unto thy days fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake. And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil and he recovered.”

2 Chronicles 32:24-26, “In those days Hezekiah was sick unto death, and prayed unto the Lord: and he spake unto him, and he gave him a sign. But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding, Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.”

The life of Hezekiah is typical of the life of many people in our day. He made a good start in the Lord. When he took over the government the children of Judah had practically forsaken the Lord altogether. Idol worship was the fashion of the day. The Temple which should have been dedicated to God became defiled with idols. The Law of Moses had fallen into neglect.

Hezekiah cleansed the Temple, and restored the worship of God. He put the priests and the Levites back into their office. Having done that, he and his people kept the Passover, the feast at which the Jews went up to Jerusalem to worship and to remember their liberation from Egyptian bondage, the feast of unleavened bread. Things had gone from bad to worse ever since the days of David and Solomon, and we are told that such a Passover as Hezekiah’s had not been observed since the days of Solomon, who lived nearly three hundred years earlier. So Hezekiah revived a Divine commandment which had been neglected all that time, some 250-300 years.

Afterwards misfortune befell the Jewish nation - Jerusalem was besieged by the powerful Assyrian army. They had just overthrown all the neighbouring countries, and also the ten tribes of Israel who had fallen away from the house of David. That calamity was God’s punishment for the sins of the ten tribes. But the house of Judah in the days of Hezekiah had returned to God. Hezekiah prayed to God, and God heard his prayer. On two occasions God turned the invading armies out of Judah and saved His people. After that, a personal calamity befell Hezekiah. He fell sick and the Lord said to him through the prophet Isaiah that he must die. But Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord, and God heard him and healed him and added unto his life another fifteen years.

But some time later, Hezekiah’s heart became lifted up. He ceased to thank God. He neglected God. We read that the king of Babylon sent messengers to Hezekiah, and that he showed the messengers all that he had. We read that “God left him, to try him that he might know all that was in his heart”. (II Chronicles 32:31). It appears that Hezekiah had neglected God to such an extent that he never mentioned him to those messengers. He glorified himself rather than God, and as the ruler, so the people. They also neglected again the things of the Lord, and so we read (II Chronicles 32:25) “Therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon

Judah and Jerusalem.” But when things began to go wrong again, Hezekiah and the people turned to the Lord afresh, and so “the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah.”

Now what can we learn from that? Hezekiah’s life is typical of that of so many people to our day. Like many who learn to know the Lord and turn to him, he made a good start. He was zealous for the Lord and the whole aim of his life was to turn the nation of Judah back to the Lord whom they had forsaken. Then things went wrong. First the invasion by the Assyrian armies, then his illness. Hezekiah took his troubles to the Lord who heard him and delivered him. Hezekiah’s prayer of thanksgiving after the recovery from his illness is recorded for us (Isaiah 38:9-20).

Now all people, even many among those who have never a thought for the Lord, pray when things go wrong. Many people of the world say nearly out of habit: “Lord deliver us.” But I wonder how many thank the Lord afterwards, when He has delivered them. I hope that all of us make it a habit not only to pray when a calamity or an illness threatens, or before some unusual ordeal, many people of the world do the same, but let us also give thanks to God after He has delivered out of a calamity. Hezekiah did so after his recovery from his illness. And when we pray in face of some calamity, do we always put God’s will before ours? Do we always make our requests subject to His supreme will? And are we always concerned that God should be glorified, not ourselves? Listen to Hezekiah’s prayer as a pattern, the one he prayed in face of the threatening Assyrian army. They had just overthrown all the surrounding countries, and as the custom in those days was, destroyed their idols. The Assyrians thought it in their power to destroy the Temple in Jerusalem as they destroyed all the idol temples in other places. But God intervened. This is Hezekiah’s prayer, Isaiah 57:16-20, “O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Lord, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only.”

Mark the motive behind this prayer:

1. That God should reprove the leader of the Assyrian armies for his blasphemies,
2. That all the kingdoms of the earth may through this incident learn of God and of His power.

Do we always realise that any crisis in our life may be sent for a special purpose which we may understand only much later? Do we always put complete trust in God, that whatever the outcome, it is according to His will?

You see, we with our limited knowledge only see and know partially. But God sees and knows so much more, and in the light of that knowledge, what we want may not be at all for our own good, quite apart from the fact that it may not be for the good of God’s purpose with any of us being furthered.

Let us take to heart the warning of Hezekiah’s actions some time later after he was delivered. “He rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him.” So many people, when they are doing well, forget to thank God, many don’t pray at all when things go well. As for their blessings of wealth and position, they talk as if by their own ability they got it all, they never bring God into it. Let us then try to learn three things from the life of Hezekiah:-

1. In our prayers, let us put God’s will before ours, even in face of some calamity, when our own worries may overcast everything else.
2. When our troubles are over, let us not forget to give God thanks immediately.
3. When things go well, let us not forget to attribute our blessings to the love and mercies of God.

Brother Leo. Dreifuss.

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## **Paul's Declaration that The Faithful in Christ shall be Raised Incorruptible at His Coming.**

Dear Brethren and Sisters

We of the Nazarene Fellowship confess that after the way which a certain contentious sect of our day calls heresy, so worship we the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, believing all things that are written in the law and the prophets: and have hope toward God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and unjust, but not simultaneously at the coming of Christ. This they do not allow, though we have always exercised ourselves to have consciences void of offence toward God and toward men. Let these same say if they have found any evil in us, except it be for this one voice which we CRY standing among them, touching the resurrection of the dead, and the redemption which is in Christ, which qualifies us for the resurrection of the just if Christ remains away and we fall asleep in Him.

Certainly Paul was preaching and advancing the importance of the resurrection of Christ to show the Jews that they had killed the "Prince of Life", a man approved of God among them by many infallible signs and wonders, but he further asserts that He who raised Christ from the dead will also raise the faithful by His spirit power, for "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Colossians 3:4). Should we tremble at such a thought? Felix did not tremble at this the resurrection of the just, but what Paul told him about the judgment to come, at the resurrection of the unjust. No doubt Felix had cause to tremble, unlike King Agrippa who after all did allow Paul to speak for himself and did know most of the customs and questions of the Jewish religion and not a misrepresentation of it, and could therefore form an unbiased judgment of Paul's defence. We have not, and are not, blessed with any King Agrippa's or persons like Festus who possessed reason and logic, so we have to be content to abide by the fact that "if our gospel be hid it is hid to them who are lost, and those who are responsible may indeed experience the resurrection of the unjust at the end of the thousand years' reign of Christ.

The question before us is not that it is a thing incredible that God should raise the dead, but the order and election of the two classes mentioned in the Scriptures. Jesus, we must all accept, was the embodiment of the Word of God and therefore his spoken words were not haphazard or uttered with the feeling of nonchalance, but in harmony with His Father's will and Plan. Let us dwell upon the words therefore which he expresses, and take note of the order of merit. Luke 20:55, "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the Angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Now that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the dead but of the living: for all live unto him." That is, all God's children live unto Him and will therefore be subjects of the resurrection of life.

Let me again stress the order of merit which Jesus (the resurrection and the life) uses:

1. Those accounted worthy to obtain that world (The Kingdom of God).
2. They therefore qualify for the resurrection from the dead, neither can they die any more for they are equal unto the angels: and are the children of God... For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus and if ye be Christ's then are ye Abrahams seed and heirs according to the promise.

