

C.L. No. 313 Jan/Feb/Mar 2026

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Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Again I feel unable to compose a fresh editorial, so have selected one which I wrote for the March 1992 Circular Letter. I hope it is of interest to readers - how we were looking forward to the future some 34 years ago. Now we can compare it with events that have taken place since then!

One of the most straightforward prophecies regarding our present times [March 1992] is given in Ezekiel's prophesy, chapter 37 and the first 14 verses, in the parable of the Valley of Dry Bones. The dry bones are the Jews scattered throughout the world and the graves are the countries where they have been scattered for centuries, cut off from one another and without hope of the Promises.

Of these “bones” God said, “I will lay sinews upon you and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live.” (verse 6). This I believe is descriptive of the re-establishment of the nation of Israel in their Promised Land in 1948.

Verse 7: “there was a noise;” I suggest has reference to World War I when the Turks were driven out of Palestine by the British army and Great Britain promised the Jews they would have a homeland there. However, when Jews began arriving in Palestine there was much opposition from the Arabs and it fell to the lot of the British army to try to keep the peace between the Jews and Arabs for the next 30 years.

“And behold a shaking” I suggest refers to events surrounding World War II which forced greater numbers of these “bones” to go to Palestine and by 1947 Great Britain had had enough of trying to administer this trouble spot and in May 1948 withdrew all their armed forces expecting the ill equipped Jews to be wiped out by the overwhelming number of Arabs, but on the 14th May 1948 the Jews declared Israel to be a nation. These “Dry Bones” had been covered over with sinews, flesh and skin and were now a body of people, a new nation.

What of the breath which God said He would put in them that they should live? This, I believe is yet to happen. For over 70 years we have seen the Jews in Israel believing in their own strength and expecting their God to help them but they have not acknowledged God’s Supremacy. Their confidence is ill founded and there is yet more for the nation to learn for they are not yet putting their trust in Him but in their own power to overcome their many enemies surrounding them. They have yet to put their trust in Almighty God and I believe events will yet force them into this situation, when their enemies over-run their land. At which time the friendly Western powers will feel so helpless that all they can say is, “Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil? (Ezekiel 38:12 & 13). While in Jeremiah 30:7 to 11, we read, “Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. 8. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve

themselves of him: 9. But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. 10. Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. 11. For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet I will not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished.

What follows then will be the establishment of the Kingdom and Jesus Christ's rule of righteousness throughout the whole world. "Even so, come Lord Jesus."

With Sincere Love to all, Russell Gregory.

A Reader Asks, "How do I know if my name is in the Book of Life?" Two replies from Russell

1st reply : -

Dear Brother R,

This question is bound to arise in our minds and though no scripture gives us a direct answer, the gospel message of a glorious future should give us confidence as to its certainty as we continually absorb Bible teaching. Right from Genesis we can see the constant love of God for mankind, so let us start there with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

What I wish to do here is paint a picture starting in Genesis 2:15,16, and I quote, "And Yahweh Ehlohim took the man (Adam), put him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to preserve it. 16. And Yahweh Elohim commanded the man, saying, you may eat freely from every tree of the garden but concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat from that, for in the day of your eating of it you will surely die."

Then, after Eve was formed from one of Adam's ribs, having been made an help-meet for Adam, she was also told of this forbidden tree. However, after a while she was tempted to eat of the tree in order to make

herself 'wise.' Then she gave some of the fruit to Adam and he also ate of it knowing full well of the consequences – they would die that very day!

But God is very merciful and had something else in mind, so He did not put Adam and Eve to death but changed their circumstances and gave them further opportunity of life eternal. Moreover it was God Himself who would provide the means whereby they could be saved by His grace.

In John 3:16 we read, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, to the end that everyone believing into Him might not suffer ruin 17. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.” How He loved us! In 2 Peter 3:9, we read, “The Lord is not slow concerning his promise, as some men deem delay, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing or any to perish, but for all to come to submission.”