In the light of this testimony of Jesus how can anyone contend that at His coming there will be a resurrection of the dead, faithful and unfaithful, and following this, it will be judged who is worthy to obtain eternal life in the Kingdom of God? This is directly opposed to what Jesus says is the case, and can only be held by people who are misinformed on the subject, or who cannot harmonise it with erroneous views held concerning the judgment. It would be in their own interests therefore to have more respect for the Christ they profess to believe in, and to hearken to His word. If Jesus had said no more on this subject, it should

have been enough to convince anyone that only the accepted of Him are the subjects of the first resurrection, but we need not leave it there if we would require further confirmation, and read with understanding.

I appeal once again to the words of Him who is “The Way, the Truth and the life.” Matthew 19:27-50, “Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold we have forsaken all and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, verily I say unto you (i.e. the 12), that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.” That is, these Jews who had first priority to the oracles of God and His calling, if they neglected so great salvation would not be among the chosen but would at the appropriate time be cast out into outer darkness. So the last shall be first and the first last: for many be called but few chosen. What then of the twelve thrones? We have again the witness of Jesus, Revelation 20, at the time of the binding of Satan for a thousand years, verse 4, “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them (these who sat on the thrones were not being judged but were given authority to judge or rule); and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God and which had not worshipped the beast neither his image... And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 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.” In view of this, can those who believe that the unfaithful rise at the first resurrection, believe also that they are blessed and holy, and that on such the second death hath no power? To believe such is the height of absurdity. Let such therefore find a sensible and scriptural alternative, for there is no alternative to truth if one desires light and life. If there are those who, for reasons known only to themselves, cannot differentiate between the resurrection of the just and of the unjust, then Jesus is not among them, neither is Paul. Jesus, in commending such who helped the needy and destitute says, “And thou shall be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”

There is another “recompense” mentioned in the Scriptures but this is not one of blessing and reward, but of vengeance. “Vengeance is mine, I will ‘recompense,’ saith the Lord.” When can this be but at the resurrection of the unjust? “How long O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Revelation 6:10. Paul is every bit in harmony with Jesus. 1 Corinthians 15:22, “Even so in Christ shall all be made alive, but every man in his own order; Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” In between we have the period of Christ’s reign till He has put all enemies under his feet. “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” Which brings us to the time and period when the nations Gog and Magog, having been deceived by Satan released from his bondage of a thousand years, are destroyed by God’s fiery judgments together with that Satan who deceived them, the latter being cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death, where the beast and the false prophet are.

John says (v.11): “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.” The Apostle Peter speaks of this in his second Epistle ch.3, v.10, “in the which the heavens and the earth pass away” - no place found for them, says John. So they are dissolved. Can it be any plainer? Nevertheless, says Peter, “we, according to his promises look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” John not only looked for a new heaven and a new earth, but was permitted in vision to see it by signs and symbols. But before the latter he saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things that were written in the books, according to their works.

I must admit that in the past I have read this account rather superficially thinking that it is just and unjust standing before God, but a closer examination will show this view to be incorrect. “I saw the dead,” says John, “standing before God.” Can dead people stand? Why of course not; they must be alive in order to stand. But John does not describe them as living but dead. And he goes on to say that “the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell gave up the dead which were in them. Why? Because these were their rightful owners’, this was where they belonged. They, in my view, were the rest of the dead who were

not subjects of the first resurrection but were nevertheless amenable to the judgment of God and the second death by reason of the things recorded in the books. Those whose names were in the Book of Life have already been accounted worthy of Eternal Life and are not seen by John as the dead standing before God. The words of Jesus' I feel sure are still applicable to the faithful during the millennium as they were when he uttered them during His ministry. "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." Jesus leaves no doubt that there is a resurrection of life and there is a resurrection of damnation, the latter cannot be the resurrection Paul was striving to attain unto - Philippians 3:10-14, but that to which Jesus made reference in Luke 20:35. It is worthy of note that from verse 11 of Revelation 20 to the end, John mentions nothing concerning the faithful; all he mentions is "the dead", and death and hell, and judgment out of the books that recorded their works. Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire. We are told that death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; how could this be done unless those who were the constituents of the same and abode in death were one and the same?

This in fact is a recording of what Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 15:26 - "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." All who were cast into the lake of fire were the personification of sin and death, constituting those from Genesis to Revelation, and including the betrayers and murderers of Christ and His beloved servants of all ages. They are those who have sown to the flesh and have reaped corruption, having chosen by their works to abide in death. In bondage to the Devil.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God" says Paul, "neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." So it is obvious that those who come forth with bodies either capable of inheriting incorruption or capable of inheriting corruption, and it is therefore obvious that those whose names are in the book of life will have come forth incorruptible, and those whose names are not in it, will come forth corruptible to experience judicial death. The first death in Genesis which Adam merited by sin, was judicial and was the death which Jesus suffered for all, by blood-shedding, but the second death is also judicial but in this case, having rejected the Sacrifice of Christ, those who are guilty are amenable to it, and also as a consequence of their works of the flesh; and when I say 'works of the flesh', I am not referring to its physical quality but to the unlawful actions committed as opposed to those who cultivate the fruits of the Spirit,

Compare Romans 7:4-8 and Galatians 5:16-24. See also Ephesians 2:1-8.

We have had printed a book dealing with where leaders were wrong about "Redemption, Resurrection and Judgment"; an analysis of much misunderstood doctrines. Except for my personal views in Revelation 20:11-15, most of the subject is dealt with, but how in any case anyone can misunderstand the first six verses of Revelation 20 is beyond me.

So that we shall have no doubts at all as to the subjects of the first resurrection, John declares that they had died for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God - and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. "This is the first resurrection." Revelation 20:5. Verse 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 His Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years." Can anyone wish to have it stated more plainly than this? Do we require that John should state the third time that the subjects of the first resurrection lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years and all others, but these did not live again until the thousand years were finished? Should anyone be so foolish, and declare John's statements to be put under the heading of doctrines to be rejected? To those who oppose our views should you not amend Clauses 24 and 29 of the Christadelphian B.A.S.F? Surely you should realise that your description of the first resurrection (Clause 24) should be worded as a general one, rather than in Clause 29 which speaks of as a reign of grace under God for a thousand years? Surely in six thousand years up to the coming of Christ you should have more rejected than in a thousand years under the direct rule of Christ? The wording is correct in Clause 29, but incorrect in Clause 24 as, by now, if you have read the foregoing defence, you should realise, unless you prefer to be blinded by tradition.

Quotations such as 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 2:19 are conspicuous by their absence in Clause 24, and especially should the latter quotation be noted. Would it be Paul's hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing for the unfaithful and disobedient to be in the presence of Jesus Christ at his coming? Yet Clause 24 emphasises that this is the case, and not only so, but places the period

of the second death at the beginning of the thousand years instead of the end, where it is specifically mentioned. But we are well aware that things have to be twisted, added to, or taken out of context, to fit misunderstood and misguided theories, so the analysis referred to on the cover of our booklet should be a great help to those who desire enlightenment on the subject rather than invented theories handed down and forced upon them under threat of excommunication. Why listen to blind leaders whose counsel is to burn our literature? It has got to such a state now, that if I were seen handing some Christadelphian literature to a Christadelphian, that member would be advised by a fellow member in a so-called superior capacity, to burn it. This is the intolerable state into which misrepresentation of others and consequent indoctrination has brought them. The invitation "Come let us reason together" seems to be lost on them, yet God holds out that invitation to the worst of sinners.

It is not the will of the members of the Nazarene Fellowship to stand before a general assize and witness the weeping and gnashing of teeth of any who are cast out, especially sincere misguided people, and I doubt if they will have to. It is, however, those who are cast out of the inheritance of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who weep and gnash their teeth because they are permitted to see the patriarchs in the Kingdom of God just prior to the second death at the end of the thousand years. It is our wish to reason together with all, and rightly divide the word of truth, not wrest it out of its context to bolster up erroneous theories, and if we refuse to do this, we are refusing to listen to Him who speaks from heaven, in favour of those who have declared they are past the investigating stage. We of the Nazarene Fellowship believe we have been called to comprise the general assembly and church of the firstborn which are written in heaven (Hebrews 12) and our faithful conduct will justify our names being enrolled or written in heaven, and we shall not have to wait for a judgment at His coming to determine whether our names are to be written in the book of life. Paul confirms this in Romans 8:27-39. What a glorious hope to have through the love of God which is in Christ Jesus! There is no fear in this love, but "perfect love casteth out fear." If we fear at all, let it be, lest, a promise being left us of entering into God's Rest, any should seem to come short of it. For unto us the gospel has been preached as well as unto the Jews of Mosaic economy. We are pleased and honoured to pass it on to those who have ears to hear.

Brother P. Parry

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## Exhortation

### Psalm 1

Psalm 1 - presumed without special reason as preface or introduction to the whole Psalm. Yet examining its character it could so stand as a Waymark. The first word Blessed, Greek, '*ashrey*' is properly in the plural form. Blessedness could be considered as an exclamation produced by contemplating the man who has God for his portion. The man, that man! One of a thousand who lives for the accomplishment of the end for which God created him. 1. God made man for happiness. 2. Every man feels a desire to be happy. 3. All humans abhor misery. 4. Happiness is the grand object of pursuit among men. 5. But naturally the mind seeks happiness; where it cannot be found, and in things which are naturally, and morally unfit to communicate it. The true way of obtaining it is here laid down: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Adam Clarke notes a double climax in this verse. Ungodly, Sinners, Scornful. Walk, Stand, Sit. Note progression in evil till its fixed. Also the circumstances of different character and conduct. The Ungodly Counsel, the Sinner his Way, the Scornful his Seat. As James 1:15,16, This is a cursed position. Opposite to Blessed.

The ungodly, *reshaim*. To be unjust, rendering to none their due. Withholding from God. Society, self, what belongs to each.

Sinners, *chattaim* from *chata*. To miss the mark, passover prohibited limits, to transgress, does no good, but does evil.

Scornful, *letsin* from *latsah*. To mock, deride, no religion, free from restraint, make ridicule of sacred things.

This position we are exhorted to avoid, and then Blessed.

But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in His law does he meditate day and night. His delight, no drift, no doubt, no compulsion. Law, continued meditation. His character and conduct as a tree. “And he is like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season and whatever he doeth shall prosper.” Sap, leaves, fruit, and whatever he doeth is blessed.

Law, Torah from *jarah*. To direct, guide, teach, make straight or even, points forward because it guides, direct and instructs in the way of righteousness, make our paths straight, shows what is even or right and points us onward to truth and happiness and is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith and by it the knowledge of sin.

The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, not sinners in the winnowing process of God’s judgment; they cannot stand or be retained as wheat. Also sinners not associated with the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Way. *derech*, to proceed, go on, walk, tread, the way to go to answer end for which truth is given; proceed onward, progression. Onward to end of faith. Romans 2:7; Hebrews 12:1,2.

As good trees by the fruit they yield are known,  
So 'tis by conduct characters are shown:  
God’s chosen ones are those He did foreknow  
That they the fruits of righteousness would show.

J.Hembling.

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This shortened version of chapter ten of “The Temple” by Dr Edersheim is included here as a background to the article on Hebrews 9:12 which follows.

## THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

*“But into the second (tabernacle) went the high-priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people... But Christ being come an high-priest of good things to come... by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” (Hebrews 9:7,11,12).*

**Weakness of the Law.** It may sound strange, and yet it is true, that the clearest testimony to ‘the weakness and unprofitableness’ ‘of the commandment’ is that given by ‘the commandment itself.’ The Levitical arrangements for the removal of sin bear on their forefront, as it were, this inscription: ‘The law made nothing perfect’ - having neither a perfect mediatorship in the priesthood, nor a perfect ‘atonement’ in the sacrifices, nor yet a perfect forgiveness as the result of both. ‘For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect’ Hebrews 10:1.

**The Day of Atonement.** As might have been expected, this ‘weakness and unprofitableness of the commandment’ became most apparent in the services of the day in which the Old Testament provision for pardon and acceptance attained, so to speak, its climax. On the Day of Atonement, not ordinary priests but the high-priest alone officiated, and that not in his ordinary dress, nor yet in that of the ordinary priesthood,

but in one peculiar to the day, and peculiarly expressive of purity. The worshippers also appeared in circumstances different from those on any other occasion, since they were to fast and to ‘afflict their souls;’ the day itself was to be ‘a Sabbath of Sabbatism’ (“sabbath of rest”), while its central services consisted of a series of grand expiatory sacrifices, unique in their character, purpose, and results, as described in these words: ‘He shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.’ (Leviticus 16:33). But even the need of such a Day of Atonement, after the daily offerings, the various festive sacrifices, and the private and public sin-offerings all the year round, showed the insufficiency of all such sacrifices, while the very offerings of the Day of Atonement proclaimed themselves to be only temporary and provisional, ‘imposed until the time of reformation.’

In briefly reviewing the Divine ordinances about this day (Leviticus 16; 23:26-32; Numbers 29:11), we find that only on that one day in every year the high-priest was allowed to go into the Most Holy Place, and then arrayed in a peculiar white dress, which differed from that of the ordinary priests, in that its girdle also was white, and not of the Temple colours, while ‘the bonnet’ was of the same shape, though not the same material as ‘the mitre,’ which the high-priest ordinarily wore. The simple white of his array, in distinction to the ‘golden garments’ which he otherwise wore, pointed to the fact that on that day the high-priest appeared, not ‘as the bridegroom of Jehovah’ but as bearing in his official capacity the emblem of that perfect purity which was sought by the expiations of that day.

From Numbers 29:7-11 it appears that the offerings on the Day of Atonement were really of a three-fold kind – ‘the continual burnt-offering,’ that is, the daily morning and evening sacrifices, with their meat-and drink-offerings; the festive sacrifices of the day, consisting for the high-priest and the priesthood, of ‘a ram for a burnt-offering,’ (Leviticus 16:3) and for the people of one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year (with their meat-offerings) for a burnt-sacrifice, and one kid of the goats for a sin-offering; and, thirdly, and chiefly, the peculiar expiatory sacrifices of the day, which were a young bullock as a sin-offering for the high-priest, his house, and the sons of Aaron, and another sin-offering for the people, consisting of two goats, one of which was to be killed and its blood sprinkled, as directed, while the other was to be sent away into the wilderness, bearing ‘all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins’ which had been confessed ‘over him,’ and laid upon him by the high-priest.

**The Duties of The High Priest.** Seven days before the Day of Atonement the high-priest left his own house in Jerusalem, and took up his abode in his chambers in the Temple.

During the whole of that week, also, he had to practise the various priestly rites, such as sprinkling the blood, burning the incense, lighting the lamp, offering the daily sacrifice, etc. Some of the elders of the Sanhedrim were appointed to see to it, that the high-priest fully understood, and knew the meaning of the service, otherwise they were to instruct him in it. On the eve of the Day of Atonement the various sacrifices were brought before him, that there might be nothing strange about the services of the morrow. Finally, they bound him by a solemn oath not to change anything in the rites of the day. The evening meal of the high-priest before the great day was to be scanty. All night long he was to be hearing and expounding the Holy Scriptures, or otherwise kept employed, so that he might not fall asleep. At midnight the lot was cast for removing the ashes and preparing the altar; and to distinguish the Day of Atonement from all others, four, instead of the usual three, fires were arranged on the great altar of burnt-offering.