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the Son of Mary was called “the last Adam became a life-giving spirit” (1 Corinthians 15:45). He was a human being like us, made subject to God’s commands and He never transgressed. After a period of probation He could have been taken up into heaven as we can see from Luke 9:51-54, - “And it came about, in the fulfilling of the days for his being taken up, that he resolutely set his face to go to Jerusalem.” We do not find Him being taken up, instead, “he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem where He offered Himself as the Lamb of God to take away the Sin of the world.

He said regarding Himself, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless the grain of wheat falling into the ground should die, it should remain alone. But if it should die, it bears much fruit.” (John 12:24) for Jesus was determined to do His Father’s will and take on Himself the death penalty due to Adam !

We read in John 15:12 to 17, “This is my commandment, That you love each other, just as I have loved you. 13. No greater love has anyone than this, that someone should lay down his life for his friends. 14. You are my friends if you carry out whatever I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does

not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from beside my Father I have made known to you 16. Not that you chose me, but I choose you and appointed you to go and produce fruit, and your fruit should remain, so that whatever you might ask the Father in my name He might give you. 17. I charge you with this: that ye love each other.

With love in Jesus Christ out Lord, Russell.

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This second ‘reply’ on the subjects of baptism and the Federal Principle is an article I wrote in 2006 and is included as it adds more substance to the discussion : -

The Simplicity of The Federal Principle yet How Very Important.

Dr. John Thomas wrote in Elpis Israel on page 132 (14th edition):

"As the constitution of sin hath its roots in the disobedience of the first Adam, so also hath the constitution of righteousness root in the obedience of the second Adam. Hence the apostle says, "As through one offence (sentence was pronounced) upon all men unto condemnation; so also through the righteousness (sentence was pronounced) upon all men (that is Jews and Gentiles) unto a justification of life. For as through the disobedience of the one man the many were constituted sinners: so also through the obedience of the one the many shall be constituted righteous."

"The two Adams are two federal chiefs the first being figurative of the second in these relations. All sinners are in the first Adam; and all the righteous in the second, only on a different principle. Sinners were in the loins of the first when he transgressed; but not in the loins of the latter when he was obedient unto death; therefore the flesh profiteth nothing. For sons of Adam to become Sons of God they must be subjects of

an adoption which is only attainable by some divinely appointed means."

It is plain that the most important aspect of baptism has been lost to most Christian sects who commonly hold the view that baptism into Jesus Christ is simply for the forgiveness of sins.

In "Reading the Bible Effectively" (A Christadelphian Study Book) we are told that baptism is "burial in water" and quotes from Romans 6 – "Buried with him (Jesus) by baptism into death." We are further told that "Baptism also represents the putting to death and burial of the old way of life, and a rising up again to a new life, centred upon Jesus. But in the summing up of this section all we read is that Baptism is:- "essential for salvation;" "involves mature responsible adults;" "must be preceded by belief of the Gospel;" "involves total immersion in water;" it "washes away our sins" and is "is how we become Abraham's seed and heirs of the promises."

Regarding John the Baptist, we read in Mathew 3:5,6 "Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judaea... and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins" and in Mark 1:4 we find that "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." If John's baptism was for the forgiveness of sins then why another baptism? Why a baptism into Christ? We know there were some who, having been baptised by John were later baptised into Jesus Christ by the Apostles. Why then was not John's baptism sufficient seeing it was for the forgiveness of sins? What more was necessary? Besides, why was Jesus, a man who had no sins to confess, baptised by John?

But before we go any further, it is perhaps necessary that we explain what we mean by the Federal Principle. Of course, this term does not appear in Scripture though the principle is explained by Paul in Romans chapters 5 to 7. The Federal Principle has to do with Law and applies only in the legal and doctrinal sphere; it determines whether a man is in Adam or in Christ and has nothing to do with nature, heredity, or the physical Law of reproduction, and while it is over all mankind, it is not operative on all.

In the simplest terms it is expressed as a coming out of Adam and into Christ.

The one sin of Adam introduced this Law of The Sin and The Death and it becomes operative upon all those who are responsible by reason of enlightenment. If a child dies, it is the result of natural causes or misfortune, and not because of Adam's sin nor because of the federal principle, since where there is no Law there is no transgression and sin is not imputed (John 15:22). The gospel is concerned with people who have attained to years of discretion and reason, and once the Law is known, a person is responsible and comes under the Law of sin and death.