**The Morning Service.** The services of the day began with the first streak of morning light. When the first dawn of morning was announced in the usual manner, the high-priest put off his ordinary (layman’s) dress, bathed, put on his golden vestments, washed his hands and feet, and proceeded to perform all the principal parts of the ordinary morning service.

The morning service finished, the high-priest washed his hands and feet, put off his golden vestments, bathed, put on his ‘linen garments,’ again washed his hands and feet, and proceeded to the peculiar part of the day’s services. The bullock for his sin-offering stood between the Temple-porch and the altar. It was placed towards the south, but the high-priest, who stood facing the east (that is, the worshippers), turned the head of the sacrifice towards the west (that is, to face the sanctuary). He then laid both his hands upon the head of the bullock, and confessed as follows:- “Ah, JEHOVAH! I have committed iniquity; I have transgressed; I have sinned - I and my house. Oh, then, JEHOVAH, I entreat Thee, cover over (atone for, let

there be atonement for) the iniquities, the transgressions, and the sins which I have committed, transgressed, and sinned before Thee, I and my house - even as it is written in the law of Moses, Thy servant: For, on that day will He cover over (atone) for you to make you clean; from all your transgressions before JEHOVAH ye shall be cleansed.”

It will be noticed that in this solemn confession the name JEHOVAH occurred three times. Other three times was it pronounced in the confession which the high-priest made over the same bullock for the priesthood; a seventh time was it uttered when he cast the lot as to which of the two goats was to be ‘for JEHOVAH;’ and once again he spoke it three times in the confession over the so-called ‘scape-goat’ which bore the sins of the people. All these ten times the high-priest pronounced the very name of JEHOVAH, and, as he spoke it, those who stood near cast themselves with their faces on the ground, while the multitude responded: ‘Blessed be the Name; the glory of His kingdom is for ever and ever.

**Choosing the Scape-goat.** The first part of the expiatory service - that for the priesthood - had taken place close to the Holy Place, between the porch and the altar. The next was performed close to the worshipping people. In the eastern part of the Court of Priests, that is, close to the worshippers, and on the north side of it, stood an urn, called Calpi, in which were two lots of the same shape, size, and material - in the second Temple they were of gold; the one bearing the inscription ‘la-JEHOVAH,’ for Jehovah, the other ‘la-Azazel,’ (Leviticus 16:8, 10, 26). These two goats had been placed with their backs to the people and their faces towards the sanctuary (westwards). The high-priest now faced the people, as, standing between his substitute (at his right hand) and the head of the course on ministry (on his left hand), he shook the urn, thrust his two hands into it, and at the same time drew the two lots, laying one on the head of each goat.

The lot having designated each of the two goats, the high-priest tied a tongue-shaped piece of scarlet cloth to the horn of the goat for Azazel - the so-called ‘scape-goat’ - and another round the throat of the goat for Jehovah, which was to be slain. The goat that was to be sent forth was now turned round towards the people, and stood facing them, waiting, as it were, till their sins should be laid on him, and he would carry them forth into ‘a land not inhabited.’

**The Confession of Sin and the Sacrifice.** With this presentation of the scape-goat before the people commenced the third and most solemn part of the expiatory services of the day. The high-priest now once more returned towards the sanctuary, and a second time laid two hands on the bullock, which still stood between the porch and the altar, to confess over him, not only as before, his own and his household’s sins, but also those of the priesthood. The formula used was precisely the same as before, with the addition of the words, ‘the seed of Aaron, Thy holy people,’ both in the confession and in the petition for atonement. Then the high-priest killed the bullock, caught up his blood in a vessel, and gave it to an attendant to keep it stirring, lest it should coagulate. Advancing to the altar of burnt-offering, he next filled the censer with burning coals, and then ranged a handful of frankincense in the dish destined to hold it. Every eye was strained towards the sanctuary as, slowly bearing the censer and the incense, the figure of the white-robed high-priest was seen to disappear within the Holy Place. After that nothing further could be seen of his movements.

**The Mercy-seat.** The curtain of the Most Holy Place was folded back, and the high-priest stood alone and separated from all the people in the awful gloom of the Holiest of All, only lit up by the red glow of the coals in the priest’s censer. In the first Temple the ark of God had stood there with the ‘mercy-seat’ overshadowing it; above it, the visible presence of Jehovah in the cloud of the Shechinah, and on either side the outspread wings of the cherubim; and the high-priest had placed the censer between the staves of the ark. But in the Temple of Herod there was neither Shechinah nor ark - all was empty; and the high-priest rested his censer on a large stone, called the ‘foundation-stone.’

He now most carefully emptied the incense into his hand, and threw it on the coals of the censer, as far from himself as possible, and so waited till the smoke had filled the Most Holy Place. Then, retreating backwards, he prayed outside the veil as follows: ‘May it please Thee, O Lord our God, and the God of our fathers, that neither this day nor during this year any captivity come upon us. Yet, if captivity befall us this day or this year, let it be to a place where the law is cultivated. May it please Thee, O Lord our God, and the God of our fathers, that want come not upon either this day or this year. But if want visit us this day or this year, let it be due to the liberality of our charitable deeds. May it please Thee, O Lord our God, and the God

of our fathers, that this year may be a year of cheapness, of fullness, of intercourse and trade; a year with abundance of rain, of sunshine, and of dew; one in which Thy people Israel shall not require assistance one from another..."

**The Sprinkling of the Blood.** While the incense was offering in the Most Holy Place the people withdrew from proximity to it, and worshipped in silence. At last the people saw the high-priest emerging from the sanctuary, and they knew that the service had been accepted. Rapidly he took from the attendant, who had kept it stirring, the blood of the bullock. Once more he entered into the Most Holy Place, and sprinkled with his finger once upwards, towards where the mercy-seat had been, and seven times downwards, counting as he did so: 'Once' (upwards), 'once and once' (downwards), 'once and twice' and so on to 'once and seven times,' always repeating the word 'once' which referred to the upwards sprinkling, so as to prevent any mistake. Coming out from the Most Holy Place, the high-priest now deposited the bowl with the blood before the veil. Then he killed the goat set apart for Jehovah, and, entering the Most Holy Place a third time, sprinkled as before, once upwards and seven times downwards, and again deposited the bowl with the blood of the goat on a second golden stand before the veil. Taking up the bowl with the bullock's blood, he next sprinkled once upwards and seven times downwards towards the veil, outside the Most Holy Place and then did the same with the blood of the goat. Finally, pouring the blood of the bullock into the bowl which contained that of the goat, and again the mixture of the two into that which had held the blood of the bullock, so as thoroughly to commingle the two, he sprinkled each of the horns of the altar of incense, and then, making a clear place on the altar, seven times the top of the altar of incense. Thus he had sprinkled forty-three times with the expiatory blood, taking care that his own dress should never be spotted with the sin-laden blood. What was left of the blood the high-priest poured out on the west side of the base of the altar of burnt-offering.

By these expiatory sprinklings the high-priest had cleansed the sanctuary in all its parts from the defilement of the priesthood and the worshippers. The Most Holy Place, the veil, the Holy Place, the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt-offering were now clean alike, so far as the priesthood and as the people were concerned; and in their relationship to the sanctuary both priests and worshippers were atoned for. So far as the law could give it, there was now again free access for all; or, to put it otherwise, the continuance of typical sacrificial communion with God was once more restored and secured. Had it not been for these services, it would have become impossible for priests and people to offer sacrifices, and so to obtain the forgiveness of sins, or to have fellowship with God. But the consciences were not yet free from a sense of personal guilt and sin. That remained to be done through the 'scape-goat.' All this seems clearly implied in the distinctions made in Leviticus 16:33, 'And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation.'

**The Scape-goat.** Most solemn as the services had hitherto been, the worshippers would chiefly think with awe of the high-priest going into the immediate presence of God, coming out thence alive, and securing for them by the blood the continuance of the Old Testament privileges of sacrifices and of access unto God through them. What now took place concerned them, if possible, even more nearly. Their own personal guilt and sins were now to be removed from them, and that in a symbolical rite, at one and the same time the most mysterious and the most significant of all. All this while the 'scape-goat,' with the 'scarlet-tongue,' telling of the guilt it was to bear, had stood looking eastwards, confronting the people, and waiting for the terrible load which it was to carry away 'unto a land not inhabited.' Laying both his hands on the head of this goat, the high-priest now confessed and pleaded: "Ah, JEHOVAH! they have committed iniquity; they have transgressed; they have sinned - Thy people, the house of Israel. Oh, then, JEHOVAH! cover over (atone for), I intreat Thee, upon their iniquities, their transgressions, and their sins, which they have wickedly committed, transgressed, and sinned before Thee - Thy people, the house of Israel. As it is written in the Law of Moses, Thy servant, saying: For on that day shall it be covered over (atoned) for you, to make you clean from all your sins before JEHOVAH ye shall be cleansed." And while the prostrate multitude worshipped at the name of Jehovah, the high-priest turned his face towards them as he uttered the last words, "Ye shall be cleansed!" as if to declare to them the absolution and remission of their sins.

**The Goat sent into the Wilderness.** Then a strange scene would be witnessed. The priests led the sin-burdened goat out through 'Solomon's Porch,' and, as tradition has it, through the eastern gate, which opened upon the Mount of Olives. Here an arched bridge spanned the intervening valley, and over it they

brought the goat to the Mount of Olives, where one, specially appointed for the purpose, took him in charge. Scripture tells us no more of the destiny of the goat that bore upon him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, than that they 'shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness' and that 'he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.' (Leviticus 16:22).

The arrival of the goat in the wilderness was immediately telegraphed, by the waving of flags, from station to station, till, a few minutes after its occurrence, it was known in the Temple, and whispered from ear to ear, that 'the goat had borne upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited.'

**The Teaching of Scripture.** Not only the text of Leviticus 16, but the language of Hebrews 9 and 10, which chiefly refer to the Day of Atonement, becomes plain. The 'blood' both of the bullock and of the goat which the high-priest carried 'once a year' within 'the sacred veil,' was 'offered for himself (including the priesthood) and for the errors (or rather ignorances) of the people.' In the language of Leviticus 16:20, it reconciled 'the Holy Place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar,' that is, as already explained, it rendered on the part of priests and people the continuance of sacrificial worship possible. But this live scape-goat 'let go' in the wilderness, over which, in the exhaustive language of Leviticus 16:21, the high-priest had confessed and on which he had laid 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins,' meant something quite different. It meant the inherent 'weakness and unprofitableness of the commandment;' it meant, that 'the law made nothing perfect, but was the bringing in of a better hope;' that in the covenant mercy of God guilt and sin were indeed removed from the people, that they were 'covered up,' and in that sense atoned for, or rather that they were both 'covered up' and removed, but that they were not really taken away and destroyed till Christ came; that they were only taken into a land not inhabited, till He should blot it out by His own blood; that the provision which the Old Testament made was only preparatory and temporary, until the 'time of the reformation;' and that hence real and true forgiveness of sins, and with it the spirit of adoption, could only be finally obtained after the death and resurrection of 'the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' Thus in the fullest sense it was true of the 'fathers,' that 'these all... received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.' For 'the law having a shadow of the good things to come,' could not 'make the comers thereunto perfect;' nor yet was it possible 'that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.'

**The Carcasses burnt 'outside the City.'** While the scape-goat was being led into the wilderness, the high-priest proceeded to cut up the bullock and the goat with whose blood he had previously 'made atonement,' put the 'inwards' in a vessel which he committed to an attendant, and sent the carcasses to be burnt 'outside the city,' in the place where the Temple ashes were usually deposited. Then, according to tradition, the high-priest, still wearing the linen garments, went into the 'Court of the Women' and read the passages of Scripture bearing on the Day of Atonement, viz. Leviticus 16;23:27-32; also repeating by heart Numb. 29:7-11. A series of prayers accompanied this reading of the Scriptures. The most interesting of these supplications may be thus summed up - confession of sin with prayer for forgiveness, closing with the words, 'Praise be to Thee, O Lord, Who in Thy mercy forgivest the sins of Thy people Israel;' prayer for the permanence of the Temple, and that the Divine Majesty might shine in it, closing with - 'Praise be to Thee, O Lord, Who inhabitest Zion;' prayer for the establishment and safety of Israel, and the continuance of a king among them, closing 'Thanks be to Thee, O Lord, Who hast chosen Israel; prayer for the priesthood, that all their doings, but especially their sacred services, might be acceptable unto God, and He be gracious unto them, closing with - 'Thanks be to Thee, O Lord, Who hast sanctified the priesthood;' and, finally, prayers, entreaties, hymns, and petitions of the high-priest's own, closing with the words: 'Give help, O Lord, to Thy people Israel, for Thy people needeth help ; thanks be unto Thee, O Lord, Who hearest prayer.'

**The High-priest in Golden Garments.** These prayers ended, the high-priest washed his hands and feet, put off his 'linen,' and put on his 'golden vestments,' and once more washed hands and feet before proceeding to the next ministry. He now appeared again before the people as the Lord's anointed in the golden garments of the bride-chamber. Before he offered the festive burnt-offerings of the day, he sacrificed 'one kid of the goats for a sin-offering' (Numbers 29:16), probably with special reference to these festive services, which, like everything else, required atoning blood for their acceptance. The flesh of this sin-offering was eaten at night by the priests within the sanctuary. Next, he sacrificed the burnt-offerings for the people and that for himself (one ram, Leviticus 16:3), and finally burned the 'inwards' of the expiatory offerings, whose blood had formerly been sprinkled in the Most Holy Place. This, properly speaking, finished the services of the

day. But the high-priest had yet to offer the ordinary evening sacrifice, after which he washed his hands and his feet, once more put off his 'golden' and put on his 'linen garments,' and again washed his hands and feet. This before entering the Most Holy Place a fourth time on that day, to fetch from it the censer and incense-dish which he had left there. On his return he washed once more hands and feet, put off his linen garments, which were never to be used again, put on his golden vestments, washed hands and feet, burnt the evening incense on the golden altar, lit the lamps on the candlestick for the night washed his hands and feet, put on his ordinary layman's dress, and was escorted by the people in procession to his own house in Jerusalem. The evening closed with a feast.