This coming out of Adam and passing into Jesus Christ can be understood in much the same way as when one would choose to leave the country of ones birth to become a citizen of another country of one's choice. Such a move involves a change of allegiance, for Adam and Jesus are the two Federal Heads. Either we can, according to Scripture, be in Adam or in Christ, but we cannot be in both at the same time. We can pay allegiance to only one. No man can serve two masters. This change of allegiance is the primary purpose of baptism while the forgiveness of sins from this time onwards keeps the disciple of Jesus free from losing his place in the Kingdom to come.

The application and the importance of this Federal Principle can be seen from the fact that by repentance and obedience, men are removed from the Federal Condemnation in Adam into the Federal Redemption in Christ, and after baptism, as a symbolic suffering of The Death, they are no longer under condemnation (Romans 8:1) or in bondage, but free (John 8:36) and uncondemned and able to rejoice in the certainty of their salvation if they endure faithfully (John 5:24). Christadelphians ignore the legal of the Federal Principle, and make it the basis of the sinful flesh heresy, applying it to the physical state of corruptibility which includes responsible and irresponsible alike.

So we see that by one man, Adam, sin entered into the world and with that sin came judicial death for sin. (Natural death is not the result of sin; it was part of God's "very good" creation from, the beginning). Since that time, all those who are enlightened are considered to be in

Adam and under condemnation, not as a curse; not as a misfortune; not as a punishment, but for the purpose of a blessing. Certainly, scripture calls it a condemnation and we can see it as an alienation from our Creator, but the blessing is that this condemnation, this alienation, can be lifted so that there is now no condemnation – see Romans 8:1 - and no alienation for those in Christ Jesus.

Jesus was appointed of God to be the perfect antitypical offering - the substance to the various shadow offerings under the Law described throughout the old testament. A Lamb without spot or blemish. "For this cause came I into the world and for this cause was I born." "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" - John 1:29. John says, "in him is no sin" (1 John 3:5). Peter says, "He did no sin" (1 Peter 2:22). Paul says "He knew no sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21). The writer to the Hebrews says, "He was apart from sin." In short, Jesus was that Holy thing born of the Virgin Mary to be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). Because of His Paternity He was empowered to do for us that which we, because of our paternity, were without power to do for ourselves - that was, to reconcile us to God. Romans 5:6,10, "For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

This was foretold in Psalm 80:17, "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man, whom thou madest strong for thyself" and confirmed by Paul in 2 Corinthians 8:9, "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 rich." So we see Jesus Christ dying the judicial death, the death for sin, "the Just for the unjust that he might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18).

With his death Jesus paid the price of the wages of sin for us. Romans 6:10, "For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." For had He not died so that by the grace of God we might share in that death unto sin through the symbolism of baptism, then we would have to die the judicial death for ourselves. Hebrews 2:9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." 2 Corinthians 5:14,15, "For the love of

God constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead."

The fundamental difference between receiving the reward of either life or death forms the basis of and the justification for the two sovereign Laws under which mankind live out their responsibility to their Creator.

- 1) The Law of Sin and Death defines the condemnation of Romans 5
- 2) The Law of the Spirit of Life in Jesus Christ defines the justification of Romans 5.

While this is quite straightforward, there are those who cling to the misconception which make this Federal Principle of non-effect - the premise that Adam introduced physical corruptibility into the world at the fall; which cursed condition, some say, remains with all mankind and can only be altered for those in Christ after they have successfully passed the Judgment Seat at Christ's return. But the teaching that mankind is under physical condemnation since the time of Adam has its foundation in the man-made Roman Catholic doctrine of Original Sin. It is not found in Scripture and its main support has always been the mistranslation and consequent misunderstanding of Romans 8:3. "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." But nowhere in Scripture are we told that the flesh is full of sin. The physical flesh is not sinful; it is not full of sin. It is not correct to say that flesh is sinful. People are sinful, not their flesh. If Mr Green, the farmer had a herd of cows, would you refer to them as farmer Green's cows? Or would you refer to them as green cows? Yet this is the error the translators have made in this verse. Why? Perhaps because they wanted to uphold their doctrine of Original Sin! There seems no other explanation for this error, or false translation. Oh, the harm this has caused!