Dr Edersheim

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## Hebrews Chapter 9 verse 12

*“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption( for us).”*

A few weeks ago I received an e-mail from one of our regular readers asking:

“Could you please comment on Hebrews 9 verse 12 where it says that Jesus obtained eternal redemption, with the words ‘for us’ in italics? The verb ‘obtained’ is apparently in the ‘middle voice’ meaning something he did for himself. I think you would say that Jesus obtained redemption by sheer obedience, but in what sense can it legitimately be said that Jesus needed redemption? Are we talking about redemption from mortality if not a sin-prone nature?”

Let us first look at the Christadelphian viewpoint regarding Hebrews 9:12 and for this we have chosen an article by George Armonis which we think is fairly typical of their understanding:-

George Armonis writes:-

### OBTAINING REDEMPTION

“There is probably no passage of the New Testament that has been so much misused, misinterpreted and misunderstood as that in Hebrews 9:12. It lies at the very foundation of the divine work manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ, and establishes the reason and purpose for which he sought redemption from the corruption that is common to man. This article looks at the interesting structure of the verse.

In Hebrews 9:12, Paul shows that the mediatorial work of the Lord Jesus Christ could not be fully realized until he was physically made appropriate for the work: by being clothed upon with the garments of immortality. The verse states: “Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption (for us).” (Hebrews 9:11-12).

To properly understand the principle of divine redemption seen in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is helpful to examine the Greek tenses used in this quotation.

Firstly, it should be noted that the final words “for us” are not in the original text, and should be eliminated. They do not conform to the structure of the verse, and have obviously been introduced by the translators who could not understand the principle that the sacrifice of Christ was firstly for his own benefit, so that he could become the Redeemer of his people.

The first section of the quotation identifies the subject of the whole exposition. It concerns the appointment of Christ as a “high priest of good things to come.” Thus, Christ first “enters the holy place.” Why? In order to “obtain eternal redemption.” Why so? Because he did not beforehand possess it, having been born into the “constitution of sin” in common with his brethren (Hebrews 2:14-16).

We now wish to carefully examine the last four words: “having obtained eternal redemption.”

“Having obtained” is one word in the Greek: *euramenos*. According to Greek grammar, the word is in the masculine gender - which agrees with the subject: Christ. Further, it is in the Middle Voice, and is a participle.

We should explain that a unique feature of the Greek language is its division of words into three “voices:” Active, Passive and Middle.

1) The Active Voice denotes an action has taken place, or is taking place (e.g. “the boy plays with the ball” - the active part is the boy).

2) The Passive Voice denotes an action performed by another on behalf of the person (e.g., “The child is having a bath, bathed by his mother.” The action part relates to his mother for the child - not to being in the child. The phrase “is having a bath” is one word in Greek, recognized by its ending.

3) The Middle Voice denotes an action that a person does for himself and for his own benefit. The action of the subject returns back to himself - i.e. “The boy is dressing himself.” He does it himself and for his own benefit. Again the phrase “is dressing himself” is one word in the Greek, recognized by its ending.

Let us now find in the Scriptures this very same word in the Three Voices-

The root word for *euramenos* is *eurisko*. It occurs many times in the Active and Passive Voices, but remarkably only once in the Middle Voice - in Hebrews 9:12.

Notice the word occurs in the Active Voice in 2 John 4, “I rejoiced greatly that I found (eureka) of thy children walking in truth.” The active part is the children. What were they doing? They were “walking in truth.”

The Passive Voice occurs in Galatians 2:17, “While we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found (*eurethemen*) sinners.” Who does the action here? God does. For whom? For us; thus it is in the Passive Voice.

The word in the Middle Voice is only found in Hebrews 9:12, “having obtained (*euramenos*) eternal redemption.” It is not “in himself,” as some translate it, but “for himself.” For his own benefit exclusively.

The translation “in himself” does not give true justice to the Middle Voice of the word *euramenos*. This is not only because it appears in the Middle Voice (and Paul could have used either of the other two voices), but the word *euramenos* is also found in the participle form. Now, as the Middle Voice demands that the action of the subject returns back upon himself, so the participle demands that the subject (Christ) takes part himself of that action.

There are no exceptions whatsoever in these rules of the Greek language.

The word *eurisko* means “to be found.” So Christ has found eternal redemption for himself.

How do we come to this conclusion? Because of the use of the Middle Voice and the Verbal Adjective Form (which qualifies the noun). This agrees with other words of Paul:

“The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits” (2 Timothy 2:6) and with the words of the Lord: “I send you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: others (not other men) laboured, and ye have entered into their labours” (John 4:38).

Putting these two quotations together reveals that Christ, who laboured together with his Father, first found eternal redemption for himself, and opened the way for others. Brother H.P.Mansfield stated: “The Lord

obtained for himself redemption (Hebrews 9:12 R.V.), and having saved himself, is able to extend salvation unto others (Romans 8:34)." ("Story of the Bible" vol.10, p. 180).

Obviously, if the "redemption" obtained by his sacrificial death (Hebrews 9:12) were for us and not for himself, we would already be redeemed; why then the need for us to "make our calling and election sure"? It is, in fact, not until Hebrews 9:14 that our own redemption is brought into view, and then it is firstly a moral cleansing. The Statement of Faith clearly teaches that "by dying (Jesus Christ was to) abrogate the law of condemnation for himself, and all who should believe and obey him" (Clause 8). Clearly the "dying" referred to is the "death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8), being a sacrificial death. Thus, when we understand that the redemption mentioned in Hebrews 9:12 is expressed in the Greek Middle Voice, which form of grammar demands that it was for himself, and for his benefit, and that the Participle relates it to the subject: Christ, therefore he must, of necessity, be a participant in that redemption. In his offering he provided not only for his own need but also for that of his family, inasmuch as both "he" and "his children" (Hebrews 2:13) are thereby saved."

George Armonis

Early on George Armonis stated:

"The first section of the quotation identifies the subject of the whole exposition. It concerns the appointment of Christ as a "high priest of good things to come." Thus, Christ first "enters the holy place." Why? In order to "obtain eternal redemption." Why so? Because he did not beforehand possess it, having been born into the "constitution of sin" in common with his brethren (Hebrews 2:14-16)."

The claim here is that Jesus entered heaven itself before He received eternal redemption. But can this be right? If it can be shown that Jesus had eternal life before He ascended into heaven can it be true that He was still in need of eternal redemption?

We know that Jesus sacrifice is the Great Antitype of all the sacrifices for sin under the Law of Moses and most notably those on the annual Day of Atonement, but where do we find the type of Jesus entering into the Holy Place to receive redemption? Such a thing is not to be found in the Scriptures! Certainly the Mosaic high priest entered the sanctuary in order to seek forgiveness. This was, in the first instance, to seek forgiveness for himself so that he could ceremonially represent Jesus Christ, the sinless Antitype who was to follow, and then, being ceremonially clean, he could seek forgiveness for the people. Jesus entered into heaven to be our High Priest so that we could be forgiven – not to receive redemption for Himself.

God has ordained that sacrifice must precede forgiveness. Jesus sacrifice provided redemption. Those who accept the redemption offered can then seek the forgiveness which leads to eternal life.

Redemption is for those who are alienated from God - having been "sold under sin" (Romans 7:14), "concluded under sin" (Galatians 3:22), "Jews and Gentiles all under sin" (Romans 3:9), "concluded in unbelief" (Romans 11:32). But never in scripture is it said that a child of God is sold under sin, concluded under sin nor are in any way under sin, neither concluded in unbelief.

Some will claim that because "God sent forth His Son... made under the law" (Galatians 4:4) then He needed redemption from the law, but this is claiming too much. Of course Jesus was under law otherwise He could not have been tempted in all points as we are. We are all under the laws of the country in which we live, and so long as we do not break the laws we are not condemned by them. That was the position Jesus was in. Never having broken the law, i.e. never having sinned, Jesus was never condemned by the law and also being free of the condemnation that came upon Adam when he transgressed, He could lay down His own life – His own possession, i.e. 'unsold to sin' – in place of the life Adam forfeited which was 'sold to sin.' Jesus was free-born. Only those 'in Adam' are in need of redemption. Jesus replaced, as it were, Adam and all in Jesus are free of condemnation having come out of the first Adam and entered into the 'second Adam' by accepting the redemption Jesus offered through His sacrifice. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5:24).

Let us now ask at the question, Did Adam need Redemption before he sinned? We answer, No, he did not. Adam needed a change of nature to live for ever but he did not need redemption.

Jesus also needed a change of nature to live for ever, but He never needed Redemption from sin any more than Adam before he sinned. Jesus shed blood was for us; it was the Precious Redemption Price. (1 Peter 1:19). He gave His life as a Ransom for many (Matthew 20:28), for all (I Timothy 2:6), but not for Himself, as Daniel 9:26 tells us, “And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself.”

“Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own Blood.” (Acts 20:28).

“For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich, yet for your sakes, He became poor, that ye through His Poverty might be made rich” ( 2 Corinthians 8:9).

“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (I John 1:vs. 6 and 7).

**Again it is important to realise** that one cannot be redeemed by an unclean sacrifice for such was Jesus if, as has been claimed, He still needed redemption after being the sacrifice for our redemption.

So when did Jesus receive eternal life? Let Jesus answer: “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” (John 5:26). We ask, what life did the Father have in Himself? Jesus used the word “zoe” which is spirit life as distinct from “psuche” which is natural life. This being so then we can be certain Jesus didn’t have to wait until after His resurrection and ascension into heaven to obtain spirit life as He already had it. Jesus lost His natural life (psuche) but He never lost His spirit life (zoe). The natural life of Jesus was in the blood which He shed on Calvary. When Jesus died on the cross, His spirit life remained with His Father until His the resurrection when He received it back again. “I am he that liveth (zao), and was dead; and, behold, I am alive (zao) for evermore.” (Revelation 1:18).

Our conclusions then are that 1) Jesus did not receive His natural life back again, but was raised with eternal life before ascending to heaven and, 2) Jesus never had any need for redemption.

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## **This next piece is from a booklet entitled “Sacrifice” written by a Christadelphian who wished to withhold his name.**

“The Apostle Paul tells us that, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief” (1 Timothy 1:15). How clear and concise is the reason for Christ’s death thus set out for us. If the mission of His death was for the redemption of so-called sin-nature, how could the Apostle style himself the chief? There is surely no gradations to sin-nature. But our transgressions can be multiplied. Our offences are many. “Yet there is deliverance from them, because Christ was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25). And “when He had by Himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High” (Hebrews 1:3). Again we read that after “He had offered one Sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Hebrews 10:12). God being in heaven, this is the place that the Apostle Paul styles the most holy place, where Christ hath entered “to appear in the presence of God for us” (Hebrews 9:24).

There is no gainsaying the fact that the redemption here mentioned, through His shed blood was for us. Were it for Himself, we are still in need of redemption, and would also be a flat contradiction of the truthful axiom that any that is already forfeited cannot purchase redemption for another that is likewise forfeited. What saith the great apostle; “In whom (Christ) we have redemption, through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:14).

This statement to the Colossians covers the whole groundwork of redemption in as condensed a manner as possible. He tells us who hath received the redemption, what it consists of and also the price paid for it. Let us acknowledge His death to be sacrificial death on our account, and then only can we measure the great love of Christ. "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him which died for them" (2 Corinthians 5:14,15)."

We turn now to consider whether or not Jesus had sin in the flesh through His descent from Mary. Those who maintain the blood of Jesus ran in the veins of Mary should think again. Nature has provided that not a single drop of a mother's blood should enter the veins of her off-spring.

Before birth the child's needs are obtained through the umbilical cord, which connects the child to the placenta. The placenta allows all the essentials for growth, such oxygen, glucose, calcium, iron, fatty acids, salt, and hormones, etc. to pass by osmosis from the mother's blood stream into that of the embryo, and which at the same time prevents the mixing of the blood of the mother and foetus. These processes are initiated at conception by the germ of life, the living cell supplied by the father. There is no mixing of the mother's blood with that of her offspring.

Supposing sin ran in the veins of Mary as some believe, it was not passed on to Jesus. The life of Jesus was passed on to Him from His Father as a new creation independent of Adam even though through one of Adam's offspring. Jesus offered His own life-blood as the sacrifice for us and there was not a single particle of His mother's blood in it.

To help consolidate some of these points I quote next from a booklet by Andrew Wilson entitled "The Atonement" X-Rayed":-

"Now, please permit an analysis of your implicated triune assumption. First, Hebrews 5:7 contains not the ghost of a hint that "the blood of Jesus required to be shed on His own account," but it is a glorious confirmation of the ransom in place of (*anti lutron*) man. He had previously merited His title to immortality. Had you been expert on the Greek middle voice, and our English nominative absolute, you ought to have known that our Lord, before He voluntarily laid down His life's blood a ransom in place of (*anti lutron*) man, the hour had come when He should have been glorified, but had this taken place before laying down His life a ransom for man, He says He had remained alone (John 12:24). Could the Beloved One have made it plainer? The Greek middle voice, and our English nominative absolute, establish this Divine truth beyond refutation, e.g. "Having obtained a rifle, James shot the lion." Now, an infant in grammar knows that the obtaining of the rifle preceded the shooting of the lion. So Jesus also having obtained eternal deliverance (*aionian lutrosin*) entered once for all into the Holy Place" (Hebrews 9:12. See also verse 15, *eis apolutrosin*).

Now, what was God's specific purpose with His Grain of Wheat? I reply, to raise a crop. What was God's next requisite in the process? I reply, before a crop can be raised, God's own Grain must first die. But if God had sown not His Grain, what had the result been? I, with Jesus, reply, it had remained eternally with God (John 12:24). Is there a soul under heaven so dense, so grossly blind to the Divine deduction that the sacrifice of the life blood of Christ was not by any means for Himself, but for the crop of wheat? Does not God's wheat field become interesting the more so when the devil came on the scene with his tares - his condemned representative association?! Thus, the present tense, both of the Greek middle voice and that of our English nominative absolute, runs parallel with the past tense of the principal sentence.

Our next question is, Did Jesus need to die, or could He have entered eternal life alone? For our answer we turn again Brother Andrew Wilson - to his booklet "From Eden to Gethsemane." He is here answering a matter raised by the Editor of "The Fraternal Visitor."

"The Editor declares that -

"There was no stage before His death concerning which the Scripture warrants us in saying at this point He had established His title to eternal life."

We would contrast that utterance with the words of the Lord Jesus, viz., “The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified” (John 12:24). But the Master shows that if this had taken place without His dying He would have remained alone.

“Verily I say unto thee, except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

Glorious metaphor of Jesus! God is the Farmer. Jesus is His Grain of Wheat which He sowed in the earth before a crop could be raised. But that other lord is still sowing tares. Let us desist therefore from handing him out the seed by declaring Jesus to be under the curse and sin’s possession. Let us discriminate between the wheat and the tares; between the Seed of God and the serpent’s seed.