Romans 8:3 should read that Jesus was sent in the likeness of sin's flesh, i.e. flesh belonging to Sin as a master. This verse tells us that Jesus did not belong to Sin as a master, which we know to be true, for Jesus belonged to God and was never alienated from Him by being under the same condemnation as Adam or those in Adam. Jesus was never in Adam but as the second 'Adam' He was the Federal Head of those who are His.

If sin in the flesh was the condemnation then how could Jesus say, "Except I had come and spoken unto them they had not had sin. But now they say, we see; therefore their sin remaineth." Again, supposing the condemnation was physical, then the coming of Jesus and the light He brought into the world would not remove it. And again, if the condemnation was physical then the coming out of Adam and into Christ has no real purpose and all that is accomplished by baptism into Christ is the washing away of past sins. However, Jesus said "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men love darkness rather than light." Paul, in support of Jesus' teaching, defines this condemnation as a legal enactment that was passed upon the human race.

A point to notice is that this condemnation does not become operative until people are given the choice. Those amenable to this condemnation are those who love darkness rather than light. Those who love light rather than darkness come out of Adam by being baptised into Jesus Christ, that is, they are baptised into His death; they are no longer under condemnation, no longer sold under sin, for the faithful are now freed from sin as their master who are in Christ and walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:1). They have been bought with a price, even the precious blood of Jesus.

Let's ask and answer the question, What life did Jesus sacrifice to buy back and so reconcile us to God? It is Jesus who supplies us with the answer - John 10:11-17, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life (*psuche*) for the sheep." It has been said that if Jesus paid the debt owing by man (judicial death) - then He could not rise again without destroying the analogy. But Jesus rose in all the fullness of His *zoe* life, leaving the remnants of His *psuche* life in the tomb - "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life (*zoe*)" (Romans 6:4).

God gave His only begotten Son. His Son gave His life to pay the debt owed to the Law. Adam owed one life to the Law. Jesus paid one life to the Law. All except the Son of God have received life from Adam and are "in Adam" until they choose to be "in Christ" by baptism into Him, that is, into His death.

Russell

Dear Friends and Young People!

Another year has gone past - and Jesus has not yet returned. So I hope and pray that these accounts of Yahweh's victories over his enemies and the enemies of His people, will encourage you while we wait together!

Remember that last time, Moses was about to return to Egypt, after a long time away. This was what Yahweh had told him to do. Yahweh had a big plan to rescue His people - the Israelites - from the Egyptians, and their slavery, and He had chosen Moses to speak to Pharaoh about it! Yahweh had reassured Moses that the men who had wanted to kill him for the murder he had committed, all those years ago, were now dead, so it was safe to go back. However, Yahweh had warned Moses that Pharaoh was a very hard hearted man, and would not let the Israelites go easily!

So Moses put his wife Zipporah, and his two sons on donkeys, while he walked alongside them, with his rod in his hand - and they set off for Egypt. It was a long journey. Meanwhile, Yahweh had spoken to Aaron (Moses brother) and told him that Moses was coming, and that he should go out to meet him. So as Moses came near Mount Horeb, where Yahweh had first spoken to him from the burning bush, he saw Aaron coming to meet him. Moses told Aaron all that Yahweh had asked him to do, including the signs he was to perform.

When they arrived in Egypt, the first thing to do, was to gather together all the Israelite elders. Aaron spoke for Moses and told them all why Moses had come - that Yahweh had heard their cries to Him and had a big plan to rescue all of them from the Egyptian's, using Moses as their leader. Moses and Aaron performed the miraculous signs that Yahweh had given Moses to do - and the elders believed them! They were just so relieved and thankful to Yahweh that at last, they were going to be set free - that they immediately bowed their heads and worshipped Him.

Next, Moses and Aaron went to speak to Pharaoh. They told him, "Yahweh, the God of Israel says, Let My people go so that they can hold a feast to Me in the wilderness!" Pharaoh was hard-hearted just as Yahweh had warned. He said, "Who is Yahweh, that I should obey Him and let

Israel go?!? I don't know Yahweh - and I will not let Israel go!" Moses and Aaron warned Pharaoh that if he would not let the Israelites go, Yahweh would be angry!

But Pharaoh got angry, and decided to punish the Israelites for even daring to think of such a thing! He ordered their Egyptian bosses to make their work even harder! That'll teach them to stop dreaming of getting away - he thought. They were all busy making bricks for all the new cities and storehouses that Pharaoh wanted built. Pharaoh accused the Israelites of being idle and he shouted at them saying that they would be given less materials to make the bricks with - but they must still make the same amount!! This was impossible! The Israelites panicked and began to blame Moses and Aaron for asking Pharaoh to release them, because it had just made things worse!

Moses then spoke to Yahweh about it, because even he was beginning to think that this plan wasn't going to work! But Yahweh told him, "I did warn you that Pharaoh was going to be awkward and stubborn! But I will force him to let the Israelites go, in the end! Moses was told to remind them, that Yahweh always has His own way, no matter how long it takes, and that no one can stop His plans! But the people were so miserable over their work burden, that they didn't want to hear.

Moses and Aaron went to ask Pharaoh again, and this time Yahweh had told them to perform the signs with Moses' rod - to show him that Yahweh means what He says. Moses threw his rod down, and it changed into a snake! However, Pharaoh's magic men were able to do the same thing with their rods! But Moses snake swallowed up all of their snakes! 😊 But Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not believe, or change his mind!

Yahweh told Moses to meet Pharaoh the next morning by the river bank, as he was going for his dip, and tell him again that Yahweh was demanding he let the Israelites go, and to show that Yahweh meant what He said, He told Moses to strike the waters with his rod - and they would all turn into blood! This is what happened! The river began to stink, and all the fish died - and all water everywhere in Egypt was turned into blood so nobody could drink it! But - Pharaoh's magic men were able to do the

same thing! So Pharaoh hardened his heart again! He stormed off in a rage.

Yahweh told Moses to go and speak to Pharaoh again, telling him that if he would not let the Israelites go, He would cover the whole land with frogs! Pharaoh wouldn't listen, so Moses was told to stretch out his hand over all the streams, rivers, and ponds - and when he did so, thousands of frogs swarmed out of them - and they went everywhere! They were in all the houses, in the kitchens, in the bedrooms.....urgh!

This made Pharaoh take notice! He quickly called for Moses and Aaron and begged them to ask Yahweh to get rid of them! He promised that if He did, he would let the Israelites go! Moses said, OK, we'll do it tomorrow. The next day Moses begged Yahweh to end the terrible plague of frogs! So all the frogs died - and then began a big clean-up job - piles and piles of dead frogs everywhere, and they were beginning to smell horrible in the heat! But - when Pharaoh saw that this plague was ended, he changed his mind! He hardened his heart again, and refused to let the Israelites go!

But Yahweh was determined! He told Moses to stretch out his rod and strike the dust of the land and it would turn into thousands of biting insects - throughout the whole land of Egypt! Pharaoh's magicians tried to do the same thing - but they couldn't do it! They had to admit that Yahweh had greater power than they did! They told Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God!" But still Pharaoh took no notice! Moses was told to go and meet Pharaoh by the water again, the next morning, and tell him that Yahweh was demanding he let Israel go - otherwise he would bring a dreadful plague of flies - but this time, only on the Egyptians - everywhere the Israelites were, there would be none!

Once again Pharaoh took no notice, and so Yahweh made thick swarms of flies all around the Egyptians! It was unbearable! Pharaoh quickly called Moses and Aaron again, and promised to let the Israelites worship Yahweh, if they got rid of the flies! But he said that he would not let them go to the wilderness - they would have to stay in the land! This was not acceptable to Yahweh! This was not what He had asked for! Moses warned him that this not suitable, and so Pharaoh reluctantly agreed that they could go into wilderness, as long as they didn't go far! He begged

Moses to get rid of the flies, and Moses warned him not to change his mind again this time! But - yet again - as soon as the flies were gone - Pharaoh changed his mind!

This is not the end of the story! We will see what happens next time! What do you think? Will Pharaoh ever let the Israelites go? But for now, may Yahweh be with you!

Dawn

A JEW ACCEPTS JESUS

This is the testimony for Jesus written to his friends:

Let me explain how I, Leopold Dreifuss, accepted these Truths. Being a natural Jew, and having attended Christadelphian lectures for some time, I “became interested in the views of the Nazarene Fellowship.

In our opinion the most essential thing in the understanding of Scripture is to know the Lord, to understand the mission which God sent Him to fulfil. But to understand that we must first go into the questions of Sacrifice and Redemption.

Let us start right from the beginning of Creation and examine Adam's position before He sinned. There we see the first man created by God from the ground and pronounced “very good”. He was corruptible, for we read that there was the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. Now, he had only one single commandment to keep - not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. He was given a free will, therefore it was in his power to choose whether he would keep God's commandment or not. But although Adam and Eve were created very good, we must bear in mind that they were corruptible, and could sin if they so choose. For had they not the inclination to sin before they were driven out of Eden the serpent could never have succeeded in tempting them. However, the serpent did succeed, and they sinned.

Now, God said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shall surely die." Let us find out what sort of death it was - natural death, or violent death? Very probably it was not to be a natural death, for he was corruptible in any case and depended on the Tree of Life if he was not to die. But we will discover yet better evidence as to which of the two deaths God meant. In the Hebrew text the sentence "thou shall surely die" reads "dying thou shall die." This construction of a sentence is often used in Hebrew, and it indicates a strong affirmation. For example, when we say in English "he did come" in the sense "he surely came", the Hebrew says "coming he came." So, "dying, thou shall die," means a very certain death. Moreover, the same phrase occurs again later on in Genesis where Abimelech, king of Gera, took Sarah, thinking she was Abraham's sister. God, appearing to him in a dream, said, "thou shall surely die" - in the Hebrew "dying thou shalt die." There cannot be any doubt that this means judicial death, for he would have died the natural death anyway, and had it not been a sudden judicial death, why should Abimelech have been in such a hurry to send Sarah away. Yet again, the phrase occurs when Solomon tells one of his enemies not to cross the brook of Kidron. But Shimei did cross the river, and we read that he was stabbed to death. So here we have the best evidence that the sentence "thou shall surely die" is a violent, sudden or judicial death.

This death Adam deserved, but, had he suffered it there and then, none of us would ever have lived, and God's purpose to fill the earth with His glory would have been frustrated. This could not be. The first thing God did was to act in mercy. He slew a lamb and thus transferred Adam's guilt to an innocent animal. This, of course, was only a temporary measure, until Christ came, but I shall say more on that later. Only let me say here that God is merciful, but He is also just, a just God who will never repent. Adam's sin had to be paid for somehow. It could not have been forgiven, for how could God look over the breaking of His commandment and yet establish His authority? The lamb which was sacrificed, and whose skin He subsequently used to clothe Adam and Eve, was only a temporary measure. Of course God foreknew what He was going to do. But until Christ paid the penalty, the slaying of animals had to continue.

Man was now in a position in which he was estranged from God. God had to keep him from the Tree of Life, because before man was once more

qualified to Eternal Life, the first sin, or rather the penalty for it, had to be paid for. Until Christ's advent man's right to Eternal Life was forfeited, or in the words of Paul (Romans 7:14) mankind was "sold under sin."

It is a general principle in Scripture, by which God gives man a choice to serve either good or evil. When man chooses the evil, he has nobody but himself to blame for the consequences. Cain and Abel had that choice: one chose the good, the other the evil. Joshua put that choice before the children of Israel. He said, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Going back to Adam, he also chose the evil when he transgressed. He was now sold under sin, the servant of sin. Sin is often personified in Scripture as a master. Adam sold himself to that master. This last sentence, of course, is figurative speech, and it really means, as explained above, that he was estranged from God. But let us again examine the phrase "sold under sin." You will, no doubt, know that in old times, when slavery was practised, a slave was the property of his master. Everybody who was born to him while he served became automatically his master's property.

If he wanted to become free he had to be redeemed. With this at the back of your mind you should now appreciate what it means to be "sold under sin." It means that the whole of Adam's posterity was under the master of Sin. In practice, that meant that they were born without the right to Eternal Life, unless they obtained that right by bringing their sacrifices as a recognition of their need of redemption. Needless to say, of course, that these sacrifices had to be brought in the right spirit of faith.

Under the Law of Moses this need was even more pressed home. What was the meaning of the daily sacrifices, the Passover Lamb, the services on the Day of Atonement? Was it not the constant lesson that there was a need of redemption? These sacrifices were not for any particular transgression of any particular law: for if anyone sinned he had to bring a sacrifice in addition to all these, and if he brought it in the right spirit of faith and true repentance, God forgave him, for how often do we read in Leviticus, "If a soul sin, he shall bring... and it shall be forgiven him," God does not exact a penalty over and over again - that is not the idea of a merciful God. So the daily sacrifices, etc., must have been for something else.

As you know, these sacrifices in themselves cannot take away sin. The redemption of mankind from this bondage to Sin could only be paid for by the antitypical Sacrifice of Christ Himself. But although these animals could not redeem mankind as a whole, the keeping of the law, together with faith, did give a few individuals title to eternal life, to mention only Elijah, Caleb and Joshua (the only two to survive Israel's 40 years' journey in the wilderness). There were also Enoch and Noah, before the Mosaic Law, of whom the Scripture records that they pleased God. Even after the introduction of the Mosaic Law we read of many who have kept it. "The law and the commandment is holy, just and good," and it was "ordained to life" (Romans 7:10).

What was it then that the law could not do? It could give title to eternal life to individuals, and we know that Moses and David, who are now 'asleep in the grave', have obtained a title to it. They were sold under sin as much as anybody. "What the law could not do" was to redeem from Adam's sin.

When we want to gain information about God's plan concerning anything, we look at the Old Testament and then apply it to the New Testament. Let us now do that to find out something about the Divine plan concerning redemption.

According to the Mosaic Law, an Israelite who became a bondservant could redeem himself if he had the means; otherwise the next of kin had to do it. But we can learn even more about this topic from Exodus. Israel was in bondage to Pharaoh. God chose Moses as their redeemer. Moses was an Israelite by birth, but by law he was in a position different from the other Israelites, He was not under the Egyptian bondage, for Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her son.

Let us now apply this to Christ, our Redeemer from the Adamic bondage to Sin. He was born of a woman, our nature. But He was the Son of God, and therefore not under bondage to Sin. For by divine law the man, the father, decides under Law whose the child is. But this will not affect his flesh and blood; his nature is the same. Similarly, Jesus was of human nature, but not born servant to Sin, He was one who had power to redeem. And just as Moses was brought up by Pharaoh's daughter and

dwelt at Midian in the wilderness until the time came that God appointed him his task, so Jesus was brought up with a human foster father, and He went into the wilderness where He was tempted, before He began the preaching of the Gospel.

Because Jesus was of our flesh he had, of course, the same inclination to sin as we all. He had to make the choice between good and evil - between fulfilling His Father's will and His own will. But where Adam failed, He succeeded. Here, then, are the essential points about Jesus' redemptive work.

He, like Adam, had a free and unforfeited life. Whereas Adam was the son of God by creation, Jesus was the Son of God by begetting, and thus Adam's next-of-kin - and hence in a position to redeem Adam from the bondage to Sin. He paid the penalty which Adam should have paid, and which the animals paid in type - that is, a violent death, with the pouring out of His blood (for "dying, thou shall die," was God's sentence).

There was no violation here of Moses' Commandment in Deuteronomy that the children shall not be put to death for their parents' ...for Jesus gave His life. He didn't need to give it to reconcile Himself to His own Father: for He was never under Sin, and never forfeited His right to life. But He died for Adam's sin, which had become "the Sin of the world"; He offered Himself, knowing that He had the power to lay down His life and take it up again - for why shouldn't He have had that power?

What is mankind's position today? Adam's sin has been paid for - God is just, and nobody ever has to die again as a punishment for Adam's sin. But Adam's act has left mankind under a great disadvantage. He has cut off all his posterity from the Tree of Life. If we want to obtain eternal life, we must associate ourselves with Christ. Of course, those that never see the Light are just like the beasts of the field that perish. But those who do see the Light become responsible.

I was convinced of this doctrine, for I found it far more logical than anything I have ever heard on religion. Nothing which any minister preaches is anything like it. I have learned a lot by attending Christadelphian lectures. But I have never seen it so clearly. Because I

realised this responsibility I was immersed, for once a person sees Light and does not avail himself of this great salvation, he confirms Adam' sin. He is then "in Adam," and Paul writes: "As in Adam all die..." (1 Corinthians 15;2a). This death, which all in Adam die, is the judicial death on the day of judgement, for, from what I have been saying all the time, you should find that it cannot be the natural death; for everybody dies this death - even those who never see Light and are under no Divine law; for where there is no law there is no transgression (Romans 4:15), Hence, those people will not incur the penalty for sin, which is violent death, yet they die a natural death.

Once we are "baptised we are in the same legal position as Adam before he sinned, or Jesus. But, of course, we can forfeit our right to eternal life if we sin wilfully: for if we sin "a sin unto death" now and get our name blotted out of the book of life, there is now no sacrifice but a fearful looking for the fiery judgment.

But otherwise, we are now the Children of God, not through anything we have done, but only because of God's mercy in sending His Son. And even so, we are only children by adoption, while Jesus is God's Son by begettal. Well, can you now explain why it was necessary that Jesus should have been born the miraculous way in which He was? And can you now see why men like Moses and Elijah and Noah could not redeem us from "the Sin of the world," although their records show a life which pleased God?

Well, there is just one more topic which, to our great regret, presents a difficulty to many Christadelphians, so that they cannot see many of the beauties of God's word. Concerning this idea of "sinful flesh." This phrase occurs only once in Scripture - in Romans 8:5. All linguists agree that this is a faulty translation. The Greek version says "Sin's flesh". The word "sin" in Scripture is often used for "sin offering" (see Genesis 4:7, which is absolutely without any sense - unless "sin" here means "sin offering" - a lamb, or a bullock; for in Cain's day people were shepherds, and there would be an animal at his door handy if required for sacrifice). And in Romans 8:5 "sin" also means "sin offering," or, according to the margin of my Bible, "sacrifice for sin".

The seventh chapter of Romans is regarded as very difficult by most Christadelphians, so let us link this up with chapters 6 and 8. In chapter 6, verse 20, Paul says, “for when ye were servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.” He goes on to explain how we were made free from sin, etc. Now he inserts chapter 7, as in parenthesis, in which he describes his position before he was converted, while he was the servant of Sin. Then, in chapter 8, or rather the last verse of chapter 7, he links up his former statement with his new position, and then, in chapter 8, declares: “There is now, therefore, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.” Now, here the word “flesh” cannot be our natural literal flesh: for we have that after our immersion exactly as before. It refers, of course, to his position before he was converted. This now gives us the key to chapter 7. When Paul says “in my flesh dwelleth no good thing,” he speaks of the time before his conversion. For, if in our literal flesh dwelt no good thing, how could our bodies possibly be the temple of God? Finally, let us look again at chapter 8, verse 9. “But ye are not in the flesh” (those brethren were, of course, in their natural flesh), “but in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.” So, then, the “flesh” means the state before baptism, the “spirit” afterwards, or sometimes, instead of the “flesh” we read about the old man - “put off the old man.”

Now, if you think about these things, I am sure that with the interest and scriptural knowledge you have got, you will find out many interesting and beautiful things.

Sincerely your brother in Christ, Leopold Dreifuss.