But we would point out to the editor that Hebrews 9:12 also declares that Jesus prior to His death had earned His title to immortality. The Editor shows that the Greek verb here is in the middle voice and is equal to “having got Him” eternal deliverance. This is accurate, but it is not enough. The English grammarian also terms this “a nominative absolute,” which proves beyond dispute that Jesus, prior to His death, had earned His title. It does not say that He entered the Holiest by His own blood and obtained, etc., but that He entered the Holiest by His own blood having obtained eternal deliverance. The tense of this nominative absolute shows that the obtaining preceded the entering - e.g. James, having obtained a revolver, shot the lion. The obtaining of the revolver precedes the shooting of the lion. So Jesus entered the Holiest previously having obtained His title to Glorification, directly on account of which God anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows (Hebrews 1:9).

Adam, before he could live eternally, needed deliverance (not redemption) from the natural condition, but he failed to establish his title: the second, by obedience, established His title (John 12:24; Hebrews 1:9). The latter, before accepting His merited prize, in Divine Love voluntarily went through the jaws of all-devouring death for doomed man (John 10:18). Breathes not the man who will prove Jesus under the curse.”

Let us read again Hebrews 9:12: “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”

While it is true that Jesus entered into heaven for us as verse 24 confirms, we see this is not what the writer is saying in this verse 12.

The word “redemption” can also mean “deliverance.” The word “deliverance” is used in Hebrews 11:35 - “Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting *deliverance*; that they might obtain a better resurrection.” Hebrews 9:12 uses the Greek word “lutrosis” and Hebrews 11:35 “apolutrosis.”

The word “obtained” can also mean “found” as for example, Matthew 10:39, He that *findeth* his life shall lose it: he that loseth his life for my sake shall *find* it.”

We know that Jesus never needed redemption. We know Jesus had eternal life before He entered into heaven. We know that Jesus did not need to die having earned a title to eternal life by perfect obedience. We know that Jesus voluntarily went to the cross to be the sacrifice for the sin of the world because of His amazing love for us.

Now let us see what the writer to the Hebrews is saying in this verse 12 and for this I will therefore paraphrase the verse in these terms: ‘It was not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood that Jesus entered the holy place as our High Priest, having already obtained eternal deliverance from His earlier nature.’

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Hebrews 12:1, 2).

Brother Russell Gregory

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### **Extract from correspondence...**

I should like you to send me the following pamphlets. I wish to be fully acquainted with your interpretation so that I able to state my differences to my own ecclesia. I am amazed – not at anyone else - but amazed at myself at the tame acceptance of some of the tenets of the Christadelphian belief. Regarding your booklet, “You Can Burn This In Ten Seconds,” I must say I started reading that first and thought well here goes, I can at least burn it as suggested, but of all your papers I find that one most convincing – firstly to get a clearer impression of what I’m supposed to accept, but what is more important, what saith the Scriptures – I am still reading them all and I repeat with all humility that your papers have made a profound impression on my life-long association of Christadelphians.

I shall be grateful, therefore dear brother, if you will send the enclosed list of papers I haven’t got and now the evenings are longer I can give them my undivided attention.

Time is short and the news of the world points to the beginning of that long looked for day of Promise - His return.

I shall look forward to hearing from you. With all good wishes and love in the Hope of Israel,

Your brother in the same Hope.”

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## **Lebanon and The Middle East**

Out of fear of Hizbullah, Lebanon has formed a new unity government, established in August, which has given in to their demands for a say in Government decisions. The opposition now headed by Hizbullah has 11 out of 30 cabinet ministers effectively giving Hezbollah veto power over government decisions. The new government has also stipulated that Hizbullah has the right to fight against Israel to “recover the land occupied by Israel.”

Imad Nasrallah, head of Hizbullah in Lebanon, has threatened revenge for the assassination of their operations chief, Imad Mughniyeh in Damascus last February. Israel denies any involvement but Hizbullah are looking for every opportunity for aggression encouraged and supported by Iran who supply them with arms and opportunities for training. One of their aims is to kidnap Israelis and the Israeli Prime Ministers Office has issued a warning urging Israelis to pay more attention to unusual conduct around them, reject tempting and unexpected business and recreation offers, and avoid taking in or hosting unexpected or suspicious guests in their hotel rooms or homes; to avoid remote areas, especially after dark, and to insist on being around familiar and reliable people; to change one’s daily routine every once in a while, including hotels, walking paths, restaurants and recreation sites. It is believed that several attempts of abduction have already been thwarted.

In 1983, Imad Mughniyeh orchestrated the simultaneous truck bombings against French paratroopers and the US Marine barracks in Beirut, in which 58 French soldiers and 241 Marines were killed. He became a prime target for Western intelligence agencies at the time and for the next 20 years. He was indicted by

Argentina over the 1992 and 1994 Israel embassy and Jewish community office bombings and regarded as the brains behind Hizbullah's strategy in the Second Lebanon War,

When Mughniyeh was travelling from Lebanon to Sudan, to meet with Iranian intelligence officials and mujahideen veterans from Afghanistan, he made a stopover at Charles de Gaulle. The CIA had supplied the French with details of the fake passport Mughniyeh was using. Yet despite a positive identification made by the Americans at the airport, the French never detained him, claiming that "he had managed to slip away."

The Military Intelligence officer in charge of the "Mughniyeh file," said "The French were the champions at this kind of thing." After Hizbullah snatched some Frenchmen in Lebanon, the French Foreign Ministry bought peace through quiet agreements with Hizbullah. There were at least two cases where they closed their eyes to blatant terrorist activity, just so that their interests would not be harmed.

Mughniyeh, the Hizbullah terror chief, became Osama bin Laden's 'inspiration' whose attacks he helped facilitate. The two men met in Khartoum, and according to a witness's testimony to the FBI, Hizbullah supplied al-Qaida with explosives instruction, and Iran used Hizbullah to provide bin Laden with bombs. Much of the al-Qaida training was carried out in camps in Iran."

It is not surprising then that Iran wants a tighter control on Hizbullah and has made a number of changes to the Lebanese group. Hassan Nasrallah no longer has exclusive control over Hizbullah in Lebanon and has seek Iranian permission to carry the more important operations. He is believed to be under the Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei

Furthermore, early in September, a high-level delegation of Iranian Revolutionary Guards visited Beirut to coordinate the integration of some Hizbullah branches into the Guards' Al-Quds Force, which is in charge of Iran's terror activities in Iraq, Lebanon and elsewhere. According to the Reform Party of Syria, parts of the Hizbullah operation structure will now be under the command of Brig.-Gen. Faramaz Ghasem Suleimani, commander of the Al-Quds Force.

Iran's plan is to increase the influence of Hizbullah in order to prevent anyone making a peace deal with Israel. If Iran is attacked by the US or Israel, it may now be able to order Hizbullah to retaliate on its behalf.

Another development is that Hizbullah's Al-Manar satellite television station has begun using an Indonesian satellite to broadcast across Asia and Australia. Al-Manar is full of anti-Israel and anti-US propaganda. Indonesia's decision to allow the Al-Manar hookup undermines US and European efforts to limit the reach of Hizbullah's broadcasts.

To make matters worse, Russia, in trying to assert more influence in Middle East affairs, has sold advanced weaponry to Syria and Iran. Some of these weapons have been passed on to terrorist fighters in Lebanon and Iraq with the intention of "wiping Israel off the map." This further complicates any prospects for peace and security in the Middle East.

When the next war starts the whole world will be embroiled as never before imagined.

***Latest update – 28<sup>th</sup> September: Israeli officials revealed that some 50 attempts by Hizbullah to kidnap Israelis abroad have been thwarted in recent years.***

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**Jeremiah 46:28.**

"Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished."