

BAPTISMAL REVIEW BOOK



*“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s
seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*
(Galatians 3:29)

A Review of the Scriptural Principles which form a Confession of Faith at Baptism

In question and answer format with
accompanying commentary based on the
writings of brethren John Thomas &
Robert Roberts

Includes the following:

The Responsibility of Examining Brethren, A
Statement of the Faith forming Our basis of fellowship,
The Common Constitution of Berean Christadelphian
Ecclesias, The Restatement of the Always-held Berean
Position, and articles by bro. Roberts on Fellowship and
the Atonement

THIS WORK HAS BEEN PRODUCED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE AUSTRALIAN AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA BEREANS CHRISTADELPHIANS.

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THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EXAMINING BRETHREN

(The Christadelphian: Volume 26, 1889, 444-445)

The household of faith is united by one common bond, being all members of one body, whose increase unto the edifying of itself in love is dependent upon the effectual working of the individual members of the body. The whole body is honoured and strengthened in proportion to the integrity and zeal of each member, but it is also dishonored and weakened by the inconsistency and laxness of any within it.

We are abundantly admonished to preserve the purity of the faith, to strive together for that end as much as possible, in peaceful relations with all men, but still in conformity with the divine order—*first* pure, *then* peaceable (James 3:17). Peace is obtainable only in the absence of a disturbing element; where that element exists peace is more or less impossible. From what cause do disturbances in the ecclesias generally spring, with whom do they originate? Is it not generally from the action of brethren weak in the faith, men who retain something of the old leaven which tends to leaven the whole lump, so that many are led to follow their pernicious ways? It is the heresy “privily brought in,” which affects the soundness of the faith and disturbs the effectual working of the members of the body. Experience has shown that envying, strife, railing and evil surmisings originate with such minds and are stimulated by them. Who are to blame for this state of things?

Examining brethren are largely responsible. To them is entrusted the charge of keeping pure the household of faith so far as admitting the “interested friend” to fellowship is concerned. **But there have been admitted to fellowship some who were practically deficient in a knowledge of the first principles of the faith.** This has been proved by many who subsequently came to see with increased knowledge that they had in the first place been immersed with a deficient knowledge of the truth, and without an adequate recognition of their responsibilities in becoming connected with Christ’s brethren. With their new light and knowledge, these good and honest hearts were anxious to be placed in a proper relationship to Christ, and hence they sought re-immersion—an acknowledgment that their first immersion was invalid. These had gone on to perfection,

but how many may be like them in their first experiences, having need to be taught again what be the first principles of the oracles of God.

Admission to fellowship is obtained by baptism; **but baptism ought only to be performed upon an understanding of the one faith being shown by the candidate, and a recognition on his or her part of the responsibilities of the step about to be taken.** It is for the examining brethren to determine whether such an understanding and recognition exists, because it is upon these that the validity of the immersion depends. It is here that the responsibility of the brethren is greatest.

There is unfortunately in many cases a desire, laudable in one sense, to see an increase in numbers, and sufficient care is not always taken to ascertain the **motive** which leads to the wish to become connected with the ecclesia, and an accommodative examination is made in order that one more may be added to the roll. It is hoped that the candidate will understand the subjects better afterwards, in the meantime, with an imperfect knowledge and with little appreciation of the responsibilities of the step about to be taken, there passes in fellowship of the household one that may prove a root of bitterness and a cause of offence. Let any brother or sister of standing in the truth reflect upon their conversations with brethren and sisters elsewhere and they will be surprised at the extent of the deficiency of knowledge in things that are essential to a proper basis. Here a brother is ignorant of the nature of Christ, there a sister has doubts as to the personality of Satan in the orthodox sense, and so on. **But how came they to be in fellowship holding these views?** They have not developed since becoming acquainted with the truth, but they are the old leaven which was brought in with them, of the doctrines of which the truth would bid them beware. The Ecclesia of God, the pillar and ground of the truth, has a duty to itself as well as to those outside, and if into the holy city there shall in no wise enter **anything that defileth or worketh abomination**, it is surely necessary as far as possible to keep out similar elements of the world from the household of faith.

The examining brethren must see to this. There is no need for austere judgment or pharisaical treatment of the candidate for immersion in attempting to secure this object. In the gentlest manner, but with the firmness which the importance of the occasion requires, the examining brethren should deal with **all the points of doctrine**, and where

there is deficiency let them show the way of God more perfectly. **But if it is evident from the manner of the candidate that he or she fails to comprehend the import of the doctrine, there should be delay in admission. The mere intellectual grasp of the facts is, however, of less importance than the perception of the responsibilities of baptism.** Let the death which baptism symbolizes to the individual be clearly impressed upon him/her as his/her dying to his former carnal life, and that in his/her rising into newness of life in taking Christ's name he also takes his yoke upon him, learning to follow his footsteps, to cultivate his mind and disposition, so that they may dwell in Him as they dwelt in Jesus. Were these things gently yet gravely set before all who come before the examining brethren, there might be fewer who would accept the conditions of fellowship, but these would be less likely to cause heart-burnings and strife in the ecclesias with which they become identified.

A word as to the attitude to be assumed to those who speak of being re-immersed. If in that frame of mind they ought not to be allowed to break bread until they have openly spoken out their difficulties and the ecclesia has had a chance to judge whether such brethren are really in Christ. To be in Christ necessitates the belief of Christ's mission and the obedience to his commandments. But if there has been disbelief or misconception of a kind that amounts to unbelief of that mission, can such a person be said to be in Christ? **The subject to my mind is of great importance to the peace and welfare of the ecclesias, and these reflections are offered in a spirit of love to such as are the door-keepers of the house of God.**

Error has almost always come into "the ecclesia of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the Truth" (1 Timothy 3:15) via those who have obtained roles of leadership and oversight adopting a lax approach or being persuaded of error themselves. This baptismal review booklet is therefore as much for the aid of the examiner as it is a help for the baptismal candidate. It consolidates in a logical order the Truth studied, which by this stage has formed a conviction in those things though unseen, are nonetheless the substance of all the disciples hope and desire.

We know from personal experience of teaching the Truth to a wide variety of interested friends, young and old, who have varying capacities including English not being their first language, that it is the responsibility of those teaching the Truth to not only understand the first principles fully themselves, but to be able to present it in such a manner that the baptismal candidate is able to grasp.

This booklet, for practical reasons, does not attempt to do this but rather is an endeavor to revise those areas necessary to gain an overview of what constitutes the gospel and the responsibility of becoming servants of righteousness. The instructor needs to patiently present these Truths in a manner which corresponds to the ability of the baptismal candidate. The instructor needs to ensure that the essential elements are grasped, especially those relating to the Atonement, which is often not as easily understood as the things relating to the kingdom of God. For this reason the subject of the Atonement needs to be revisited as the story of the scriptures passes under review, presenting opportunity for those principles to be restated and thoroughly explained during the course of baptismal preparation.

A REVIEW OF THE SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES WHICH FORM A CONFESSION OF FAITH AT BAPTISM

READING ~ ROMANS CHAPTER 6

A WORD BEFORE EXAMINATION

We (the Berean Christadelphians) are under the law of Christ: that law requires of us not to baptize or receive into our fellowship those who do not believe the truth, on pain of being held responsible for their unbelief. Examination before baptism ascertains whether an applicant understands and believes the truth. The validity of baptism depends upon believing the truth. Examination implies a recognized basis of fellowship; that is, a definition of the doctrines set forth by the teachings of Christ and his apostles referred to in the New Testament as “the truth” (Note: A Guide to the Formation and Conduct of Christadelphian Ecclesias Nos. 33 & 34). This Truth is defined in A Statement of the Faith forming our Basis of fellowship (pg. 127, Doctrines to be rejected (pg. 130), the Commandments of Christ (pg. 132), and a Restatement (pg. 140) (which became necessary as a result of compromise and wrong doctrine of other fellowships).

In apostolic times, Jews and proselytes of the Jewish religion understood the promises made to the fathers and the things concerning the kingdom of God. Therefore their belief was shown by the simple stated belief that Jesus was the Christ. The apostles however warned that after their departure, a scheme of beliefs that were astray from the truth centered in the Name of Jesus Christ, i.e. the apostasy, would develop. As a result of this universal rejection of the truth, a simple confession of belief in Christ as in apostolic times could no longer be received. Therefore, as a matter of allegiance to Christ and defense of our own position, we must establish whether the applicant **believes** and is prepared to **submit** to the truth. **The purpose of our conversation together before witnesses is not for you to demonstrate the truth by many quotations but to find out if you believe it.** (Note: the commentary, questions and answers that follow are designed as both a summary of the things learnt in the course of preparing for baptism, and sample questions, some of which could be asked at a baptismal examination. Some of the

questions are therefore far more important than others, forming the foundation of the gospel. The comments (in italics) are often deeper knowledge than what is required of the applicant for baptism, but is provided so as to stimulate the applicant's interest in works such as Elpis Israel (by bro. John Thomas), The Blood of Christ, The Law of Moses (by bro. Roberts) and other related articles, which will greatly assist further Bible study. The commentary is also provided to help the Bible student understand the background to Clauses 5-12 of A Statement of the Faith forming our basis of fellowship regarding the essential subject of the Nature and Sacrifice of Christ. Although copious quotations are not required during a baptismal examination to establish an applicant's conviction, they are supplied in this summary so that the earnest believer may see the scriptural evidence supporting "an answer of the hope that is in them." (1 Peter 3:15).

At baptismal examinations, where circumstances permit, the Presiding Brother will read aloud to the ecclesia or assembled witnesses, the Baptism Applicant's letter in which he/she expresses their conviction in the things concerning the kingdom of God and those things relative to the saving name of Jesus Christ, and a desire to become related to the covenant of promises through the waters of baptism. It is a most important letter - truly a matter of life and death as the Lord stated in Mark 16:15-16. This letter expresses his/her desire to submit to the commandments of God and it is that submission, which is counted for righteousness and union with Christ.

The seriousness of this undertaking is expressed by bro. Roberts: *The Christadelphian* Volume 8 1871:308-313.

"If the knowledge of truth fail to beget the new man in the heart of the sinner, the baptism following his knowledge is not a birth (2 Corinthians 5:17; John 3:3-6). It is a mere performance of no benefit to him, but rather to his condemnation. It ought, therefore, to be seriously considered by all who contemplate that step, and by all who are called upon to assist them, whether there is evidence of death to sin before arrangements are made for burial. The burial of a living man is cruelty. It were better for the sinner to leave God's covenant alone than to make a mockery of it. Let him ponder well his state and his ways. "Let the sinner forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought," before he comes in this matter "to the Lord our God, who will abundantly pardon." Let him

“repent,” before he is baptised for the remission of sins. Then will he be received as a son with blessing, and his days guided unto life eternal—that is, if his circumspection continue.”

PART I

OUR SUBMISSION TO GOD

“A son of God is a character, which is developed out of the ‘incorruptible seed’ (1 Peter 1:23) of God, sown into the fleshy table of the heart (Matthew 13:19). When this seed, or word of the Kingdom, is received, it begins to work in a man until he becomes a believer of the truth. When things have come to this pass, he is a changed man. He has acquired a new mode of thinking; for he thinks in harmony with the thoughts of God as revealed in His law and testimony. He sees himself, and the world around him, in a new light. He is convinced of sin; and experiences an aversion to the things in which he formerly delighted. His views, disposition, temper, and affections are transformed. He is humble, child-like, teachable, and obediently disposed; and his simple anxiety is to know what God would have him to do. Having ascertained this, he does it; and in doing it is ‘born out of the water’ (John 3:5). Having been begotten by the Father by the word of truth (James 1:18), and born of water, the first stage of the process is completed. He is constitutionally ‘in Christ’”. (Elpis Israel Part 1 chapter 4 ‘The Constitution of Righteousness pg. 135).

The Lord Jesus says that there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents (Luke 15:7).

1. You are prepared to submit to God?

Yes. I realize as the apostle Paul states in Romans 6 that once in my past life I was a slave to sin which leads to death, but now I wish to present myself as a servant of obedience which leads to righteousness (Roman 6:16 -19).

2. You understand that it is a fundamental element of the Lord’s teachings that we cannot serve two masters. Who do you wish to serve?

I wish to serve God and I understand that “No one can serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (Matt 6:24).

Are you a member of any organization or have taken an oath of allegiance, which would in any way conflict with Christ's words of Matthew 6:24, e.g. a member of the arm-forces, navy, police force, a mason etc.?

No.

3. What does Christadelphian mean?

Brother or relative of Christ.

Who is a brother or relative of Christ?

He who performs the will of God as the Lord Jesus said, "Whoever **does** the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." (Matthew 12:50; John 15:14-15).

4. What is the will of God that we should do?

That we believe in God's Son the Lord Jesus Christ and keep His commands.

(1 John 3:23-24).

Do you believe this?

Yes, with all my heart.

Is it possible for us to be saved apart from God's work in Christ?

No, for there is no salvation in any other; there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12).

BAPTISM

5. Is baptism a commandment?

Yes, the Lord commanded His disciples, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes (**the gospel**) and is baptized will be saved, but whosoever does not believe (**the gospel**) will be condemned." (Mark 16:15-16).

Can you give us some examples of baptism in the Bible?

Israel was baptized in the sea/cloud as they passed through the Red Sea; the Ethiopian Eunuch; Cornelius and his household and the Lord Jesus Himself (1Corinthians 10:1-2; Acts 8:26-40; 10; Matthew 3:13-17).

6. Why do you want to be baptized?

It is the will of God that we should be baptized and I want to, “put on Christ”, to be baptized into his sacrificial death and by this identification be washed from my sins in his blood; that I might become part of Abraham’s seed and an heir according to the promises. (Galatians 3:27-29; Romans 6:3; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5).

*To “put on Christ” implies a “covering” or garment. Paul in quoting Psalm 32 refers to the blessedness of those whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are **covered** (Romans 4:7). The condition of receiving the blessedness of this covering as we shall review, is to believe the gospel preached to Abraham which centered in Christ as the promised seed. This was later expanded to David and elaborated upon by the prophets. There was however a “mystery” connected with this gospel which Paul says was kept secret in previous ages; though “a salvation of which the prophets enquired and searched diligently...when it (the Spirit of Christ) testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” (1 Peter 1:10–12), but was not revealed till the inspired apostolic preaching concerning Jesus Christ after his resurrection. The apostolic “revelation of the mystery” (Romans 16:25) explains how Jesus’s sufferings declared God’s righteousness providing the Divine method of justification or forgiveness of sins for Jew and Gentile that men and women could exercise faith towards, as the basis of salvation.*

In believing this gospel and being baptized into the name of Christ, a garment of righteousness is graciously provided as a covering for sin. This initial clothing of righteousness becomes a garment of salvation (Isaiah 61:10) if a life of righteousness reflecting the Christ mind and example is developed during our probation. This is defined by the Lord Jesus himself as “the righteousness of the saints” (Revelation 19:9). In this process those who have taken upon them the name of Christ through baptism “have an

advocate with the Father” so that if they confess and forsake their sins, striving to “walk in the light,” then we can be assured that “the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 2:1-2; 1:7). Those who do so by “patience in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, he (Christ) will give eternal life” (Romans 2:7). Such are promised to walk with him in white (Revelation 3:4-5) and therefore “Blessed is he that watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame” (Revelation 16:15).

Identification with all that God accomplished in Christ is what baptism represents.

To identify is to relate to someone or something, to see oneself represented in someone or something. To identify with somebody is to understand and feel sympathy with someone, to relate to someone’s experience i.e. Hebrews 4:15; Isaiah 53:12; Hebrews 2:14. In Romans 6 - the baptism chapter, we are called to identify with God’s work in Christ. God’s great work in Christ which we are called upon to identify with, was a work of total sacrifice, overcoming, subduing, condemnation and destruction of the devil (diabolos) and his works (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8). This was accomplished by God in Christ’s perfect life of obedience and sacrifice, mentally, morally and at last, physically through the sacrificial condemnation of sin in the flesh and resurrection. If we are to truly identify with Christ and respond to God’s love in providing us with His unspeakable gift of covering and cleansing of our sins, then we need to purify and perfect our own character, thoughts, desires, and behavior by the Word of God (Ephesians 5:26; 1 John 3:3-6). By this daily dedication, we “abide in Him” and are “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (John 15:7, 8; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:22-24), and are “conformed to the image” or likeness of God’s son (Romans 8:29). By this means we believe we shall be “found in Christ” (Philippians 3:9) at the Lord’s appearing, having “the righteousness which is of God by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe...” (Romans 3:22; also note Law of Moses pg. 268).

What then is baptism?

It is a burial in water by which we publicly profess the name of Christ (Romans 6:4).

Is infant sprinkling wrong and why?

It is not a burial in water and infants cannot “know” the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He sent. Understanding God’s principles must precede baptism (John 17:3; Acts 8:12).

7. What is necessary before baptism?

A correct knowledge and belief of the Gospel (Mark 16:15-16).

What is repentance and is it necessary?

Peter says, “Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). The order of God’s requirement I believe is important to note— repentance followed by baptism. Scriptural repentance is not mere sorrow for sin; it is a mental and moral change.

8. What does baptism symbolize?

It is the God-appointed means by which we identify with what God accomplished in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Until we are baptized we are dead in our sins but when we rise from the waters of baptism we, “rise with him through the faith of the operation of God,” “quickened together with him,” says Paul, God “having forgiven us all trespasses.” (Colossians 2:12-13).

*God indeed “forgives for Christ’s sake” but we need as a condition of obtaining this forgiveness to understand the meaning of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Paul gives us the spiritual definition of the death of Christ in Romans by the use of two important phrases. He says the crucifixion of Christ was a “**declaration of the righteousness of God**” by “**a condemnation of sin in the flesh.**” (Romans 3:25; 8:3). A **declaration** is to publically proclaim or announce something. Bro. Thomas says, “The cutting off of Jesus provided this indispensable covering for sin: **so that he being slain and raised from the dead, the means of a sinner’s justification, styled ‘the righteousness of God,’** was brought in...” (Exposition of Daniel pg. 32).*

*How this was accomplished is explained by Bro. Roberts, in 'The Blood of Christ,' "The crucifixion of Christ as a 'declaration of the righteousness of God' and a 'condemnation of sin in the flesh'... exhibited to the world the righteous treatment of sin. It was as though it was proclaimed to all the world, when the **body** was nailed to the cross: 'This is how **condemned human nature should be treated according to the righteousness of God; it is fit only for destruction.**'"*

*Bro. Roberts emphasizes that this "was **the condition** of the exercise of God's forbearance. That is to say, God maintains His own **righteousness** and His own **Supremacy** while forgiving us, and **exact**s the recognition of them and submission to them, as the condition of the exercise of His forbearance in the remission of our sins." God "does not offer it (forgiveness) or allow it apart from submission to the declaration of His righteousness in Christ crucified. There must be the most humble identification with that declaration. **Baptism in our age is provided as the means of that identification.**" "Our endorsement of it (what God accomplished through the sacrifice of Christ) in baptism is comparable to a form of apology presented by the Majesty of heaven as the condition of our receiving His mercy unto life eternal." (Ephesians 4:32; Romans 3:25, 26; 8:3; The Blood of Christ sections 'The Conditions of Forgiveness' pgs. 5&6; 'The Place of Forgiveness', pgs. 10-11 Logos ed.).*

Having understood the gospel, which includes the means by which God is prepared to accept us (Romans 1:17), what happens when you rise from the waters of baptism?

Our past sins are washed away (Acts 22:16; Colossians 2:13). We identify morally with what was accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ, our "old man was crucified **with** him in order that **the body of sin (or flesh) might be brought to nothing,**" having been, "crucified with Christ," "henceforth we should not serve sin." (Romans 6:6; Colossians 2:11; Ephesians 4:22 ESV). We are, by God's divinely appointed arrangements "in Christ" and must therefore, "walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4).

*As we have noted baptism is the appointed ceremony by which we publically identify with what God accomplished in the death and resurrection of Christ – Namely the destruction of “the devil” or “sin in the flesh” (Hebrews 2:14; Romans 8:3) which we all, including Christ, inherited from Adam. It was by this means Christ “bore our sins in his body on the tree that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.” (1 Peter 2:24). All the righteous requirements of God as set forth in the scriptures in all the types, prophecies and New Testament expositions are explained simply in what **actually** happened in the death and resurrection of Christ – the destruction of the ‘devil’ or ‘condemnation of sin in the flesh’ or ‘the body of sin’. ‘Sin in the flesh’ is also personified by the phrase ‘the old man’ (Colossians 3:9 & Romans 6:6) because it is that which ‘has been sinning from the beginning’ i.e. ‘the devil’ (1 John 3:8). Therefore John says “whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil”. John tells us “the reason the son of God was manifested was to destroy the works (acts or deeds) of the devil”(1 John 3:8). To do this **the root** of these acts, **the source** of these rebellious deeds had to itself be destroyed, i.e. the devil or that physical defiling principle ingrained in the flesh of all mankind that makes man’s nature intrinsically evil. (James 1:14-15, Mark 7:21, Romans 7:23, Matthew 15:18-20). Bro. Roberts states “**This is the great promise and prophecy and requirement of every form of the truth: the destruction of the body of sin (Romans 6:6).** It was destroyed in Christ’s crucifixion – the ‘one great offering’; we ceremonially share it in our baptism: ‘crucified with Christ’, ‘baptized unto his death’. We morally participate in it in putting the old man to death in ‘denying ungodliness and worldly lusts’: and the hope before us is the prospect of becoming subject to such a physical change as will consume mortal nature and change it into the glorious nature of the spirit...” (Law of Moses pg. 236-238). Having been “crucified with Christ” as Bro. Roberts’ points out, we morally participate in this identification in that practical way Paul indicates in Romans 6:4. God’s love, set forth in Christ, gives us a powerful motivation after we are baptized to follow our Lord’s example to overcome.*

9. Are there any physical changes at baptism?

No, we are still mortal after baptism.

Baptism does not take away the law of condemnation or the sentence of death which “passed upon all men” (Romans 5:12) as a result of Adam’s transgression. We are, however, by God’s arrangement declared to be “in Christ”, that is to say, not having ourselves the holiness and perfect obedience God’s righteousness demands, God graciously provides us through Christ’s death, resurrection and glorification a covering of righteousness, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:18-19; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; 2 Cor. 5:21, Revelation 3:4; 16:15; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Having “put on Christ” we are “Abraham’s seed” and heirs of the hope of eternal life (Galatians 3:26-29) but this is a matter of promise – a promise that is conditional on our conformity with God’s commands. It is not until the resurrection and judgment when Christ our judge will declare whether we have, in deep appreciation of all that God has done for us, followed our Lord’s example, that we may be in him physically, partaking of his nature.

What is the condition specified by God that we might be made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21)?

Our faith is counted to us as righteousness at baptism, and thereafter we are to set forth in our lives that obedience which springs from that faith that God has placed in our hearts by His word (Rom. 4:3; 1:5; 16:26; 10:17).

What changes ought to occur in our desire to be obedient to Christ’s command to be baptized?

Before baptism there must be a mental and moral change, a change of purpose. This is scriptural repentance (Acts 2:38; 3:19, 26). Before baptism we are “in our sins,” “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” (Ephesians 2:12). God makes the condition of extending His mercy dependent on our response.

*There is indeed a connection between what God offers us in Christ, and our own acts. That is, the cleansing result of God’s means of reconciliation is as you have said dependent upon our compliances. The apostle John says ‘If we **walk** in the light the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin’ (1 John 1:7). If we refuse to **walk** in the light of God’s*

*word then there is no power of forgiveness. It therefore requires more than a knowledge of the truth for baptism to be valid. The Lord Jesus in his conversation with Nicodemus spoke of being 'born again' or 'from above' (John 3:3-5). This begetting involves the impartation by the word of the divine likeness, so that 'in this world we are living as He lives' (2 John 4:17) by God's wisdom, holiness and sacrificial love. Anyone desiring to be baptized must therefore realize to some extent the position to which he/she is invited by the gospel with its responsibilities. The apostle Paul shows us in Romans 6 that the believer must become 'dead to sin' **before** he/she is 'buried with Christ'. As the death and burial of the believer is an **identification** by faith with that of Christ's, so is the believer's rising up, that he/she may be 'alive to God' and 'walk in newness of life' mentally and morally. (Romans 6:11 & 4).*

10. Do you think you will be perfect after baptism?

No.

11. Do you have a mediator before baptism?

No. After baptism we have "an advocate with the Father," "a mediator between God and man," "our great High Priest," the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 John 2:1; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 7:26). Scripture states that after baptism when we sin, if we confess our sins and forsake them, "Christ is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" and "to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (1 John 1:9; Hebrews 7:25).

On the question of God hearing the prayers of the unbaptized, refer to Appendix I on page 165.

FAITH AND THE GOSPEL

"It is of primary importance that we believe the truth, and not a substitute for it; for it is by the truth only we can be saved; 'the truth as it is in Jesus' (Ephesians 4:21), neither more nor less, is that to which our attention is invited in the word. 'The truth' is set forth

in the law and the prophets; but we must add to these the apostolic testimony contained in the New Testament if we would comprehend it 'as it is in Jesus.' The kingdom is the subject matter of 'the truth'; but 'as it is in Jesus,' is the truth concerning him as the king and supreme pontiff of the dominion; and the things concerning his name, as taught in the doctrine of the apostles. As a whole, 'the truth' is defined as 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ' (Acts 8:12). This phrase covers the entire ground upon which the 'one faith,' and the 'one hope' (Ephesians 4:5-6), of the gospel are based; so that if a man believe only the 'things of the kingdom,' his faith is defective in the 'things of the name'; or, if his belief be confined to the 'things of the name,' it is deficient in the 'things of the kingdom.' There can be no separation of them recognized in a 'like precious faith' (2 Pet 1:1) to that of the apostles. They believed and taught all these things; God hath joined them together, and no man need expect His favour who separates them, or abolishes the necessity of believing the things He has revealed for faith...It is our wisdom, therefore, to receive nothing which has not the sanction of their (apostles) authority. Paul styles everything else but what he preached 'another gospel,' (Galatians 1:6-8) that is, 'a perversion of the gospel of Christ'; and, as we can only be saved by belief of the truth, such a gospel is both useless and injurious." (Elpis Israel Logos ed. pg. 192 – 193).

12. You have truly said that a belief in the gospel before baptism is essential for salvation. What is the gospel?

It is the things concerning the good news and glad tidings of the kingdom of God and those things concerning the saving name of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 8:12).

Paul says, "Christ brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Timothy 1:10). And that, "God would justify (or forgive and constitute righteous) the Gentiles through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham..." (Galatians 3:8). The way we are brought into connection with the work of salvation as accomplished in Christ is by faith in the gospel. Our faith is counted to us for righteousness. (Romans 4:3 & 24; 5:1).

13. But how do you obtain faith and conviction?

“Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17).

Is faith necessary?

Yes. “Without faith it is impossible to please God: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” (Hebrews 11:6).

Does faith by itself secure us the salvation accomplished in Christ?

No. There must be obedience or “works” also. “Faith without works is dead...by works faith is made perfect.” (James 2:20-22).

14. What works are those who believe commanded to do?

There are many things we have been commanded to do. First we are commanded to be baptized.

15. Where did you get this knowledge of what is the will of God and the truth concerning Christ?

In the Holy Scriptures - the Bible. “From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (2 Timothy 3:15).

Bro Roberts says “There is no other form of God’s word in the earth at present but the bible...The Bible is the standard; every claim must be judged by this. But before men can judge by the Bible, they must be acquainted with it, and before they can be acquainted with it, they must study it... in a daily, regular, earnest manner, at stated times set apart for the purpose. By this method, a man becomes so acquainted with the Scriptures as to be able to make that practical application of them in judgment that qualifies him to discern the things that are of God from those that are only so in name and appearance.” (Seasons of Comfort Vol 1 pg 294).

Bro. Thomas states: “The ability to believe lies in a sound understanding, a candid disposition, and knowledge of the testimony of God. **Where there is ignorance of this there can be no faith....** The mere belief that Jesus is the Son of God is not believing in Him. To believe in Him is to believe what God testifies concerning Him. The faith of the ‘religious world’ is like a stool with only one leg. It professes to believe in Jesus, but it is ignorant, and therefore faithless, of the message He was sent to deliver to Israel. His message had relation to ‘the things hoped for’--to the things of the kingdom which the God of heaven will set up upon the ruin of the kingdoms which now exist. Men are invited to believe in the **Messenger** of the Covenant, (Malachi 3:1) and **in the message** which unfolds the things of covenant.” (Elpis Israel Part 1 chapter 5 ‘The way of the tree of life’ pg. 163). Again, bro. Thomas states “the condition of salvation is the belief of the **whole gospel and obedience to it**. It is not ‘he that believes in Jesus Christ, and is baptized shall be saved,’ but ‘he who believes the GOSPEL and is baptized’” (Mark 16:15-16) (Elpis Israel pg. 198).

What is the Bible?

It is a book written by God’s power of inspiration, which worked in Moses, God’s prophets and apostles who lived during Israel’s history. It reveals God’s purpose with the earth and man upon it that from the beginning of creation God had a plan by which he would separate out from all mankind – Jew and Gentile, a remnant who would manifest God’s character in response to His love; being obedient to His revealed will which was made plain in the Lord Jesus Christ who would deliver His people in harmony with God’s plan.

Are the scriptures as originally given by God to the Old and New Testament writers wholly inspired?

Yes. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” (2 Timothy 3:16) (Note: A Statement of the Faith Forming our Basis of Fellowship, section titled THE FOUNDATION on page 127).

The apostle Peter tells us (2 Peter 1:20-21) explicitly that the all-inspired revelation of God's word to specifically chosen men was done in such a manner so that which is recorded did not reflect any personal opinion or embellishment, addition or subtraction from what the spirit of God revealed. In our daily study we should use essentially literal translations of the Bible such as the KJV, RV and ESV etc. While it was not always possible for the translators to find an exact equivalent English word for the original Hebrew and Greek, with the aid of concordances and Hebrew/Greek lexicons, we can get the correct understanding. In our desire to harmonize our thinking with the thoughts of God we should always remember bro. Roberts advice from Christendom Astray about the "unmistakable declaration of the word of God" that "plain testimony ought to guide us in the understanding of what may be obscure. We ought to procure our fundamental principles from teaching that can not be misunderstood and harmonize all difficulties therewith" (pg. 35).

Who wrote the Bible?

Moses, Yahweh's prophets and Christ's apostles.

Who wrote the first five books?

Moses.

How could he write them when he was not born during the events of Genesis?

By inspiration.

How many books does the Bible consist?

66.

Into what parts is the Bible divided?

Two parts i.e. the Old Testament (39 books) written by Moses and God's prophets and the New Testament (27 books) written by Christ's apostles.

Is the Bible the only source of knowledge concerning God and His purposes available in the earth?

Yes I believe the Bible is the **only** source of inspired knowledge and the claims of others who may say the book of Mormon, or The Watch Tower or Ellen White's 'The Great Controversy' are inspired are completely false.

WHAT THE BIBLE REVEALS CONCERNING GOD

16. You have said the Bible reveals God's purpose. What does the Bible reveal concerning God?

That there is only one God, the Father of all, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the common idea that God is a trinity is utterly unscriptural. "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (1 Timothy 2:5). "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." (Deuteronomy 6:4). Also Isaiah 45:5; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 1:3 etc.

17. The first chapter of the Genesis record states, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." It then goes on to show that during a process of six literal days all life on the earth was created. Do you believe the first chapter of Genesis is a true literal record of Creation and not just a vision Moses saw, representing long ages of Evolution?

Yes. I believe the Genesis record in chapter one is a literal account. I do not believe in Evolution. Yahweh through Moses commanded Israel, "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of Yahweh thy God...for in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea, and all in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Yahweh blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:9-11). (Note Berean Restatement No. 3 'Evolution' on page 145).

18. What is the nature of God?

God "**only** hath immortality," i.e. underived immortality (1 Timothy 6:16).

Where does God dwell?

In heaven for Solomon at the dedication of the temple in Jerusalem prayed, “What prayer or what supplication so ever shall be made of any man or of all Thy people Israel...hear Thou from heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive...” (2 Chronicles 6:29-30) “Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name...” (Matthew 6:9).

Is God confined to heaven though dwelling there?

No. He is everywhere present and nothing can be hid from His knowledge (Jeremiah 23:24; Psalm 139:6-12).

Has God shape and form?

Yes. “Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.” (James 3:9; also 1 Corinthians 11:7 - image; John 5:37 - form and voice; Psalm 34:15-16 - eyes, ears and face; Hebrews 1:3 - the right hand of the Majesty on high).

Is God a trinity?

No. “There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5).

19. Is the word “trinity” in the Bible?

No.

Why is it to God alone all honour and power everlasting is due?

Because He is Omnipotent - all-powerful (Revelation 19:6); Omnipresent - all present by His spirit and Omniscient - all seeing (Jeremiah 23:24; Hebrews 4:13; Psalm 139; 1-8).

What does the Bible reveal concerning the character of God?**Note Exodus 34:6-7 etc.**

That He is kind, yet inflexible in the requirements of His law; loving and compassionate, yet terrible as a destroying fire against the rebellious and the guilty; forgiving towards

offences, yet jealous of the dignity, the glory, and supremacy of His name. He is holy, and cannot look upon sin. He is wise, and cannot tolerate fools. He is true and faithful, and will destroy all the false and perfidious. He is just and true and perfect - at once the fountain of love and vengeance, the author of life and death; the source of reviving mercy and consuming fire. He is eternal, unchangeable, unsearchable, infinite, and glorious in power and majesty - the king immortal, the possessor of heaven and earth, to whom alone is glory due. (The Christadelphian Instructor pg. 9 no.14).

*The above summary by bro. Roberts of the name or character of God has a most important principle. The apostle Paul says we ought to note “the goodness (kindness ESV) and the severity of God” (Romans 8:22). Bro. Thomas reminds us in Elpis Israel that the character of Yahweh is not constituted of one attribute only, but that he is sovereign of the universe as well as kind and merciful. He is not merely an intellectual but also a **moral being**. His purpose with man who He intellectually and morally constituted is to reflect His moral glory voluntarily by belief and obedience to His word, so as to be in harmony with, and thereby honour His name. (Refer Elpis Israel pg. 180 – 181). We in fact can only be the recipients of His loving kindness when we **first** understand and humbly bow before His righteousness and holiness, acknowledging that He is “**just and the justifier** of the one who has faith in Jesus.” (Romans 3:26).*

20. What is the spirit of God?

It is God’s power by which He made heaven and earth and all creation is preserved by this same power. (Psalm 104:30; Jeremiah 32:17; Job 33:4; Acts 17:24-28; Job 34:14-15).

Is the Holy Spirit a God?

No. Nowhere in scripture does it say this. It is the power of God separated out (meaning of Holy) to do a particular work (Luke 1:35).

Is God therefore separate from and different from His spirit?

No. God and His spirit cannot be separated. They are both one. (John 4:24). He is everywhere present by His spirit. “Whither shall I go from Thy spirit?” (Psalm 139:7).

What do these things teach us about our conduct?

They teach us that we are always in His presence. Even our innermost thoughts and intentions He can discern. (Hebrews 4:12-13; Psalm 139:12).

What is God's free spirit? (Psalm 51:12)

It is God's spirit and His breath of life. (Job 34:14).

What is the "right spirit" the Psalmist prays for? ("Create in me a clean heart God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10)

It is the mind of men cleansed by the word of God (Psalm 51:6-10).

Bro. Thomas describes in beautiful language what is this right spirit that must be developed in every man and woman who becomes a true believer of the gospel. "This new mode of thinking and feeling created in a true believer by the divine law and testimony, is variously designated in scripture. It is styled 'a clean heart and a right spirit' (Psa. 51:10); 'a new spirit' and 'a heart of flesh' (Ezek. 11:19); the 'inward man' (2 Cor. 4:16; Rom. 7:22); 'new creature' (2 Cor. 5:17); 'the new man created in righteousness and true holiness'; and 'renewed unto knowledge after the image of him that created him' (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10); the 'hidden man of the heart' (1 Pet. 3:4); and so forth. This new and hidden man is manifested in the life, which is virtuous as becomes the gospel. He delights in the law of the Lord, and speaks often of His testimonies. He denies himself of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and walks soberly, righteously and godly in the world. His hope is the glorious manifestation of Jesus Christ, with the crown of righteousness, even glory, honour, and immortality, promised to all who look for him, and 'love his appearing', and desire his kingdom (Titus 2:11-14; 2 Tim. 4:1,8; Heb. 9:28)." (Elpis Israel Part 1, chapter 4 'The two principles', pg. 144).

21. You said that God is one. Who is the "us" in Genesis 1:26? ("Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.")

The Elohim or Yahweh's mighty ones - the angels.

ANGELS AND WHAT SCRIPTURE REVEALS CONCERNING SPIRITUAL AND NATURAL BODIES

22. Who are the Elohim? What did they do?

They are glorious beings, manifestations of God, sent by God on various errands throughout the universe doing His pleasure. (Psalm 103:20) It was by their hands that Yahweh executed the acts of creation as is recorded in Genesis 1. (Job 38:7).

What is the nature of the angels?

They are spiritual bodies, immortal in nature, and like men in their form and aspect.

Who made them spiritual bodies?

God. (Psalm 104:4).

23. We know God is a spirit being and “He maketh His angels spirits.” How many types of body are there?

There is a natural body and a spiritual body. (1 Corinthians 15:44).

Is a spiritual body like a natural body?

It is like it in shape, but not in nature.

What type of body have you?

A natural, mortal body.

What is the difference of nature between a spiritual body and a natural, mortal body?

A mortal body grows old, decays and dies, whereas a spiritual body is immortal and glorious. (1 Corinthians 15:42).

Bro. Thomas says “a spiritual body is as material, or substantial and tangible, a body as that which we now possess. It is a body purified from “the law of sin and death” (Elpis Israel, Part 1, chapter 2 “The spiritual body” pg. 43)

24. What has God promised relative to these bodies Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 15?

Those who believe, love and obey the truth steadfastly to the end shall experience a glorious change when this mortal will put on immortality. (1 Corinthians 15:51).

When will this happen?

When the Son of man shall come in his glory with all his holy angels. The dead who are responsible (those who know the revealed will of God and have been called upon to submit to it) will be raised and appear before him to be judged, along with all others who are responsible and alive at his coming (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

What will happen at the judgment seat?

The faithful will be separated from the unfaithful who will be dismissed from His presence to shame, corruption and death. The accepted will be changed in a moment, all in one company, into the likeness of the body of their glorious judge (Matthew 25:32-46; Daniel 12:2; Romans 8:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Philippians 3:21).

Are the Angels then, of the same nature as we shall become if we are saved at the resurrection?

Yes, exactly the same. God’s promise to us is that we shall become equal to them and die no more (Luke 20:35-36).

Let us not forget these important words of Christ in Luke 20 where he clearly states that angels cannot die, yet the churches teach that the devil is a fallen angel which Paul states in Hebrews 2:14 Christ came to destroy!

25. Have Angels ever been seen upon the earth?

Yes, many times. Three appeared to Abraham. Two visited Sodom and destroyed it. One wrestled Jacob. One led Israel out of Egypt. One appeared to the father of John the Baptist and one to the mother of Jesus. They appeared at the resurrection of Jesus and at various times to the apostles etc. (Genesis 18:1, 19:1, 32:24; Hosea 12:4; Exodus 14:19-24; Luke 1:11-26, 2:9; Matthew 28:2; Acts 1:10, 5:19, 12:7-10 etc.)

Have the Angels names?

Yes. Gabriel appeared to Daniel, Zacharias and Mary. Michael is the Archangel. Sometimes they are spoken of as God bearing God's memorial name. (Daniel 9:21; Luke 1:19 & 26; Jude 9; Exodus 3:2-6).

26. Why are the angels spoken of as if they were God?

They are His representatives and His Name is in them. (Exodus 23:20-21).

CONCERNING MAN

*Bro. Thomas states in Elpis Israel "When the work of the six days was completed, the Lord God reviewed all that He had made, and pronounced it 'very good.' This quality pertained to every thing terrestrial (on earth). The beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, reptiles, and man, were all 'very good;' and all made up a natural system of things, or world, as perfect as the nature of things required. Its excellency, however, had relation solely to its physical quality. Man, though "very good," was so only as a piece of divine workmanship. **He was made different from what he afterwards became**....Adam and his betrothed had a nature capable of corruption, **but were not subject to death, or mortal**....In the Paradise of Eden, mortality and immortality were set before the man and his companion. They were capable of being filled with either; but with which depended upon their actions: for immortality is the end of holiness (Rom 6:22), without which no man can see the Lord."(Elpis Israel Part 1, chapter 2 'Man in his novitiate' pg. 72 & 74).*

27. What does the Bible reveal concerning man?

Originally God made man of the dust of the ground, in the image of God as a living soul or natural body of life, “very good” in kind and condition. Man was placed under a law through which the continuance of life was dependent on his obedience. (Genesis 2:7 & 17; Romans 5:12; A Statement of the Faith No. 4 on page 127.

What nature is man?

He is mortal. He dies and returns to the dust from which he was made (Ecclesiastes 3:19-20; Psalm 89:48; Job 14:10).

Has man an immortal soul, which lives on after death as held by nearly every religious system on earth?

No. That doctrine is one of the many religious untruths that have come to be regarded as truth. Man is wholly mortal. God only has immortality. Immortality is something a man has to seek for. It is a matter of promise and hope to be accepted among the worthy at Christ’s return to the earth (Genesis 3:4; Jeremiah 16:19; 1 Timothy 6:16; Romans 2:7; Titus 1:2; 1 John 2:25; Philippians 3:20-21; 2 Timothy 4:1 & 8).

Can man’s life be immortal though his body is mortal?

No, the scriptures of truth state that when man dies “ His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish” and “ The dust shall return to the earth as it was; and the spirit (or breath – the vitality of life) shall return to God who gave it.” (Psalm 146; 3-4; Ecclesiastes 12:7).

*The inspired writing of the apostle Paul very clearly illustrates the significance of these truths when discussing the resurrection and promise of eternal life, says “the first man Adam became a **living soul**; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the **natural** and **then the spiritual**” (1 Cor. 15:45 & 46 ESV). There is in Paul’s mind a clear distinction between a natural body and a spiritual body and that distinction, says bro Thomas “lies in the testimony that ‘Adam was made a living soul’(Hebrew nephesh chayiah or a body of life); showing that he considered a **natural or animal body and a living soul as one and the same thing**” (Note: Elpis Israel*

Part 1 chapter 2, 'The formation of man' pg. 31-37. Also Christendom Astray pg. 27-37 "Human Nature Essentially Mortal" and pg. 54 "The dead unconscious until the resurrection").

Is the phrase "immortal soul" found anywhere in the Bible?

No.

So do souls die?

Yes. "The soul that sins it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4 & 20).

28. What does mortal mean?

It describes the human body as being subject to a condition, ending in or causing death.

There is a common belief in heaven and hell. What happens to man when he dies?

Does he know anything?

When we die, our breath goes forth and in that very day our thoughts perish. We eventually return to the earth from which man was made. The dead know not anything. We who are responsible will know nothing until we awaken at the resurrection. (Psalm 146:3-4; Ecclesiastes 9:5-10; Psalm 6:5; Isaiah 38:18-19; Psalm 49:16-20).

So we cannot contact the dead?

No.

29. What is hell in the Bible?

It is a covered place, the grave. The original word for hell in the Old Testament is the Hebrew word *Sheol* and refers to the grave. The word hell comes from the Anglo-Saxon and means to cover or hide. The word hell in the New Testament is placed for the Greek word *Hades*, which means that which is in darkness.

What is Gehenna?

The word hell is also sometimes translated in the New Testament as the Hebrew word *Gehenna*. *Gehenna* refers to the Valley of Hinnom near Jerusalem. It was a place where idolatrous Jews burnt their children to pagan gods and later became a rubbish dump where the bodies of the condemned were burnt.

SIN IN ITS TWO ASPECTS

30. What is sin?

Sin is disobedience to God's law. The word sin is also extended by a figure of speech in scripture to that **physical** principle of our nature, which is the cause of all disease, death and transgression of God's law. The word sin is used this way because this evil was fixed in Adam's flesh as a result of his disobedience to God's law, and God passing the sentence of death upon him. (Note Clause 5 of the Statement of the Faith; 1 John 3:4; Romans 7:15, 17-18, 23-25; 5:12, 14 & 19; Elpis Israel Part 1 chapter 4 'The Constitution of Sin' pg. 128 & "The Bible doctrine concerning the tempter considered." by bro. Thomas).

What is another word or phrase used in scripture to describe this evil principle in our flesh?

"Sin in the flesh," which is the Bible "devil" (Greek *Diabolos*) is what Jesus destroyed in his death. It is the devil which has the power of death which Paul in Romans 5 equates with sin that causes death, therefore "sin in the flesh" = devil (Romans 8:3; Hebrews 2:14; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:16).

You say God sentenced Adam to death because he transgressed His law and that this sentence or evil became a fixed principle in Adam and his descendants' flesh. Is God then the author of sin?

No, in Him is no darkness at all. Sin came by man (James 1:17; 1 John 1:5, Romans 5:12).

What then is this evil God fixed to man's nature as a result of transgression?

God is the author of evil, but not of sin. Evil is a scriptural word and when used in a natural sense it refers to the punishment or consequences of sin. The evil which came upon man as a result of his rebellion was the sentence of death – ‘dying thou shall die’ as indicated in the original Hebrew (Isaiah 45:7; Amos 3:6; Gen.2:17).

*The scripture reveals that man is mortal because of sin. Death is the result of sin and not the quality of the nature with which man was originally created. It is God’s law, and therefore a part of His righteousness, that sinners must die. As you have quoted “The soul that sins, it shall die.” Adam, our first father sinned and was judged unworthy of immortality. He was sentenced to death before he had any children. This **sentence defiled** (or contaminated) his previously very good condition and became a physical law of his being that was transmitted to all his posterity (descendants) **including the Lord Jesus Christ**. Bro. Thomas shows that the scriptures describes this defiled or contaminated condition of human nature as “‘sinful flesh’ (Romans 8:3) or flesh full of sin, **a physical quality or principle that makes the flesh mortal and called sin, because this property of flesh became its law as the consequence of ‘transgression’**” (Herald of the Kingdom of Age to Come, March 1855 pg. 51). **Adam thus became subject not only to disease and death, but to a law of sin in his members (i.e. in his body) opposed to the law of God which incites transgression.** Paul, one of the greatest servants of God who has ever lived, speaking of his personal experience says “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth **in me**” (Romans 7:18-20) “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is **in** my members” (Romans 7:23). Therefore, death began with Adam, and came to us through him. We receive the nature that he had after he was condemned to die. We inherit his sentence of death, which is **the root cause of man’s problems including why we sin.** This impulse or tendency to sin originates from this **physical condition of man’s nature** and personified by Paul as “**Him** that had the power of death, that is the devil” which is a synonym for **Sin, therefore Sin = devil = sin in the flesh** (Romans 6:23, 5:12 & 18, Ezekiel 18:4 & 20;*

1 Corinthians 15:22; Romans 3:23, 7:24; Hebrews 2:14; A Statement of the Faith No. 5 (page 127).

Does God intend that the human race shall always be subject to this present evil state?

No. God in His kindness conceived a plan of restoration which, without setting aside His just and necessary law of sin and death, should ultimately rescue the race from destruction and people the earth with sinless immortals. (Hosea 13:14; Isaiah 25:8; 1 Corinthians 15:26; A Statement of the Faith No. 6, pg. 127).

31. Will God bring about this great work without any reference to whether men please Him or not?

No. The work will be thoroughly done in righteousness. As death came by sin, so life will come by obedience (1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Peter 4:18; Galatians 6:7; Romans 5:19).

32. The scriptures declare that “there is none righteous, no, not one.” How then can salvation come if it is to depend on righteousness?

If it were left to man it would be impossible. But God has not left man to himself. God has a plan of salvation, the foundation of which was laid by making promises to Adam, Abraham and David, the substance of which was God’s work in His only begotten son the Lord Jesus Christ. (Genesis 3:15, 22:18; Psalm 89:34-37; Isaiah 25:7-9, 51:1-8; Jeremiah 23:5; A Statement of the Faith No. 7 page 127).

*The importance of understanding the two senses in which sin is applied in God’s word has a direct bearing on how it was possible for God to **righteously** condemn sin as a **physical principle** in the very flesh that had become defiled as a consequence of man’s rebellion. At the same time God could righteously raise this man as the basis of divine covering and mercy from the dead upon the same divine principle i.e. death came by sin even so eternal life came by perfect obedience (Romans 5:19). **The key** to this masterpiece of divine wisdom is in the fact that God views these two aspects of sin,*

though related as **cause** (sin in the flesh) and **effect** (transgression) as having an essential difference.

The defiled flesh and blood nature we inherit from Adam has **no personal guilt** attached to it, we are **not** held guilty for Adam's sin! 'Sin in the flesh' which we inherit does not alienate us from God for which we need forgiveness, **it is a physical condition** over which we have no control, it is says bro. Thomas '**our misfortune, not our crime**' (Elpis Israel Part 1 chapter 3 pg. 78 & pg. 132). Nonetheless, from this condition, from the bondage of that which has the power of death – the devil or 'the body of sin' (Hebrews 2:15; Romans 6:6) we need deliverance and redemption. That which we are held responsible for is when having been enlightened by the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:17) we transgress God's law by either neglecting to do what God commands, or by deliberately disobeying. For these transgressions we are held personally responsible and need forgiveness.

PART 2

GOD'S PLAN OF RESTORATION CENTRED IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

We must now think not only why the Lord Jesus Christ is the substance of the promises, through whom God's righteousness was to be declared, but the way Scripture reveals how this was achieved. These promises, we know, had reference to Jesus Christ, who was to be raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David.

*The adoption by man in the beginning of the serpent's false reasoning in effect accused God of lying. This act cast down, falsely accused and dishonored God and His truth. Man, as he had been warned, was rightly sentenced to death. If man was to be redeemed from this position, a method of redemption had to be established which did not set aside God's just and necessary law of sin and death. Of necessity, this method of redemption needed to reverse what had so dishonored God, and vindicate (i.e. to uphold so that none could say God was unjust) His holiness and righteousness. God's righteousness had to be declared in such a way that man might acknowledge God's just principle as set forth at the beginning - that sin had to be condemned, and that by faith he would see that God, in upholding His righteousness is the justifier of those who believe in what God accomplished in Jesus (Romans 3:25-26). It was the mission of Christ to do this by first honoring God by the obedience of faith – do perfectly under intense trial what Adam failed to do. A work accomplished **in himself**, which not only reversed all that had so dishonored God at the beginning, but of divine **necessity**, sacrificially condemned sin in the very nature that had been defiled in Eden as a consequence of sin - the nature which ever since the fall in Eden has been the source of all rebellion against God's law.*

*The declaration of God's righteousness therefore required Jesus to be a **representative** of those he came to save - wearing **the same condemned nature** we all inherit from Adam and therefore **the same need of redemption** from it. Jesus, though born in this same condemned sinful nature, was to obtain a title to resurrection by **perfect obedience** to God, and by **dying, abolished the law of condemnation (i.e. the sentence of death Romans 5:12) for himself, in order that it might be abolished in all who should believe***

*and obey him. The perfect obedience of Christ was therefore not sufficient on its own to declare God's righteousness, nor was his sacrifice merely the crowning act of a life of obedience. In fact his perfect obedience had to culminate, by divine command, in his submission to the death of the cross. His submission to the **death on the cross was the means by which God's righteousness was upheld, and sin publicly condemned.** The Lord Jesus as our **representative** was the **first to be redeemed by his own sacrificial death and resurrection.** He, as the fore runner of the redeemed, was physically cleansed from the defilement of "sin in the flesh" at his glorification to spirit nature. By his life of perfect obedience, even to the death of the cross, he received the right from God to bestow the same blessing on all who should in faith and obedience, come to God through him. (1 Corinthians 15:45; Hebrews 2:14-16; Romans 5:18; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Romans 3:23-26; Romans 8:3; Hebrews 9:12, 22-28; Statement of the Faith Nos. 8 & 9 pg. 127).*

33. How can men who are sinners lay hold on the righteousness of God in Christ?

God calls on men and women to repent, and offers to forgive their sins if they believe in Jesus and put on his name. (Acts 17:30, 13:38; Isaiah 55:7 Acts 2:38; Acts 4:12)

How do we enter into Christ?

We enter into the Lord Jesus Christ by being born of water and of the Spirit. By God's word we are mentally and morally changed. This change is imputed to us for righteousness when we put on Christ's name at baptism. (John 3:5-8; Romans 4:3, 21-25, 12:2)

34. Are we saved by faith in Christ alone?

No. Faith justifies from all past sins, and ensures peace with God, but works are required to retain God's favour and secure acceptance at the last. (Romans 5:1; 1 Corinthians 10:12; Romans 8:13; 2 Peter 2:20; James 2:24; Revelation 2:5 & 23).

Now if that is the case, the churches teach a whole series of doctrines that directly contradict this truth.

35. We know that Jesus Christ is the son of God but is he God the son?

No. Such an idea stems from the false doctrine of the trinity widely proclaimed in the third and fourth centuries. It has no place in apostolic teaching.

Did the Lord Jesus pre-exist before his miraculous birth that was the result of the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary?

He existed only in the mind, plan and purpose of Yahweh and this is the reason why in the opening chapter of the gospel of John he is described as “the word made flesh” (Proverbs 8:12-31; Revelation 13:9; John 1:1, 14).

Was He immortal before he was raised from the dead and “ascended to the father” (John 20:17)?

No. This is the false doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. Scriptures state, “How can he be clean who is born of a woman?” And that “God made Christ to be sin (i.e. sinful flesh or flesh and blood) for us, who knew no sin.” (Elpis Israel ‘The Constitution of Sin’ pg. 134; Job 25:4, 14:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:3; Hebrews 10:10-14; John 3:6-7)

What was Jesus Christ’s mission?

He came to save his people from their sins. Jesus means saviour. (Matthew 1:21)

Bro. Roberts states simply in “The Blood of Christ,” “He was born that he might die, as the first necessity in the case; for thus was the righteousness of God to be declared, and sin condemned in its own flesh, as the foundation of all the goodness to come afterwards.” (section ‘Very Simple, Very Reasonable’ pg. 7 Logos ed). We know Jesus Christ was the Son of man as well as Son of God, made in all things like unto ourselves, yet without sin, (Acts 2:22; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 2:14-17) that his mother Mary was a descendant of David, (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35)

Was Mary immaculate (completely clean, pure, flawless) as the Roman Catholic Church teaches?

No. That blasphemous doctrine is a part of Mariolatry. Her immaculate nature was proclaimed in the late 1800's and has no place in apostolic teaching.

36. Can you then explain, so that it is clear, how Jesus Christ was both man and the Son of God?

He was begotten of a human virgin mother by the power of the Spirit of God and not by a human father. He was therefore divine in origin, in character and education. Mary, the Lord's mother, descended from David and was betrothed to Joseph who was also a descendant of David. On his mother's side, Jesus was the Son of David, and therefore a man partaking of David's nature, which is the nature common to all, a body of death requiring redemption. From his mother's side he therefore derived both the tendencies that lead to sin and the sentence of death that came upon man at the beginning because of sin and was passed on to all Adam's descendants including Christ. (Matthew 1:1; Galatians 4:4; Luke 1:35; Romans 8:23 & 7:24; Hebrews 9:12)

What are the consequences of this great truth?

This was the way God designed Christ to be the "sin bearer", that is, the means by which "he bore our sins in his body on the tree." (1Peter 2:24)

Bro. Roberts in "The Blood of Christ" shows us, "The object was to open a way out of this state, both for himself and his brethren, by death and resurrection after trial. It pleased God to require the ceremonial (i.e. it was formal, public and literal) condemnation of this sin-nature in crucifixion in the person of a righteous possessor of it, in a body under the dominion of death because of sin. It was that nature that was to be operated upon and redeemed in him, as the basis of our forgiveness". (Subsection 'Sin in the Flesh' pg. 14 Logos ed)

You believe then that there was a time when death did have dominion over Jesus?

Yes. (Romans 6:9)

37. What does Christ mean?

Anointed. (Acts 4:27; Psalm 2:2)

What is anointing?

It is the ceremony by which kings and priests were by divine appointment consecrated to their office. It consisted of putting holy oil on their heads. (Exodus 29:7-9; 1 Samuel 16:1-3)

How and when was Jesus anointed?

He was anointed with the Holy spirit as he came out of the waters of baptism in the Jordan. (Luke 3:21-22)

Is the Lord Jesus referred to by any other names in the Bible?

Yes. Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14) - God (*Hebrew - Ail - Power*) with us.

38. If that is the case, do you believe Jesus is co-equal and co-eternal with the Father as the Trinitarians teach?

No. The **man** Christ Jesus, begotten of the Father and endowed immeasurably with God's spirit was distinct from the Father. Jesus was one with God mentally and morally. Christ was the perfect manifestation of the Father's character in the flesh. His flesh was the same defiled (contaminated) nature, subject to death, as the race he came to save. The scriptures tell us God only has immortality underived. Christ disowned co-equality with the Father and the scriptures show co-eternity is impossible in a son. (John 8:18, 14:11 & 28; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Corinthians 11:3 & 15:28)

We must now carefully consider the importance of the fact that Jesus is both divine and human with respect to his mission. The very reason for his coming into existence was to save men from their sins in order that God's Name might be glorified. To do so, as previously mentioned, Yahweh's plan necessitated the miraculous birth of Christ from a human mother enabling him to bear our condemnation, but divine in the source from which he derived his perfect character. This strengthened him to be able to be a sinless bearer of our defiled nature, so that after suffering the sacrificial death required to

declare the righteousness of God, he could be righteously raised from the dead. By his perfect life of obedience, sacrificial death and resurrection, God could extend forgiveness to us on the basis of what was accomplished in Christ without setting aside his principles of righteousness and holiness. (Luke 1:68-73; 2:30-32; Hebrews 2:14-17; Galatians 4:4; John 1:14; 1 Timothy 3:16; Romans 3:25; Statement of the Faith Nos. 9 & 10, pg. 127)

39. When did Jesus' public mission begin?

At his baptism. (Acts 1:22)

Why was Christ baptized?

Jesus said it was proper “for us (referring to John the Baptist and Himself) to fulfill all righteousness.” (Matthew 3:15)

What does Jesus mean when he said, “for us to fulfill all righteousness?”

The Lord's words were in response to John's confession on hearing Christ's request to be baptized, that he (John) himself needed to be baptized of the Lord Jesus. The master's words indicate he also had a need to be baptized and this need arises from the fact that for God's righteousness to be declared in the great sacrificial work God had given him to do, he had to be a true representative (one in need of the same thing) of those he came to redeem.

*Bro. Roberts says in fact “there was a **necessity**. The work he had come to do was first of all a work of obedience in himself.” (Nazareth Revisited pg. 84). Bro. Roberts states in the Law of Moses “Christ's work was therefore to establish salvation by forgiveness, but forgiveness on conditions, and **these conditions involved the declaration of the Father's righteousness in the public condemnation of sin in its own flesh in the person of a guiltless possessor of that flesh**” (Law of Moses, pg. 176). The Lord Jesus' obedience to baptism (a ritual act appointed by God symbolizing the putting away of sin) pointed forward to his sacrificial death. The Lord's deliberate identification with John's expression of need to be baptized “for us to fulfill all righteousness” shows us in the words of bro. Roberts “that Christ himself was included in the sacrificial work he did ‘for*

us.’ ‘For himself that it might be for us,’ for how otherwise could we have obtained redemption if it had not first come into his possession, for us to become joint heirs of?’
(*Law of Moses, 177*)

Do you believe the Law of Moses was a part of that ‘all righteousness’ the Lord said he had come to fulfill?

Paul said “the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” (Romans 7:12 ESV). The Lord Jesus said with respect to the law and the prophets, “I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them...not a iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished” (Matt 5:17-18 ESV) The law was a representation of God’s righteousness (Romans 3:21), the **reality** was set forth in the life of perfect obedience, sacrificial condemnation of sin and resurrection of Christ.

Was the Law then a figure or shadow and prophecy of how God would save men from their sins by the sacrifice of Christ?

Yes. I believe Paul says so in Col. 2:17, and in Hebrews. (Chapters 8:5 and 10:1)

40. The baptism of John, as you know, was a “baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:4). As Jesus had not sinned and therefore, had no need of repentance, what did his baptism represent?

I believe Christ, though not a transgressor of God’s law, came as the sin-bearer (Isaiah 53:5-6). By being “born of a woman, born under the law” (Galatians 4:4), God made him flesh and blood under the physical law of sin and death, by which means he bore our condemnation, so that he might take it away by his death (1 Peter 2:24).

What covenant did Christ’s sacrificial death confirm (or bring into force)?

The Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed (Romans 15:8), by which blood he himself, as our representative, was first redeemed and cleansed from the nature we all inherit. This established the basis upon which God could extend His mercy to us without violating His principles of righteousness.

It is very important to hear those being examined say this great Truth. So as the sinner, do you believe God laid all the sins of those who were to be saved upon him by Jesus being made of the same “sinful flesh” as the human race?

Yes, because the root of all our problems come from the nature we bear. Christ’s teachings (Matthew 5-7) always went to the root of man’s problem – “sin in the flesh”, and it was that root that he came to destroy in himself. (Isaiah 53:12; 1 Peter 2:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

You say that Christ’s mission was to save men from their sins. What was the subject of his teaching to the Jewish race?

He called His people, the Jews, to repentance from every evil work. He set forth infallible proof by the miracles he performed of His divine sonship and Jewish kingship. He proclaimed the glad tidings that God would restore the Kingdom of Israel through him and accomplish all things written in the prophets (Mark 1:15; Matthew 4:17, 5:20-48; John 1:49; Matthew 19:28; Luke 4:43 & 24:44; Statement of the Faith No. 11, pg. 127)

What was the result of Christ delivering this message and exhibition of God’s power?

He was put to death by the Jews and Romans (who were but instruments in the hand of God) to accomplish what God determined had to be done, as revealed through His prophets. (Acts 2:22-23, 3:13-18 & 4:10-12)

CONCERNING THE DEATH OF CHRIST AND THE WAY OF SALVATION

41. We have spoken of the way God saves men from their sins by Jesus Christ. In what way then does God turn men from their sins?

Yahweh in giving His Son as a sacrifice for sin exhibited His inexpressible love. It is by this love when deeply appreciated, and by the power of Christ’s teachings and example that God will turn men away from their sins and lead them to righteousness. (John 3:16-18; Romans 5:6-8; Acts 3:26; 1 Peter 2:21-25).

42. We have spoken of how God forgives for Christ's sake because of what was accomplished in his sacrificial death. We would like you to sum up what was accomplished in the death of Christ. Also can you mention two most important passages that should always be linked in answering this question?

The condemnation of sin in the flesh (Romans 8:3) through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all (Hebrews 10:10) as a propitiation or covering for sin through faith in his blood, to declare the righteousness of God as a basis for the remission of sins, that is Romans 8:3 and Romans 3:25-26. (Statement of the Faith No.12, pg. 127).

THE ESSENCE OF GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

*In those few words quoted from the Statement of the Faith No. 12, you have stated the very essence of God's plan of redemption. You said "the condemnation of sin in the flesh, through the offering of **the body** of Jesus." We note that Clause 12 does not say "the condemnation of sin in the flesh, through a life of perfect obedience" but "through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all". God's plan of salvation rested on Jesus' redemption from Adamic nature by a perfect obedience which had to culminate in the condemnation of sin's flesh by his sacrificial death. There are those who insist that the phrase "condemned sin in the flesh" was fulfilled by the moral condemnation of sin during Christ's life. Bro. Roberts says "**this cannot be the meaning** in view of the statement with which it is conjoined that what was done was 'what the law could not do.' (Romans 8:3). The law condemned sin so thoroughly in the **moral sense** that it is called 'the ministration of condemnation' (2 Corinthians 3:9)... Christ was sent 'in the likeness of sinful flesh' for the accomplishment of the work in question – **the condemnation of sin in the flesh**. This is, in fact, the reliable clue to the meaning. That he was sent in the likeness of sinful flesh (which Paul in Hebrews 2:14 says is **sameness**) for the accomplishment of the work shows that it was a work to be done **in him**." (Law of Moses pg. 174).*

*The diabolos destroyed (Hebrews 2:14), sin in the flesh condemned (Romans 8:3) was **physical because the flesh and blood body of Christ was accounted as "sin,"** "For he*

(God) **made** him (Jesus) **sin** for us, who knew no sin (transgression)...” (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Bro. Thomas states, “**Sin** is a word in Paul’s argument (in Romans 7), which stands for ‘human nature,’ with its affections and desires. **Hence, to become sin, or for one to be ‘made sin’ for others, (2 Corinthians 5:21) is to become flesh and blood. This is called ‘sin,’ or ‘Sin’s flesh,’ because it is what it is in consequence of sin, or transgression.**” (Eureka Vol. 1 pg. 247).

In your statement you linked as Bro. Thomas and Roberts, Romans 8:3 and Romans 3:25-26. They always linked those passages because they understood that **the declaration of God’s righteousness was the condemnation of sin in the flesh of Christ.** Bro. Roberts states “**There is no difference between the shedding of the blood of Christ and the condemnation of sin in the flesh...for what is death but the condemnation of sin....This sacrificial condemnation of sin is otherwise said ‘to declare the righteousness of God for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God’ (Romans 3:25)...No view can be right that cannot be brought within the terms of that definition.** It is in fact, the final easement of all difficulty where the mind is able to rise to the divine point of view involved in the statement. **The crucifixion was a divine declaration and enforcement of what is due to sin, and as it was God’s righteous appointment that this should be due to sin, the infliction of it was a declaration of God’s righteousness...for others to recognize, that they might be forgiven.**” (Law of Moses pg. 175-177).

The crucifixion as a divine declaration and enforcement of what is due to sin was a command from God, (John 10:18) that Christ himself should in faith submit, to which the garden of Gethsemane bears witness (Mark14:32-36). God had determined His righteousness could be declared in no other way as the basis of the remission of sins through His forbearance (Romans 3:25-26). The only way therefore that God can be recognized as righteous and “just” (Romans 3:26), which was the very purpose of this public declaration, **is if there was sin in the body of Jesus that had to be destroyed.** His body was accounted as ‘sin’ and treated as ‘sin’ as a public repudiation of sinful nature as the basis of divine fellowship and acceptability.

Could not sin have been condemned in its own flesh by the crucifixion of any sinner?

No, for as “by one man sin entered the world and death by sin” (Romans 5:12), even so eternal life was to come through one “who knew no sin so that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

*Bro. Roberts gives the reason in *The Blood of Christ*; that “not only had sin to be condemned, but resurrection had to come in harmony with the law that made death the wages of sin.” (*The Blood of Christ*, ‘Very Simple, very Reasonable’ pg. 7 Logos ed). That is a glorious truth and this provided us with one who should be a mediator between God and man who is the dispenser of forgiveness and salvation as well as our righteous judge.*

Would you now please explain how sin could be condemned in Christ who was sinless, and how could the righteousness of God be declared in the blood shedding of a righteous man?

Being born of Adam’s condemned race and partaking of their condemned nature, Christ was equally subject to the consequences of Adam’s transgression. Therefore, his public execution was a public demonstration of the righteous treatment of sin. It proclaimed how condemned human nature should be treated according to the righteousness of God; it is fit only for destruction. It pleased God to require this before inviting men to be reconciled to God through the man in whom this upholding of God’s righteousness should take place. (Hebrews 2:14 & 9:26; Romans 1:3 & 6:9-10; the Christadelphian Instructor No.55 & Blood of Christ ‘The Place of Forgiveness’, pg. 10 & 11 Logos ed.)

*Bro. Thomas says “Sin could not have been condemned in the body of Jesus, if it had not existed there.” (*Elpis Israel Part 1, chapter 4 “The Constitution of Sin”* pg. 128)*

*Bro. Roberts states “Christ could not **righteously** die if death had no dominion over him (Romans 6:9) and it could not have this dominion except through Adam, through Abraham, David and his mother, for he had no sin of his own...In this very real sense, our sins are considered as being laid on him and the beginning was made by making*

*him of the same death – inheriting nature from Eden... God’s plan of righteousness... required that the sufferer, while himself in the channel of death so far as nature was concerned, should himself not be a sinner, that he should be the Lamb of God, without spot, undefiled.... The man produced through Mary by the Spirit of God combined the two essential qualities for a sacrifice; he was the very nature condemned in Eden and therefore wrong was not done when he was impaled upon the cross. ‘It pleased the Lord to bruise him.’ Would it please the Lord to do iniquity? No: therefore it was right. But how could it be right, unless he were the very condemned stock?’ (Blood of Christ pg. 8-9 Logos ed.). “This is why it was necessary that Jesus should be ‘made of the seed of David according to the flesh’ (Romans 1:3), that he might partake of the very flesh and blood of man (Hebrews 2:14). It was that **nature** that was to be operated upon and **redeemed in him.**” (Blood of Christ section ‘The Place of Forgiveness’ pg. 11 Logos ed.)*

43. Was Christ Himself saved in the redemption he wrought out for us?

Yes. Christ benefited from his own death. “By his own blood he entered once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption,” for himself, as the Greek verb implies. It was therefore necessary that Jesus should offer for himself for the purging of his own nature first, from the uncleanness of death, that having by his own blood obtained eternal redemption in himself, he might be able to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him (Hebrews 9:12; 9:23 & 13:20).

Have you any doubts that Christ, in fulfilling the type of the High Priest under the Mosaic Law, had of necessity to offer for himself as well as for those whom he represented?

Paul says, “The heavenly things themselves,” (i.e. Christ who is the substance prefigured in the Law) had to be “purified,” “with better sacrifices than these,” (i.e. by the sacrifice of Himself). This was accomplished after Christ’s resurrection on the third day when he “ascended” to the Father (John 20:17) in his change of nature, “this corruptible must put on incorruption” (1Corinthians 15:52-54). This physical purification or removal of sin in the flesh was on the basis of the redemption accomplished by his sacrificial death (Hebrews 9:23; 7:27, 8:3 & 5:3).

*This is the **key issue** that distinguishes the Truth from the apostasy of the churches on this vital subject of the nature and sacrifice of Christ. It is the heart of the problem with those who cannot clearly see the scriptural meaning of the sacrifice of Christ. **Much of the problem lies in the denial of the second sense in which the word ‘sin’ is used in scripture. Those who deny this aspect say the phrase ‘sin in the flesh’ is merely a figure of speech, and refers to moral, not physical sin. If that was true, it begs the question, how could sin be put to death in the crucifixion of Christ if sin was not actually in Christ’s flesh, and not actually physically put to death? If he himself was unrelated to the sacrificial redemption, then sin was not actually and really put to death, and he never achieved the destruction of the diabolos, the purpose for which he came into the world. His crucifixion then did not manifest the justice and righteousness of God, but the very reverse – injustice and unrighteousness. Therefore the question must be answered in all good conscience: Did he offer as one of those needing the sacrifice as a **representative**; or did he offer merely on behalf of others, **not needing it himself**, i.e. as a **substitute**? Bro. Roberts states “The sacrifice of Christ could not be for us without being for himself inclusively. What was accomplished was accomplished in himself alone. We come on to the foundation he laid. **It does not appear how the sacrifice of Christ for us could be scripturally understood without this being perceived. Away from this, the heathen notion of substitution is the only idea that remains**” (The Christadelphian, April 1888).***

THE FALSE DOCTRINE OF SUBSTITUTION

44. Was Christ a substitute (one who takes the place of others) who died instead of us as the churches teach?

No. God’s method of returning sinful man to favour was not by a substitutionary sacrifice, but required the putting to death of man’s condemned and evil nature in a **representative** man of spotless character, i.e. one who bore our condemned nature and therefore in as much need of redemption from sinful flesh as those he came to save.

*That is very important to understand. Without exception, the doctrine that the churches preach on the subject of the nature and sacrifice of Christ, in one form or another, is a substitutionary atonement. That is Christ offered himself by taking the place of those he came to save, punished for the transgression of others, dying **instead** of them. Under this theory, Christ suffered the wrath of God by suffering **their** punishment, paying the penalty of **their** sin. The church doctrine is of a wrathful deity, whose justice can only be appeased by passing sentence upon one who had **absolutely no relation to the sin condemned on the cross.***

*If by the word “sin” we were to accept what the churches teach that it refers only to transgression or moral guilt, then the only way in which we are to understand how God “condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:3) was by Christ’s perfect life of obedience! But the united testimony of the scripture is that the reason why Christ came under the beneficial operation of his own death was that he might be saved, redeemed and purified from death by his own blood (Hebrews 13:20; 9:12, 23; 5:7). The removal of this defiled or contaminated nature was by his sacrificial death and resurrection. We can only gain the benefit of what God achieved in Christ by exercising faith in this divine means of redemption and by identification with it through baptism. If we do **not** believe in this divine method we cannot be saved (Mark 16:15-16; Galatians 1:6-8). To say sin in the flesh was condemned by Christ’s perfect obedience and deny the physical condemnation of “sin in the flesh” by Jesus’s crucifixion is to believe the false doctrine of substitution.*

What lies at the foundation of the extreme Rome-ish doctrine of substitution apart from the obvious injustice that it conveys is a complete denial of the two senses in which scripture uses the word sin. This is enshrined in the doctrines that define the anti-Christ - that Christ had not come in sinful flesh, which is the touchstone of the doctrine of the Trinity. The other church doctrine, which this subject has an obvious essential application, is the subject of the devil destroyed in Christ’s death (Hebrews 2:14).

*Bro. Roberts shows us, that if Christ died as a substitute for us, he should not have been raised from the dead, which he was. Therefore we should not have to die, which we most certainly do. Bro. Roberts also shows why the doctrine of ‘substitution’ “cannot be the right view, for this **remarkable reason, that Christ himself is exhibited to us as coming***

*under the beneficial operation of his own death” (The Blood of Christ section ‘Christ Himself Benefited By His Own Death’ 3 & 4, & 8 Logos ed). The reason why Christ came under the beneficial operation of his own death is stated in scripture that he might himself be saved, redeemed and purified from death by his own blood (Hebrews 13:20; 9:12 & 23 and 5:7). “He ‘obtained redemption’, but not till his own blood was shed” (Law of Moses pg. 173). “Christ himself was included in the sacrificial work... ‘for himself that it might be for us’” (Law of Moses pg. 177). “It was a necessity that he (Christ) should offer up himself, for the purging of his own nature” (Christadelphian 1873 pg. 468). “Christ required redemption from Adamic nature equally with his brethren; and the mode of redemption which God had ordained was a perfect obedience culminating in a sacrificial death” (Christadelphian 1895 pg. 262). Christ needed to be purified by his own death and resurrection. His sinful nature had to be removed by his own sacrifice. **“Those who deny Christ’s participation thereof (i.e. sinful nature), deny its removal by sacrifice, and therefore deny the fundamental testimony of the gospel, that he is ‘the Lamb of God, taking away the sin of the world’.** (Law of Moses pgs. 173 & 238). Bro. Roberts further shows how the doctrine of substitution “nullifies that other most important element of the Truth, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, and that he only is righteous who doeth righteousness. It draws a veil over the truth that we have to ‘work out our salvation’ by a ‘patient continuance in well-doing’ and that he only that endureth to the end shall be saved. It (the doctrine of substitution) undermines that most important testimony of the Gospel that Christ is the judge of who is fit to be saved, and that he will impartially give to every man according to his works” (The Blood of Christ, section ‘Effect on Character’ pg. 15 Logos ed).*

For an explanation of the relationship between the false doctrine of substitution and the two senses in which the word ‘sin’ is used in scripture, see Appendix II ‘The False Doctrine of Substitution Explained and Refuted’, on page 166.

THE BIBLE DEVIL AND SATAN

45. What is Satan?

It simply means an **adversary**. Like the word *devil*, it is an untranslated word. It was originally Hebrew, and was adopted into the Greek and finally transferred to the English.

We in fact read the scriptures intelligently if we read adversary wherever we find 'Satan'. When we do this we shall find it easy to avoid the popular misconception, which is nothing more than a pagan myth of an infernal fallen angel in opposition to God.

Can you have a good and bad Satan?

Yes. The Angel of Yahweh who stood in the way of Balaam's ass is referred to as an adversary or Satan. Yahweh Himself is referred to as Satan or an adversary to Israel and caused David to number Israel. The saints in the ecclesia at Pergamos were said to dwell where, "Satan's seat (or throne) is," —Pergamos being the central Roman power in Asia. This power is referred to as "the devil" in Revelation 2:10, which "cast" some of the saints "into prison." "Sin in the flesh" as manifested in the authorities of the Roman State was the great adversary (or Satan) of the early believers. (Numbers 22:22; 1 Chronicles 21:1 compare 2 Samuel 24:1; Revelation 2:13)

Can you have a good and bad devil?

No. The devil or the personification of sin in the flesh is always set against God, whereas the word Satan can be good or bad depending on the scriptural context. Sin however, is the great Satan or adversary personified in scripture.

46. How then is man tempted?

"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed." (James 1:14-15). The Lord Jesus says, "For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery...all these evil things come from within, and they defile a person" (Mark 7:21-23). We are tempted both from within as a result of the defiled nature we bear, as well as from without.

Was Jesus tempted?

He was tempted in all points like unto us yet without sin. (Heb. 4:15)

47. You have previously stated that sin was condemned in Christ who knew no sin and Jesus died that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil (Heb. 2:14). What is the devil?

The Bible devil is a scriptural personification of 'sin in the flesh'. The devil is understood by its characteristics; it is that in the flesh, "which has the power of death," and is called sin because the fixing of this evil in the flesh was the result of man's original transgression. There is no such being as the personal, immortal devil of popular religious belief (Romans 8:3; Hebrews 2:14).

*As you have stated there is no such being as the personal, immortal devil of popular religious belief. The belief in such a being is due to Greek Mythology and the misunderstanding of certain figures and symbols in the Bible. The Bible devil is a scriptural personification of 'sin in the flesh.' The word 'devil' is the Greek noun diabolos which Bro.Thomas says, "is the name of that which 'crosses, or causes to cross, or falls over' therefore to slander or falsely accuse. Diabolos is therefore a very fit and proper word by which to designate **the law of sin and death, or Sin's Flesh.**" (Eureka Vol.1 pg. 249) and as a scriptural personification of sin, has slandered or falsely accused Yahweh's law from the beginning, whose stronghold is the flesh, as a result of man believing the serpent's lie. **Note bro. Thomas does not say the devil is transgression of God's law but rather what causes it, i.e. "Sin's Flesh," the physical "flesh and blood" nature of man.** The Bible devil is manifested in many ways, individually and in the aggregate, in political and religious opposition, but all have their origin in the disobedience of flesh and blood to Divine Law. The Bible presents the 'devil' or 'sin in the flesh' as the source of all our problems and all the evil man commits as a result of this principle dwelling in us. The devil presents itself in our inner thoughts, and in those who would tempt us to do evil. The devil in its largest manifestation exists in the present religious and political constitution of things upon the earth. **The Son of God was manifested expressly for the purpose of destroying the devil and his works, that is Sin in its two scriptural aspects, root and branch.** (Romans 7:17-25 & 8:1-3; Hebrews 9:26; Romans 6:23; James 1:14-15 & 4:7; John 13:27 & 6:70; Acts 5:3-9; Ephesians 2:2; 1*

Timothy 5:14-15 & 1:20; Matthew 16:23; Mark 8:33; Luke 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:18; Revelation 2:12-13; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 2:10; Romans 16:20; Revelation 12:3 & 17, 17:9 & 12, 20:2; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8).

48. What opened the way that on the third day for God to righteously raise Jesus from the dead and exalt him as High Priest and mediator between God and man?

Jesus under severe trial never sinned requiring forgiveness. It was this that opened the way for his resurrection. Had he been a sinner as all other men and women, death would have held the power over him that it had over them. God raised him from the dead after he destroyed the devil or that which has the power of death which Paul says is “sin, the sting of death” (1Corinthians 15:56) and being raised from the dead, “death hath no more dominion over him.” “He ever liveth to make intercession for us, and is able to save to the uttermost all those who come unto God by him.”

That is very true, and in this way he has become the righteousness of God to all who would be saved by the belief and obedience of the truth. (1 Corinthians 15:4-23; Hebrews 7:26 & 4:15; John 8:46; Matthew 3:17; Acts 10:40-43; 1 John 3:5; Acts 2:24-27 & 4:10-12 & 27); (Statement of the Faith No.13 on page 127).

49. What is a mediator? Does he mediate for everyone?

A mediator is one who goes between. There is one mediator between God and man the man Christ Jesus. He is the mediator of the new covenant and is a priest over his own household only. He does not intercede for the world or for those who though they may claim to be God’s servants, have abandoned themselves to disobedience.

The scriptures tell us that Christ makes intercession for his erring brethren if they confess and forsake their sins. (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:1-6 & 12:24; Luke 24:51; Ephesians 1:20; Acts 5:31, 15:4 & 13:39; Hebrews 4:14-15; John 17:9; Hebrews 10:26; 1 John 2:1; Proverbs 28:13)(Statement of the Faith No.14, pg. 127)

On the question of whether God hears the prayers of the unbaptised, refer to Appendix I ‘Does God hear the prayers of the unbaptised?’, pg. 165. We should note that even

Cornelius (a devout man, who feared God with all his household and prayed continually) who clearly was a proselyte to the Jewish religion and therefore understood “the Hope of Israel” and desired to approach God in an acceptable way, still had to be guided in the way of truth with respect to the Atonement that he and his household might understand the gospel in full and then be baptized.

THE PRINCIPLE OF OBEDIENCE AS THE BASIS OF OUR ACCEPTANCE

We know the Lord sent forth his apostles to proclaim salvation through him as the only name given under heaven whereby men may be saved. (Statement of the Faith No.15, pg. 127) You have said that the way to obtain this salvation is to believe the Gospel the apostles preached and to take on the name and service of Christ by being baptized. Christ gave the command to be baptized, and we may not ignore the commandments of Christ and be blameless. The Apostle John recorded this of Jesus: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5) Jesus explains here that baptism is not an option. A man cannot enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water, in his baptism, and of the spirit, after his resurrection to life.

What do we have to do then if we are to be found worthy at Christ’s return?

We must continue patiently in the observance of all things the Lord has commanded.
(Romans 2:7; Matthew 28:20)

*We must recognize that while faith turns a sinner into a saint, obedience only will secure a saint’s acceptance at the judgment seat of Christ. Disobedient saints will be rejected more decisively than the unjustified sinner. **The rule of life must be obedience to the commandments of Christ.** (Bro. Roberts’ Bible Reading Companion)*

After the obedience of baptism, what other commandments has Christ delivered for our observance?

He has commanded us to assemble ourselves together every first day of the week to break bread and drink wine in remembrance of him. (Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:25)

The bread and wine are the ritual symbols of the death of Christ. We partake of them and thereby identify ourselves with what God accomplished by the Lord Jesus' sacrificial death, in the declaration of God's righteousness by the condemnation of sin in the flesh. By our participation we show forth that we truly appreciate God's love in the giving of His Son and desire to be transformed into the image of him who loved us and gave himself for us; that by His grace, through faith, hope to receive God's gift of forgiveness through Jesus Christ our redeemer.

50. The doctrine of the churches denies the principle of obedience as the basis of our acceptance with God in Christ by its preaching of humanism and human rights. What are some of the other commandments of Christ we must obey to be accepted at the judgment seat?

We must "love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul and with our entire mind," and "love our neighbour as ourselves." We are therefore, to love our enemies, to bless those who curse us, do good to those who hate us, and pray for those who badly use us. We are to be ready to do every good work, to give to those who ask, to relieve the afflicted i.e. to follow after whatsoever things are true, honest, pure, just, lovely and of good report. (Matthew 22:37; Luke 6:27-28; Matthew 5:44 & 42; Philippians 4:8)

What are some things we are not to do?

We are commanded not to return evil for evil, not to avenge ourselves but rather give place to wrath and suffer ourselves to be defrauded. We are not to labour to be rich or to love the world. We are not to grudge, complain, criticize, speak evil of or condemn our brethren and sisters. We are not to give way to anger, wrath, bitterness or evil speaking. We are not to talk spitefully or speak of others' sins until we have spoken to them ourselves first. We are not to be guilty of adultery, fornication, uncleanness, drunkenness, covetousness, wrath, strife, sedition, hatred, rivalry, boasting, vainglory, envy, jesting or

foolish talking (Romans 12:17-20; 1 Timothy 6:8; 1 Peter 3:9; James 4:11; Matthew 7:1; Ephesians 4:31; Matthew 18:15; James 5:19-20; Ephesians 5:3-4).

51. Will belief in the Gospel save us if we are disobedient to Christ's commands?

No. Our belief of the Gospel and baptism will only be to our condemnation if we live in disobedience to the commandments of Christ. Only those who do his commandments will at last be among the blessed. Christ said, "Ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I have commanded you." (Revelation 22:14; Matthew 7:26; 2 Peter 2:21; John 15:14 & 14:15; Statement of the Faith No.16 pg. 127).

Will you try to be obedient?

Yes.

52. Is there forgiveness for those who having submitted to the Gospel, may fail in rendering a perfect obedience to the commandments of Christ?

Yes. If there were not, no flesh could be saved. Forgiveness is conditional upon our confessing and forsaking our sins and our ability to forgive others. However, forgiveness is only granted at the intercession of Christ. If we are unforgiving, or if he refuses to intercede, there is no hope for us. (Psalm 130:3-4; 1 John 1:7-9 & 2:1; Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34; Matthew 6:15; John 17:9).

*The true religion of God is a system of **Faith and Practice**. Bro. Thomas asks "...where is obedience to the gospel of the kingdom in the name of Jesus? Whoever thinks of obeying this? And yet He comes to take vengeance on all who obey it not (2 Thess. 1:8). I cannot too earnestly commend the words of Samuel to the attention of the reader in this place. 'Hath the Lord,' saith he, 'as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry' (1 Sam. 15:22, 23). A great principle is set forth in these words. It is that which can alone place men in harmony with the religion of God. Without it a man may in deed know the truth, but he must **believe and do** if he would inherit the kingdom*

which has been preparing from the foundation of the world...All the Most High requires of men is just to believe what He has done, what He teaches, and what He promises; to obey the law of faith; to take care of the poor of His flock; and to keep themselves unspotted from the world. This is pure and undefiled religion (James 1:27). But, alas! Where is it to be found?" (Elpis Israel Chapter 5 "The way to the tree of life" pg. 167-168).

PART 3

FAITH, HOW SIN ENTERED INTO THE WORLD, THE FIRST PROMISE TO THE TOWER OF BABEL

“In the mental constitution of man, God designed that the sentiments (or feelings that produce hope and belief, etc. that made man a morally accountable being) enlightened by His truth, should have the ascendancy, and preside over, and govern his actions. Under such an arrangement, the thoughts of the man would have resulted from spiritual thinking as opposed to the thoughts of the inferior creatures, which are purely the thinking of the flesh (the propensities or lusts). Where the truth has possession of the sentiments, setting them to work and so forming the thoughts, it becomes the law of God to them; which the apostle styles ‘the law of his mind’; and because it is written there through the hearing of ‘the law and the testimony’, which came to the prophets and apostles through the spirit, he terms it, ‘the law of the spirit’ inscribed ‘on the fleshly tables of the heart’; and ‘the law of the spirit of life’ because while obeyed, it confers a right to eternal life.” (Romans 7:23; 8:2 and 2 Corinthians 3:3)” (Elpis Israel Part 1, chapter 3 ‘The Carnal Mind’ pg. 89).

53. You have said that our faith is counted to us for righteousness when we obey the truth in baptism. What is faith?

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence (or conviction) of things not seen”. It is the act of mind by which we believe or have confidence in the promises God has made (Hebrews 11:1; Romans 4:3, 9 & 20).

54. You have said faith is a confidence or conviction in what God has promised. What was God’s first promise?

After man sinned, Yahweh Elohim spoke to the serpent in the presence of Adam and Eve: “I will put enmity between thee (the serpent) and the woman, and between thy seed (serpent’s seed) and her seed: it (the woman’s seed) shall bruise thy head (serpent’s head) and thou shalt bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15).

55. How did sin enter the world?

Paul tells us that by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin (Romans 5:12).

It is the rule of God's grace that before He exalts man they must pass through an indispensable period of probation. Probation characterized by the obedience of faith tested under trial. For this purpose Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden and given a law to keep. This was a test of their obedience aimed at demonstrating faith in their lives to the glory of God.

What was the law they were commanded to keep?

God commanded them that they could eat of all the trees of the garden into which God had placed them but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil they could not eat of it lest they die. Eve was beguiled by the serpent's reasoning and ate of the tree. This thinking of the serpent which had aroused Eve's desires was now presented by Eve to her husband and he also ate of the forbidden fruit (Romans 5:12; 2 Timothy 2:20-21; 1 Peter 1:5-7; Genesis 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 11:3).

56. What was the serpent?

The serpent was one of the living creatures Yahweh Elohim made, which He pronounced as "very good." It was subtler or shrewd, quick of perception, than any other creature God had made. God enabled it to speak, to give utterance to its thoughts (Genesis 1:24-25 & 3:1).

Was the serpent moral, i.e. could it understand the difference between right and wrong?

No. Its ability to speak did not give it moral accountability. The thinking of its flesh could not ascend to faith being as an animal without the physical ability to believe. Its speech only expressed fleshly thoughts as generated by its sensations. Being more observant and reasoning than the other creatures God had made, it must have overheard the Angels in conversation with Adam in respect to God's law (Genesis 3:1; Ecclesiastes 3:21).

Were the serpent's words to Eve the truth?

No. It was a lie for God had said dying thou shall die.

Did it intend to deceive Eve?

The serpent was incapable as an animal, of moral intention. It unintentionally deceived Eve and caused her to come under the sentence of death.

(Note Elpis Israel pg. 88).

57. What happened when Eve listened to the serpent question what God had said and utter a totally false statement?

The reasoning of the serpent was not immediately dismissed as the Lord Jesus gave example when he was tempted after 40 days in the wilderness. In contrast the serpent was listened to; its reasoning thought upon and then accepted as truth, which aroused desire or lust for equality with God, which tempted them to take of the tree. This desire was then given into and they sinned first in their hearts and then by putting into action their deceitful lusts.

Why was it necessary that the serpent, by Divine arrangement be the source of trial to test man's faith?

Adam and Eve were **not** created mortal (i.e. subject to death), but 'very good'. Adam's transgression resulted in the defilement of his body. This defilement has been inherited by all Adam's descendants including Christ. Unlike Adam and Eve before sin entered into the world, we are born into a state in which we are subject to disease, death and to a law of sin in our bodies which incites us to transgress. 'Sin in the flesh' (or diabolos) was not the **quality** of Adam's nature before he transgressed, therefore the serpent was placed in the garden to expose man to false reasoning as a means of testing man's faith without in any way violating God's righteousness.

What was the result of Eve and then Adam through Eve, adopting the reasoning of the serpent?

The adoption of the serpent's reasoning caused "enmity" (hostility) against God's law and God Himself. God had warned that transgression against His law would result in the sentence of death. Man's sin as a result, became a physical defilement in their bodies which was inherited by all Adams descendants including, as we have noted Christ. Paul refers to this physical defilement as "the law of sin **in** my members," which resulted in him possessing "a body of death," which would lead eventually to death. As these elements of corruption in their bodies were the result of transgression, Paul refers to it as, "the law of sin" and because death is the wages of sin, he also refers to it as, "the law of sin and death" (Genesis 3:15, 2:17; Romans 7:23-24 & 8:2).

58. What does the serpent symbolize in the scriptures?

It is a symbol of "sin in the flesh" - the serpent in the flesh (John 3:14-16; 1Corinthians 15:56; Romans 8:3).

*Jesus said **his body** crucified on the cross fulfilled the type of Moses lifting up the flesh - coloured **serpent** in the wilderness (John 3:14-16; Numbers 21:9). That serpent represented 'sin,' for Paul says, "**the sting of death is sin**" (1Corinthians 15:56).*

Therefore Jesus' Body crucified = "condemned sin in the flesh" = the brazen serpent lifted up.

*Bro. Thomas shows man's adoption of the serpent mind and the belief of its untruthful reasonings caused a similar mode of thinking to be generated in the minds of Eve and her husband. "Hence the carnal mind, or thinking of the flesh, unenlightened by the truth, is the **serpent in the flesh**....By a figure, sin is put for the serpent, the effect (sin) for the cause (the serpent); seeing that it was the suggester of unbelief and disobedience to man, by whom it entered into the world. Hence the idea of the serpent in the flesh is expressed by 'sin in the flesh'; which was '**condemned in the flesh**' when Jesus was crucified for, or on account of, sin, 'in the likeness of sinful flesh'." (Elpis Israel Part 1 chapter 3 'The Carnal Mind' pg. 91-92).*

In your own words, how do you think this relates to Christ?

Christ came to destroy “sin in the flesh,” or the devil and his works. This sinful flesh was lifted up when His body was nailed to the cross for, or on account of sin. In this sense, He fulfilled the type of Moses lifting up the brazen serpent in the wilderness, that those bitten by the fiery serpents would in faith look upon it and live. It is only in this sense that Christ “was made sin for us who knew no sin”. He was subject to a nature in which “serpent-sin” was an all pervading element in his flesh and therefore subject to the sentence of death and impulses of the flesh. He however put to death all unlawful obedience to these lusts being absolutely obedient to God’s word, even to the death of the cross (Hebrews 2:14; Romans 8:3; 1 John 3:8; Numbers 21:9; John 3:14-16; 11 Cor. 5:21).

As we have tried to emphasize, the object was to open a way out of this state, both for himself and his brethren, by death and resurrection after trial. It pleased God to require the condemnation of this sin-nature; a body under the dominion of death because of sin; in crucifixion, in the person of a righteous possessor of it, as the basis of our forgiveness.

59. Can you explain Genesis 3:15?

“And I (God) will put enmity (hatred and hostility) between thee (serpent, symbol of “sin in the flesh” embodied in the political and religious opposition of the world) and the woman (symbol of the ecclesia of God) and between thy seed (the serpent’s seed or the servants of sin) and her seed (the servants of righteousness); it (woman’s seed in the singular - the Lord Jesus) shall bruise thy head (serpent’s or Sin), and thou (serpent-power) shall bruise his heel (woman’s seed).”

It is a prophecy of the enmity (hostility) between “sin in the flesh” embodied in the political and religious opposition of the world (symbolized by the serpent) and God’s people (symbolized by the woman), which will result in the final triumph of God’s truth over sin. The means by which God’s word could have this victory was through Christ (woman’s seed - “the word made flesh”). The seed of the serpent (or Sin) manifested through the Roman power and initiated by the chief priests of Israel, but by the foreknowledge and determinant council of God, bruised Christ in the heel (a temporary wound) by crucifying the Lord but God was to raise him from the dead. In this act of

malice and wickedness against him Christ would however strike Sin a fatal blow. By this means, God through Christ, condemned the serpent in the flesh, or “sin in the flesh,” (the devil or the root of all rebellion against God) a deathblow to the head, through the offering of his body once for all, to declare God’s righteousness as the basis for the remission of sins. (Statement of the Faith No.12 pg. 127).

*This great work set forth from the foundation of the world required a **body specifically prepared** for sacrifice (Hebrews 10:5 & 10). This is illustrated by the fact that immediately after sentence was passed upon the serpent the woman and the man, that Yahweh Elohim “appointed coats of skins” for their covering. This command implies sacrifice of animals which pointed forward to what would be accomplished as outlined in this first promise of Genesis 3:15. This sacrificial condemnation of sin was to be accomplished in the seed of the woman who bore the very defiled nature that was the result of man’s rebellion. For God’s righteousness to be declared it necessitated that before this sacrificial condemnation could take place Christ had to pass through a period of trial like Adam in which his faith would be put to the test. Christ overcame by perfect obedience, defeated, held transfixed and crucified the power of sin within him. This opened the way so that God could publicly condemn sin in the flesh and actually destroy the diabolos, or Sin physically through the death of the cross. In the terms of Genesis 3:15, this was a work accomplished in **Christ’s flesh**. The Lord Jesus himself draws comparison between his actual body lifted up and the brazen serpent Moses lifted up in the wilderness (John 3:14-15) symbolizing that which has ‘the sting of death’ which is ‘sin’ (1 Corinthians 15:56). Sin in the flesh, having been publicly condemned in Christ’s sacrifice, his body was purified or purged of the physical ‘law of sin and death’ on the third day when he was given immortality (Note: Eureka Vol I pg. 248). By this divinely appointed means Christ received the right from God to bestow the same blessing on all who should in faith and obedience come to God through him.*

The whole divine purpose of salvation from death—including Christ’s own redemption—depended on the seed of the woman overcoming the diabolos through perfect obedience, and then by the body of sin being lifted up in public condemnation so as to declare ‘This

is how condemned human nature should be treated according to the righteousness of God;’ it is fit only for destruction (The Blood of Christ, section ‘The place for forgiveness, pg. 11 Logos ed.). Diabolos was then put to death before all men to make plain and vindicate God’s holiness as the basis of acceptable approach and the forgiveness of sins.

Is there a further application to Genesis 3:15?

Yes. The enmity the woman’s seed (Christ) experienced at the hands of the Romans (the old serpent power) was but a taste of what the woman’s seed, in a plural sense as manifested in Christ’s disciples, would experience in a long conflict from the time of Christ’s ascension until his return. In this, many of Christ’s followers have also been bruised in the heel, but will prove to only be a temporary bruising, for they shall be raised from the dead along with those who are responsible at Christ’s appearing and kingdom. At Christ’s second appearing with his Immortal Saints, he will contend with the old serpent “Gog,” (Russian/European confederacy) who will control the territory of the Ancient Roman Empire. In the battle of Armageddon this sin-power (the devil and Satan) will be overwhelmed and bound 1000 years until the end of Christ’s millennial reign. The Book of Revelation states there will be a rebellion against Christ’s authority at the end of this time resulting in the final destruction of the power of Sin. At that time the second resurrection and judgment (of those who died during the 1000-year reign of Christ) will take place. The righteous will be given immortality and the wicked destroyed. Only sinless immortals shall then inhabit the earth. Thus, the serpent-power will be given its final deathblow to the head and Genesis 3:15 will be fulfilled completely. Christ who overcame the world in his own person will “take away the sin of the world,” and will “make all things new.” Every curse will then cease, and death will be swallowed up in victory; for death shall be no more. (Revelation 12; 2 Timothy 4:1; Ezekiel 38; Revelation 16:14, 20:2-15; Genesis 3:15; John 16:33; Revelation 21:5, 22:3 & 21:4)

60. What did God say to the woman?

“Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow you shall bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over you.” (Genesis 3:16).

61. What did God say to the man?

“And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded you, saying, You shall not eat of it: cursed is the ground for your sake; in sorrow you shall eat of it all the days of your life;”

“Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you; and you shall eat the herb of the field;” “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return unto the ground; for out of it you were taken: for dust you are, and unto dust you shall return.” (Genesis 3:17-19).

62. After man’s rebellion, did God permit them to stay in the garden He had placed them?

No. The Angels drove them from the garden so they could not partake of the Tree of Life and become immortal sinners.

63. What did God provide Adam and Eve?

God provided them with skins of lambs to cover their nakedness.

Why was this necessary and what did it signify?

These animal skins the Lord Jesus tells us in the last book of the Bible were lamb skins “the lamb slain from the foundation of the world” and represented the sacrifice that the seed of the woman was to make for his people thereby providing a covering for sin. (Hebrews 9:22; John 1:29; Revelation 13:8).

We see in these God’s arrangements, first of all in the poured out blood, the symbol of the life offered (Leviticus 17:11). It was the ritual recognition and declaration by the worshipper that he was under condemnation and had no right to his life. He acknowledged this in coming to God in this appointed way. Man was humbled and God

exalted. By this humble approach man acknowledged that the cause of death was the breach of God's supremacy in the beginning, and the restoration of that supremacy is the condition under which God's grace is extended to man. Bro. Roberts states "The lesson of sacrifice is not so much the idea of man's punishment as God's vindication" (The Law of Moses pg. 91). That vindication was ultimately set forth through the death of Christ by which man was asked to see, "that God might be just" while acting the part of justifier or forgiver. The sacrifice of lambs at the beginning to provide a covering for man did not illustrate this, except typically and preliminarily. It did not, as Bro. Roberts explains, exhibit the righteousness of God except in a prophetic sense; it was a type of the true exhibition of God's righteousness that God would accomplish in the Lamb of His providing.

Bro. Thomas shows that when the sacrifice of Adam was accepted, his and his wife's offence was "provisionally remitted for "the scripture saith, that it is not possible for the blood of animals to take away sins. (Heb. 10:4) It was impossible, because sin was to be condemned in sinful flesh... The great principle to be compassed was the condemnation of sin in sinful flesh, innocent of actual transgression. This principle necessitated the manifestation of one, who should be born of a woman, but not of the will of man... He would be Son of God by origination; and Son of Mary by descent, or birth of sinful flesh. Now it is not to be supposed that Adam and Eve did not understand this: God doubtless explained it to them; for they had none to teach them but Him, and without His instruction, they would not have known what they should believe... Adam and his wife had faith, or God would not have accepted the sacrifices with whose skins they were clothed; for it was as true then as it is now, that "without faith it is impossible to please God." (Elpis Israel Part 1, chapter 5 "The Way to the Tree of Life" pg. 164).

God therefore calls upon us to understand, admire, and recognize, so that we have the opportunity to humbly and thankfully identify with what God has done for us in the death of Christ. "To declare the righteousness of God" was the condition of the exercise of His forbearance. That is to say, God maintains His own righteousness and His own Supremacy while forgiving us, and exacts the recognition of them and submission to

*them, as the condition of the exercise of His forbearance in the remission of our sins.
(Note The Blood of Christ section 'The Conditions of Forgiveness' pg. 5 & 6 Logos ed.)*

Why was the fig leaf (Adam and Eve's invention) an unacceptable covering?

Such a covering did not involve the shedding of blood. Blood is the life of the flesh (Leviticus 17). The principle of how man was to be redeemed necessitated the humble recognition of what was due to man from God because of sin. This is the reason why Christ was made subject equally with those of the defiled race He came to save.

We therefore can see that from the foundation of the world God ordained the sacrificial shedding of blood as the means by which mankind could be cleansed from the defilement of 'sin in the flesh' brought on the race through Adam. This was to vindicate God and humble man. God was pleased to require this before extending his grace and forbearance to fallen man. This divine principle, so that God's righteousness might be declared, of necessity had to apply to all mankind, including Christ.

AFTER THE FALL IN EDEN TO THE CALL OF ABRAM

64. In conjunction with the man and the woman's eyes being opened as a result of eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was the conception of Cain. Abel his brother was born after him. Can you tell me what scripture reveals about their lives?

Cain was a tiller of the ground while Abel was a keeper of sheep. In the course of time both men came to worship Yahweh probably at the entrance of the Garden of Eden where Yahweh's Angel guarded the way to the Tree of Life. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground as an offering, while Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock "and of the fat thereof." Yahweh had previously revealed His will that "without the shedding of blood there can be no remission," of sins. Cain's offering was rejected but Abel's was accepted. This made Cain jealous, bitter and uncontrollably angry and when opportunity presented itself he murdered Abel. Yahweh raised up another son to Adam called Seth who took Abel's place. He and his descendants worshipped Yahweh in truth and constituted the

“seed of the woman,” while Cain who was expelled from God’s presence and his descendants were the seed of the serpent. (Hebrews 9:22; Genesis 4 & 3:15).

What principle is revealed in Yahweh’s rejection of Cain and acceptance of Abel’s offering?

“My ways are not your ways neither are my thoughts your thoughts says Yahweh.” Cain wanted to worship Yahweh contrary to what he knew to be God’s revealed will. Abel humbly submitted to God’s will and offered “a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,” by which he was declared “righteous.” (Isaiah 55:8; Hebrews 11:4).

*Yahweh had revealed that before man could be invited to reconciliation, His righteousness had to be declared by the public demonstration of what is due to sin. Abel and the sacrifice he offered pointed forward to the submission of Christ, the declaration of God’s righteousness, and the condemnation of sin in the flesh in the body of Christ, as the Lamb of God which should take away the sin of the world (Romans 3:25-26; Romans 8:3; John 1:29). **God therefore restricts forgiveness to those who fear Him and submit to the conditions He has provided.** Bro. Roberts states, “If you will recognize your position, repent, and come under that man’s wing, I will receive you back to favour and forgive you....It is in Him for you if you will submit, and believe in him, and put on his name, which is a confession that you have no name of your own that will stand. Obey his commandments, and I will receive you and forgive you for his sake, and you shall be my sons and daughters.” (The Blood of Christ section “Heaven’s Etiquette’ pg. 10 Logos ed.).*

NOAH

65. We read in Genesis 6 of the call of Noah. What was the world like in Noah’s day?

We read that the sons of God who were the descendants of Seth began to marry the daughters of men, the descendants of Cain. The sons of God had before this time remained separate from the corrupting influence of the descendants of Cain but now they were seduced and the whole world became corrupt before Yahweh, being filled with

violence, men's hearts were evil continually. Only Noah found grace in Yahweh's sight (Genesis 6).

What does this teach us about marrying outside of the truth?

Being unequally yoked with unbelievers is always dangerous, much more so in the closest union of all - marriage (2 Corinthians 6:14).

*In the Doctrines to be rejected No. 34 (pg. 130) marriage with the unbeliever is stated to be unlawful. Bro. Thomas commenting upon the marriages between the sons of God (or descendants of Seth) and the daughters of men says "This was a fatal step. Can a man take fire into his bosom, and not be burned? The sons of God corrupted themselves in marrying the daughters of Cain. Instead of bringing them over to 'the way of the tree of life,' they were beguiled into 'the way of Cain' (Jude 11). For sons of God to marry daughters of Belial is to jeopardize their fidelity to God. This practice has ever been fruitful of apostasy." (Elpis Israel Part 1 chapter 4 'The Antediluvian apostasy' pg. 121). Therefore the wisdom of God directs that if a baptized member of Christ's body should be attracted to someone outside of the Truth of necessity do their utmost to engender an interest in that person of the Hope that they have so that that interested friend would themselves desire to share in that hope, and seek baptism **before** marriage.*

What did Yahweh call upon Noah to do?

Noah was commanded to build an ark to save him and his family because Yahweh was going to bring a great flood upon the earth and destroy all flesh. For a period of 120 years Yahweh showed His longsuffering and mercy during which time Noah built this huge vessel and preached to the Antediluvians, warning them of Yahweh's coming judgments. But they would not listen. (Genesis 6:22; Hebrews 11:7; Genesis 7).

After Yahweh had brought all the animals, birds etc. to Noah to be placed in the ark, Noah and his family (8 souls) went into the ark. Yahweh shut the door seven days before the deluge began. What does this signify?

Likewise, those who are responsible, including the friends of Christ will be gathered out of the nations before God judges the world. (Isaiah 26:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Matthew 24:31).

66. What does the flood and ark symbolize?

The apostle Peter likens the salvation Noah experienced in the ark to baptism. As the waters of the flood saved Noah and his family by washing away the sinful Antediluvian world, so too are our sins washed away at baptism. By baptism we enter Christ who is our ark of safety. If we continue to walk in this newness of life, which we put on at baptism, we will be found “in Christ,” at the Lord’s appearing. We will be saved when Yahweh pours out His judgments on a world, which Christ said would be just as it was in the days of Noah at His second advent. (1 Peter 3:20; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:4; Galatians 3:27; Luke 17:26-27).

What was the symbol of God’s covenant with Noah after he came out of the ark and what does it signify?

As a token of the covenant that Yahweh would never destroy the earth again by a flood He set a rainbow in the cloud. This token of the covenant looks forward to that time after Christ’s return and God’s judgments have cleansed the world of all unrighteousness when the world will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh. (Revelation 4:2; Revelation 10; Numbers 14:21; Isaiah 11:9).

What races came from Noah’s three sons Ham, Shem and Japheth?

Ham is the father of the dark races, Japheth of the Gentiles and Shem is the progenitor through which Abraham and the Jews came (Genesis 10).

67. After the flood and as man began to multiply again in the earth, the scriptures tell us that the population contrary to God’s will remained together as a group and moved east into the area of Shinar (Babylon) where they built the Tower of Babel. Was this pleasing to God?

No.

68. What did Yahweh do at the Tower of Babel?

Yahweh wanted Noah's descendants to multiply and replenish the earth so the Elohim (Angels) confounded man's language giving man a multiplicity of tongues so that they would be scattered abroad over the face of the earth (Genesis 9:1 & 11:6-9).

Do you think this confusion of tongues will go on forever?

No. The prophet Zephaniah states that after the great battle of Armageddon Yahweh in the kingdom age will "turn to the people a pure language," then the nations of the earth will "serve Him with one consent." (Revelation 16:14-16; Zephaniah 3: 8-9).

PART 4

ABRAHAM AND THE HOPE OF THE PROMISE MADE UNTO THE FATHERS

*“I stand and am judged”, says he (the apostle Paul), “for **the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers**; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For **which hope’s sake**, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews”. (Acts 26:6-7) Now from this statement, it appears:*

- 1) that God made a certain promise to the fathers of Israel;*
- 2) That this promise became **the hope of the nation**, and was therefore a national question;*
- 3) That this promise had been the hope of the twelve tribes in all their generations; was the ground of their worship; and that they hoped to attain it by rising from the dead.*

*But we have a still plainer avowal, if possible, of the identity of this national hope with the hope for which the apostle suffered so much. The Lord Jesus had appeared to him after his arraignment before Ananias, and said to him, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome”. When he arrived at this city...he told the Jews how it was they found him in the custody of a Roman soldier, with fetters upon his person: “On account of **THE HOPE OF ISRAEL**” said he, “am I bound with this chain” (Acts 28:20). This is conclusive. **The hope of the promise made to the fathers** was, and, indeed, is to this day, **the Hope of Israel**...But what was the hope of Israel about?...I cannot do better than to state what he (Paul) did in the words of Luke; who says that “He expounded and testified to them **the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening**”. (Acts 28:23) (Elpis Israel Part 2, chapter 2 “The promise God made unto the Fathers” ‘The Hope of Israel’ page 229-230).*

69. Who was the father of Abram and where did he originally dwell?

Abram’s father was Terah. They lived in Ur of the Chaldees, a place steeped in idolatry on the eastern side of the River Euphrates (Nehemiah 9:7).

70. When Abram was 75 he left Ur with his father, wife Sarai, nephew Lot and a large household on a long journey. Where did he go and why did he undertake such a difficult journey?

Abram first travelled northwest following the Euphrates to Haran. After his father died, he left Haran to journey south to the land of Canaan. He did so by faith, not knowing where Yahweh would direct him. (Joshua 24:3; Acts 7:2-4; Genesis 12:1; Hebrews 11:8).

71. What did Yahweh say unto Abram?

“Now Yahweh said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation and I will bless, and make thy name great and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” (Genesis 12:1-3).

72. When God said, “And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed,” what does Paul say God did?

He preached the Gospel unto Abraham (Galatians 3:8).

That is very true and most important, “The scripture, foreseeing that God would justify (i.e. to make or render righteous) the heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abram, saying, ‘In thee shall all nations be blessed’.”

Can you once again tell us what the gospel is?

The word *Gospel* means good news or glad tidings; and the glad tidings that were announced by Christ and his apostles are the things concerning the kingdom of God and the things concerning the saving name of Jesus Christ. (Acts 8:12 & 28:30; Statement of the Faith No. 17 pg. 127).

73. Yahweh led Abram to Shechem (the centre of the land of Canaan) and promised Abram who had no children that “his seed,” would inherit this land (Genesis 12:7).

Who is this promised seed?

The apostle Paul states, “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.”

(Galatians 3:16).

74. You have said that God preached the Gospel to Abram when God said, “In thee shall all nations be blessed,” by which Paul explains God would justify the Gentiles through faith. How was He to do this?

Through faith in Jesus Christ, the promised seed of Abraham by the forgiveness of sins. (Galatians 3:26; Romans 4:24-25).

75. Yahweh gave further detail of this promise at the prominent elevation of Bethel after Lot had separated from Abram. What was this promise?

“Yahweh said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou are northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee.” (Genesis 13:14-17).

Can you tell me what you understand by this promise?

Abraham was promised that not only his promised seed the Christ, but he himself also would inherit the land of Canaan forever.

That is right, but why is this so significant?

Here is the promise in scripture of eternal life. It consisted in promising a mortal man an everlasting possession.

It is always important to hear those who desire to identify with what God has accomplished in Christ through the waters of baptism to state this great truth.

What else does this promise show?

Abram did not believe he was promised heaven but an everlasting inheritance on earth. Abram was also promised that he would have a natural, multitudinous seed who became the nation of Israel. (Galatians 3:16; Genesis 13:15-16; Genesis 17).

76. How do we become related, fellow heirs with these promises so that we might receive with Abraham the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant?

By faith in Christ Jesus and by putting on Christ through the waters of baptism by which means we become Christ's and are Abraham's seed, heirs according to the promise. (Galatians 3:26-29).

Bro. Thomas reminds us that "There is no true religion without faith, nor any true faith without the belief of the truth. Now, although a Scriptural faith is the scarcest thing among men, it is exceedingly simple, and by no means difficult to acquire, when it is sought for aright. Paul gives the best definition of faith extant. He says, 'faith is a confident anticipation of things hoped for, a full persuasion of events not seen' (Heb. 11:1). This is the faith without which, he tells us afterwards, God is not, and cannot by any possibility be pleased. It is a faith which lays hold of the past and the future. The person who possesses it, knows what is testified concerning Jesus by the apostles, and is fully persuaded of its truth; he also knows the exceeding great and precious promises which God has made concerning things to come, and he confidently anticipates the literal fulfilment of them. Laying hold of these things with a firm faith, he acquires a mode of thinking and a disposition which are estimable in the sight of God; and being like Abraham in these particulars, he is prepared by induction into Christ, to become a son of the father of the faithful, and of the friend of God." (Elpis Israel Part 1, chapter 5 'The way to the tree of life' pg. 165).

77. What is the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant?

The blessing relates to justification or the forgiveness of sins for all those who are baptized into Christ. Those who are so justified and remain faithful will inherit the “hope of the promises,” which entails eternal life in the kingdom of God established forever on the land promised to Abraham. (Galatians 3:8; Acts 3:25-26 & 26:6-7; Galatians 3:8:29; Matthew 5:5; Revelation 5:9-10; Romans 4:13-14).

God has promised He would justify (declare righteous) the Gentiles through faith in the Gospel, which was taught to Abraham. This is why we are invited to believe or place our confidence in the gospel before we are baptized because the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth. (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:21).

78. Can we be saved without a correct understanding belief in the Gospel, which was preached to Abraham?

No. The Lord Jesus said to His disciples, “Preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not (the Gospel) shall be condemned.” Paul taught that the Gospel’s hope revolved around the “covenants of promise” and that outside them there is no hope. (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 26:6-7; Ephesians 2:12; 4:18).

79. How was Yahweh’s promise confirmed to Abraham?

In Genesis 15 Yahweh commanded Abram to prepare a sacrifice, by dividing it into pieces. Yahweh then caused Abram to fall into a deep sleep. Yahweh’s fiery lamp passed between these pieces consuming them. At this time God made a covenant with Abraham assuring him of the promises. Not only so, but to this covenant God also added an oath, which guaranteed His covenant by Yahweh’s very existence!

*By these two unchangeable things, God’s covenant and oath in which it is impossible for God to lie, God showed Abraham what Paul refers to as the “immutability (unchangeableness) of His counsel.” By this means the promises were **typically** confirmed. (Genesis 15:9-18; Psalm 50:5-8; Jeremiah 34:8; Isaiah 42:6; Hebrews 6:13-18; Micah 7:20; Psalm 105:8-9).*

80. By “typically” (or shadow) I mean the sacrifices Abram prepared were a type or a foreshadowing of that which was actually to be accomplished at a later time. So if the promises were typically confirmed to Abraham in Genesis 15, when were they actually confirmed or brought into force?

The promises were actually confirmed by the sacrificial death of Christ. In this way “sin in the flesh,” was condemned and God’s righteousness was declared. By this means the Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed in His blood. (Romans 15:8; 8:3; 3: 25, 26; Matthew 26:28).

That is true, and again, it is most important for those desiring to be baptized to understand this great truth, for it lies at the heart of “the promise made by God to the fathers,” even “the hope of Israel”. (Acts 26:6, 7; 28:20).

81. Did God make known to Abraham the history of his natural seed on this same occasion?

Yes. God related to Abram what would happen to the children of Israel for the next 400 years in regard to their affliction in Canaan and Egypt and their deliverance under Moses in the 4th generation. (Genesis 15:13-16).

What did Abraham understand by the deep sleep that came upon him when he was shown these things?

Abraham was shown he would die and be buried and not receive the promises at that time. (Genesis 15:12 & 15; Hebrews 11:13-15).

82. When God therefore promised Abraham, a mortal man, an everlasting possession on earth and that he was to die, what does this imply?

Abraham believed in the resurrection of the dead and a change of nature. He was taught that this was to be possible through what Yahweh would accomplish in His Son, the seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:1-3, 20, 50-58).

It is the apostle Paul who was not ashamed to publicly declare that he had “a hope in God...that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.” And for that reason, he “always took pains to have a clear conscience towards both God and man” (Acts 24:14-16).

Some say when Israel inherited the land of Canaan under Joshua that the covenant was fulfilled. Is this true?

No. Paul states that Abraham died having not received the promise. Therefore, Israel’s conditional occupancy of the land under the Law of Moses could not fulfill the terms of the covenant. God’s prophets declare that fulfillment will be at Christ’s return. (Hebrews 11:13; Acts 7:5; Hebrews 8:7-13; Acts 3:20-21, 24 & 26).

Can you tell me how Abraham was “justified” or declared righteous by God?

Paul states in Romans 4 that Abraham believed God. His righteousness therefore consisted in believing in what he could not himself perform. This is “the righteousness of faith” and that belief or faith was counted to him for righteous or forgiveness of sins.

*That is a wonderful truth, God has set forth the example of Abraham to show how man can be just before Him - by “**the righteousness of faith**” apart from “works of law,” “the promise rests on grace” (or undeserved kindness, the gift of God) so that no human being might boast in the presence of God (Romans 4:1-3, 13, 16 & 18-25; Ephesians 2:4-8; 1 Corinthians 1:29).*

Bro. Thomas in Elpis Israel states “Now if it be asked, What is the truth? – The answer is, the things which Abraham believed, with the acknowledgement that Jesus is the Seed spoken of in the promises made to him. It is therefore essential to our salvation that we be familiar with matters of Abraham’s faith...which was counted to him for righteousness...He (God) requires men to acquaint themselves first with what He as promised, and then to consult the testimony He has given until they are fully persuaded as Abraham was. ‘Now’, says the apostle, ‘it was not written for Abraham’s sake alone, that this full persuasion of the Divine promise was counted to him for righteousness; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on God.’ (Romans 4:11 & 23).” Bro.

Thomas then asks the question “When, or at what point of time, and how, is a man’s faith in the Truth counted to him for remission of sins?...The scriptures say that through Jesus is now preached the remission of sins to those who believe the gospel of the Kingdom; and that justification by faith is through his name...Now, there is but one way for a believer of the gospel to get at this name, to wit, by being ‘baptised into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’ The answer to the question, then, is this, that a man’s faith in the gospel is counted to him for righteousness in the act of being baptized into the name.” (Elpis Israel pg. 264-266, Logos ed.).

83. The birth of Ishmael from the union of Abraham and Hagar was an attempt by Sarah to anticipate the promise of the seed. Was Ishmael the seed of promise?

No. He was born after the flesh. The seed of promise was to be born by the power of God and was to be the seed not only of Abraham but also of Sarah who was at that time barren. (Galatians 4:29; Genesis 17:15-22).

What does Isaac mean?

His name means laughter or joy.

Was Isaac then a son of promise?

Yes, as a son of promise, he brought great happiness to Abraham and Sarah. They saw in him the fulfillment of all their hopes. Through him would come the son of promise, the conqueror of sin, the seed promised in Eden, who would bruise the head of the serpent and would be the heir of the world in whom God said all nations would be blessed.

(Genesis 21:6 & 3:15; Romans 4:13; Genesis 12:3; John 8:56).

84. Abraham’s faith was to be proved. Can you tell me about the sacrifice of Isaac?

Abraham was commanded to take Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice upon a mountain God would show him in the land of Moriah. (Genesis 22:1-2).

Why was this so significant?

It was to show how sin would be condemned through the sacrifice of the promised seed; God's dear Son of whom Isaac was typical.

Did Abraham slay his son?

No. God stopped him at the last minute and Isaac was released. He had virtually been resurrected from the dead and Abraham received him as such in a figure. (Genesis 22:10-12; Hebrews 11:19).

*Bro. Thomas reminds us of the two essential conditions of justification, "Paul says, he (Abraham) was justified by **faith**; and James, that he was justified by **works**...As a sinner he was justified from his past sins when his faith was counted to him for righteousness; and as a saint he was justified by works when he offered up Isaac... The two stand related as cause and effect; faith being the motive principle it is a justification which begins with the remission of sins that are past, and is perfected in obedience unto death...by a patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour and incorruptibility" (Elpis Israel pg. 266-267 Logos ed.).*

85. What did the sacrifice of Isaac symbolize?

It showed Abraham that by the death and resurrection of the promised seed (God's Son who would also be Abraham's seed) sin in the flesh would be dealt a deathblow and open the way of salvation through Christ unto all who like Abraham put their faith and trust in Yahweh. (Genesis 22; Matthew 1:1; Romans 4:21-25).

Yahweh as a result of Abraham's obedience confirmed the covenant with an oath. "And said, By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed My voice." (Genesis 22:16-18).

Abraham was given in these words a personal blessing. He was promised a multitudinous, national seed (Israel) and a multitudinous, spiritual seed (the immortal saints) as the stars of heaven. He was promised that God would extend salvation and blessedness to all nations through Christ. He also promised that the Christ would possess the gate of His enemies.

86. Abraham's seed possessing the gate of his enemies does not only refer to Christ ruling a subdued world to the will of God. Can you tell us what the last enemy Christ will subdue or conquer is?

The last enemy to be subdued is death itself. (1 Corinthians 15:26 & 54-55; Isaiah 25:8).

87. Were these same promises made to anyone else?

Yes, Isaac and Jacob. (Genesis 26:2-4 & 28:13-14).

Did Abraham, Isaac and Jacob receive possession of the land of Canaan promised to them?

No. They were strangers in the land of promise during their lifetime and died without receiving it. (Hebrews 11:8-9, 13, 15, 39-40; Acts 7:5).

Will God fulfill His promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by giving them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession?

Yes. He will raise Abraham, Isaac and Jacob from the dead and give them possession of the land when the kingdom of God having been established there, will have become a heavenly constituted country. (Micah 7:20; Mark 12:26; Luke 13:28; Matthew 8:11; Hebrews 11:16).

YAHWEH'S PURPOSE DEVELOPED THROUGH ISAAC TO THE TIME OF MOSES

88. Isaac had two sons. Can you tell me about them?

Esau was born first of the twins and became a cunning hunter but was a carnal man only interested in the things of the flesh. Jacob was an upright “plain” man i.e. gentle, complete. (Genesis 25:19-27).

89. Before these boys were born Rebekah was told by Yahweh’s foreknowledge, “Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people and the elder shall serve the younger.” (Genesis 25:23) How did this play out in their lives?

One day Esau returned faint from hunting and found Jacob cooking a mess of red lentils. Esau demanded to be fed but Jacob refused to do so unless Esau sold his birthright to him. This birthright was the right of the first-born and made him head of his brethren, succeeding to his father’s position after his death and had a special claim to his father’s blessing, receiving a double portion of his father’s goods. The spiritual blessing of the birthright meant nothing to this man of the flesh. He was not a man of faith but was only concerned with temporary gratification. On a later occasion Jacob at the instigation of Rebekah deceived his father and obtained the blessing. A blessing, which his father though deceived, realized with great “trembling,” was Yahweh’s will to bestow upon Jacob. Jacob by Divine election was the one through whom the Abrahamic promise would develop. (Genesis 25:30; Hebrews 12:16-17; Genesis 27:33; Hebrews 11:20).

90. When we are baptized we have a birthright. Do you think you can behave as Esau?

We cannot despise the things of God and His promises by living for gratification in an immoral or godless way. Faith in God’s promises calls for “a patient continuance in well doing seeking for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.” (Hebrews 12:15-17; Romans 2:7-9).

91. What happened after Jacob received the blessing from Isaac?

He for fear of his life had to flee to the Syrian, Laban his mother’s brother, who he rigorously served for a wife. By Laban’s deception Jacob obtained two wives and by their insistence he also took two concubines so that in the process of time he begat twelve sons. (Genesis 28-32; Hosea 12:12).

Eventually Jacob left Laban and returning to the Promised Land, in fear of Esau, though under Yahweh's stated and revealed Divine protection was caused to wrestle with an Angel. Through tears and prayer Jacob tenaciously persevered and prevailed with God (Ail - Power and Strength). The Angel told him his name would be changed to Israel.

92. What does Israel mean?

The Angel said that he was to be called Israel because as a prince he had persevered and prevailed with God (Genesis 32:29; Hosea 12:4-5).

What does this teach us?

When we are baptized we become the Israel of God, baptized into Christ who persevered and overcame the flesh through the word of God manifest in a life of perfect obedience and at last “destroyed him that hath the power of death,” the diabolos or “condemned sin in the flesh,” in his flesh. As Christ overcame we are called to patiently endure and overcome with God through prayer and a studied application of His word in our lives. If we do so until the end we are promised to be the king/priests of the future age reigning with Christ. (1 Peter 2:9-10; Hebrews 2:14; Romans 8:3 & 2:7; Revelation 2:7 & 11, 5:9-10).

93. In the development of Yahweh's purpose Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel. What are their names?

Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin.

94. Joseph was one of the greatest types of Christ in the Old Testament scriptures. How was he so?

Joseph's early life was typical of Christ's first advent. He was beloved of his father. He was sent seeking his brethren. God's revelation to him foresaw the time when he would rule over his brethren. He was hated and despised and finally typically put to death by being thrown into a dry pit, which was typical of the grave. He was sold into Egypt as

Christ was betrayed for money. Yet, after suffering wrongfully in prison in Egypt he was elevated, his garments changed and made ruler over all Egypt second only to Pharaoh, which was typical of Christ's resurrection and glorification to the right hand of God. Joseph's life then became typical of Christ's second advent. His brethren because of severe drought came and bowed down to him not knowing who he was but later Joseph revealed himself to them. Joseph was a saviour of his brethren and of the Gentiles who came to put their trust in him. His name means "increaser," for he was to increase God's family by way of adoption. His two sons born in Egypt became adopted into the hope of Israel. He is therefore typical of Christ Who will save Jew and Gentile at His appearing and kingdom (Genesis 37; 39-42; 45 & 47).

95. Did Jacob come down to Egypt with his sons and their families?

Yes. Joseph cared for his father and his brethren. It was in Egypt where Jacob died but was buried in the land of Canaan by Joseph according to his expressed desire (Acts 7:14-15; Genesis 48 & 49).

96. Before Jacob died he blessed his sons. What was the blessing of Judah?

"Judah thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh (i.e. 'he whose it is'- BDB Theological Dictionary, note Ezekiel 21:27) come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." (Genesis 49:8-10).

Can you explain this blessing?

Judah and Joseph are set forth in Israel's blessing as types of Christ who will be the future king/priest of Yahweh's kingdom. By inspiration Jacob's blessing principally foretold the destiny of the nation in the "latter days." The line of the kings of Israel was to come through the tribe of Judah. This was established in the line of David through whom Christ as promised would descend. Jacob by faith looked forward to the time when

Yahweh's kingdom would be established forever in the land of Canaan as covenanted to Abraham, Isaac and himself. The kingdom's empire would consist of all the nations of the earth subdued to the will of the king who would descend from Jacob through Judah. The Lord Jesus Christ as Shiloh (He whose it is) the King, the Lion of the tribe of Judah is seen by Jacob as wielding the scepter in the kingdom age, giving laws to the world, possessing the gate of His enemies and blessing all nations of the earth.

After the death of Jacob, Joseph lived to the age of 110. Before he died, Joseph assured the children of Israel that Yahweh would visit them and at the appointed time, bring them out of Egypt. The children of Israel continued to multiply in Egypt. A Pharaoh arose who knew not Joseph and began to severely persecute the children of Israel. To Amran and Jochebed of the tribe of Levi a son was born in these troublesome times that Yahweh was to use to lead Israel out of captivity.

97. What was his name?

Moses.

When Moses was 40 years old he fled Egypt though brought up as the son of Pharaoh's daughter because he killed an Egyptian who was severely treating an Israelite. Where did Moses go?

Moses went to the land of Midian where he became a shepherd and married the daughter of Jethro. Here he stayed until he was 80 years old.

What arrested his attention one day when he was tending Jethro's sheep on the back side of a desert near Mount Sinai?

He saw a bush, which was burning but was not consumed out of which the Angel of God spoke to Moses.

On this occasion the Angel of Yahweh told Moses His purpose in delivering the children of Israel in accordance with what He had revealed to their fathers. He also enunciated His Name.

98. What is the memorial Name of God and what does it mean?

God speaking of Himself said, “Er Asher Er” i.e. “I will be who I will be,” but when we speak of God using the third person we call Him “Yahweh” - “He will be.” This prophetic Name speaks of Yahweh’s great purpose. “I will be manifested in whom I will be.” “God was manifested in the flesh (sinful flesh for the purpose of its condemnation in Christ), justified in the Spirit (i.e. through his death, resurrection and glorification, Christ was cleansed from “sin in the flesh”) seen of angels (or messengers), preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory.” (Exodus 3; 1 Timothy 3:16).

Is this manifestation or Yahweh’s purpose complete in Christ?

No. It is Yahweh’s purpose through Christ to be manifested in a multitude of redeemed, immortalized people drawn from all nations. (John 17:6, 11 20-26; Revelation 5:9-10).

99. Was Moses prepared to go back to Egypt to deliver Israel?

No. Yahweh assured him that He would be with Moses and gave him three signs to show Israel that they might believe. His rod turning into a serpent, his hand when placed in his bosom becoming leprous and was healed, and water being turned into blood. Moses still felt inadequate because he was slow of speech so Yahweh said He would also send with Moses his brother Aaron who would act as Moses’ spokesman. (Exodus 4).

What happened when Moses came before Pharaoh?

Moses came before Pharaoh with the message from Yahweh to “Let My people go,” that they might be a “people for His Name.” Pharaoh angrily rejected this request and increased the burdens upon Israel. (Exodus 5; Deuteronomy 6:12, 21-24).

Pharaoh refused to let Israel go and hardened his heart so Yahweh through Moses sent a series of ten plagues (first three upon both Jew and Egyptian, the last seven upon the Egyptians only). What were these ten plagues?

Water into blood, Frogs, Lice, Flies, Murrain (cattle disease), Boils, Hail, Locusts, Darkness, Death of the first-born (Exodus 7-12).

100. What was Israel commanded to do before the slaying of the first-born by the Angel of Yahweh?

On the 14th day of what became Israel's first month in commemoration of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, they were to kill the Passover lamb without blemish at evening (between three and six o'clock) and catch its blood in a basin. They were to use a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood and sprinkle it upon their two doorposts and lintel of their houses. They were to roast the lamb whole and eat it with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. Not a bone of the lamb was to be broken. None was to be left until morning. Smaller families were to join together if a lamb was too much and if any remained it was to be burnt in the fire. They were to eat with their shoes on and staff in their hand, ready to leave as soon as Moses gave the word (Exodus 12).

What does the Passover lamb, its sprinkled blood on the two doorposts and lintel represent?

Paul said, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." The slaying of the Passover lamb without blemish pointed forward to Christ's perfect obedience and spotless character, while being a possessor of our defiled sinful flesh. By this means Christ was "the lamb of God that should take away the sin of the world". If we receive this in faith I believe that God will "Passover" our sins by providing us with a covering for sin.

The Passover lamb as Yahweh's sacrifice (Exodus 23:17, 18) combined, as you just mentioned, the two essential qualifications for sacrifice – Christ our Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7) was the very nature condemned in Eden and therefore wrong was not done when he was crucified, as Bro. Roberts has reminded us over and over during this baptismal review, "He was born that he might die as the first necessity in the case, for thus was the righteousness of God to be declared and sin condemned in its own flesh as the foundation of all the goodness to come afterwards." This was not all however that was required as signified by the Passover lamb being "without blemish" for,

*“resurrection had to come in harmony with the law that made death the wages of sin...All these aims required that the sacrificial victim should be a perfectly righteous man, as well as the possessor of the nature to be sacrificially condemned...he was in **character** spotless- ‘holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners’. Sin had hold of him in **his nature**, which inherited the sentence of death from Adam: but it had no hold of him in his character: for he always did those things that were pleasing to his Father. When he died, ‘he **died unto sin once**’ (Hebrews 7:26, 27; 8:3; 9:12, 23, 28; 13:20). But God raised him because of his obedience, and ‘being raised from the dead, he dieth no more; death has no more dominion over him’ (Romans 6:9, 10)” (The Blood of Christ pg. 8). Paul also states in Hebrews 9:28 “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time **without sin** unto salvation.” We therefore note that the lintel (the head of the door) symbolic of Christ had to be sprinkled along with the two doorposts representing Jew and Gentile. By Yahweh’s appointment, Christ was required to be sprinkled by His own blood-shedding sacrifice for His own salvation because He bore our defiled Adamic mortality as our representative. By this means He “bore our sins in His own body on the tree,” that He might for all (but of “necessity” beginning with him) overcome sin, destroy it and provide a covering for all those who by faith come unto God through Him. Paul says God “set forth” Christ in this way “that through faith in His blood we might obtain remission (or the ‘passing over’ ESV) of sins” (1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 7:27, 9:14; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 2:14, 9:23 & 12, 13:20; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 3:25-26).*

101. How did the children of Israel escape from Egypt?

God led them to the western side of the Red Sea where they were brought into great danger, for Pharaoh, hearing they were in a place where they could not escape, came out with a great army to catch them and take them back into Egypt again (Exodus 14).

How did Yahweh’s arm of salvation deliver Israel from certain death?

Yahweh opened a way through the Red Sea for Israel to pass. Israel moved safely to the other side and when the Egyptians followed, God brought the sea upon them and they were drowned (Exodus 14; Psalm 78:13 & 53).

This way of salvation through the Red Sea was a type of what?

Paul says Israel was baptized into Moses in the cloud and the sea and rose as it were to newness of life on the opposite shore, no longer the servants of the sin power. This is typical of our baptism into Christ. The Lord Jesus destroyed ‘the body of sin’ (Romans 6:6) in his crucifixion, even as Pharaoh and his army were destroyed in the sea. We ceremonially identify with what God has done in Christ for us, in our baptism and we morally participate in it in putting the old man to death in “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts”. Henceforth, we should not serve sin (1 Corinthians 10:1-6; Romans 6:6; Colossians 2:12; Titus 2:12).

For what purpose did God perform all these wonderful works?

That He might make His existence and power known to Israel and to all the earth (Deuteronomy 4:34-35; Psalm 106:8; Ezekiel 20:6-9; Exodus 10:1-2, 9:16 & 8:22).

ISRAEL AT SINAI

102. When Israel had crossed the Red Sea, what did God do with them next?

He led them to the wilderness of Sinai among great, barren mountains and showed His presence in a visible manner before them by descending to the top of Sinai in the midst of a dense cloud, smoke, earthquake and a prolonged sounding of a trumpet blast which was followed by speaking to them with a loud voice, which they all heard (Exodus 19:20; Deuteronomy 4:10-14 & 5:4).

Why did He do that?

Yahweh did this so that the people might believe in Moses, as the prophet of God and be prepared to obey the law (Exodus 19:9; Deuteronomy 4:10).

103. What did God say in the hearing of the children of Israel?

Yahweh gave them the Ten Commandments. The first five relate to loving God:

- 1) Thou shalt have no other gods before me

- 2) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image...
- 3) Thou shalt not take the Name of Yahweh thy God in vain...
- 4) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...
- 5) Honour thy father and mother...

The next five relate to loving our fellow man:

- 6) Thou shalt not kill
- 7) Thou shalt not commit adultery
- 8) Thou shalt not steal
- 9) Thou shalt not bear false witness...
- 10) Thou shalt not covet... (Exodus 20:1-17; Deuteronomy 4:12-13)

Did He deliver a law to them besides the Ten Commandments?

Yes. He spoke to Moses many other things, which Moses repeated to the people (Deuteronomy 4:13-14).

104. The Lord Jesus summed up these Ten Commandments of Yahweh to Israel in two great principles. What are they?

The Lord Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40).

SABBATH KEEPING

105. Do we have to keep all these Ten Commandments today?

Nine of the commandments have been re-affirmed by the 'law of Christ' except the Sabbath, the principles of which however, the Lord showed us in His life we should perform every day. That is, remembering Yahweh in true thankfulness, our lives dedicated to Him in ceasing from the works of the flesh. There is not a single command in the New Testament requiring observing the seventh day as a Sabbath. It was a part of

the Law that was 'done away' in Christ (Hebrews 3:5-6; Romans 3:21-22, 6:14, 7:6; Hebrews 7:18-19, 8:7 to 9:4; Colossians 2:16-17; 1 Corinthians 9:21).

The Apostle Paul stated to the Roman ecclesia comprising of Jews and gentiles that the observance of one day above another was a matter of little consequence. (Romans 14:5) The Jewish Christians wished to continue observing the Sabbath as a day of rest; there was nothing wrong in them doing so as long as they did not try to impose their will on their gentile brethren and sisters, or in their observance of the seventh day to “forsake the assembling of themselves together” (i.e. on the first day of the week when the disciples gathered to remember Christ in the appointed way) as some at the Jerusalem ecclesia seemed to be doing (Hebrews 10:25). He warned them against placing stress on certain days, like the Sabbath (Galatians 4:10-11). The Lord Jesus and his apostle to the gentiles teach that every day ought to be used as an opportunity to serve and worship God in spirit and in truth.

*Christ invites us to learn of him and in so doing find true rest for our souls (Matt 11:29-30). Rest or the ceasing of work is the meaning of Sabbath. Christ’s law to which we are called (1 Corinthians 9:21) shows that the Mosaic law which made the keeping of the seventh day a command was “but a shadow of good things to come” (Colossians 2:17). The **reality** is rest or a ceasing from the works of sin with all its accompanying sorrows. The Sabbath pointed forward to the millennium or seventh day of one thousand years, when all men will find in the knowledge and service of God true rest from sin, a cleansing of conscience and life in harmony with God when his kingdom is reestablished on the earth.*

*The followers of Christ in Colossians 2:11-17 are shown by Paul how to observe what the law taught by way of shadow concerning circumcision and the Sabbath. Paul gave both circumcision and Sabbath keeping a **spiritual** significance rather than a literal observance (verses 11, 17). Under the law the Lord Jesus himself points out that circumcision took precedence over Sabbath-keeping (John 7:22-23). Yet circumcision is not binding on a follower of Christ except in a spiritual sense. In Romans 2 Paul tells us*

*“A Jew is one **inwardly** and circumcision is a matter of the **heart**, by the **spirit**, not by the **letter** (The Mosaic Covenant). His praise is not from man, but from God” (Romans 2:29). How can those of a Judaizing tendency say the Sabbath is binding when circumcision (the greater law under the mosaic covenant) has been superseded! Christ’s law teaches circumcision is to be made plain in the lives of his disciples in a spiritual sense; so too Sabbath keeping. Colossians 2:17 shows that the Sabbath is set forth as a shadow of something to be revealed in Christ; Paul (Hebrews 4:9-1) brings together all the above teachings when he says, “There remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God...Let us therefore labour (or strive) to enter that rest”. The disciple of Christ observes the Sabbath in a spiritual sense when he **daily** strives to cease from his own fleshly works, “**laboring** (like the priests in the temple on the Sabbath days-Matthew 12:5) to enter that rest” — not one day, but every day of the week. Christ invites us to this true Sabbath rest each day by us **learning of him** and following his example (Matt 11:28-30). If we do so, we will through God’s grace be invited to experience that Sabbath rest of the kingdom millennial age which “remains for the people of God” (Hebrews 4:9).*

THE MOSAIC COVENANT

106. Did Yahweh make a covenant with the people about these things?

Yes. God offered to bless them with many blessings if they would obey the law that He would give them. The people promised to do all the Lord commanded them. Then the Lord gave the law and Moses wrote it in a book, and read it to the people. He then sprinkled the book and the people with the blood of sacrifices. Thus, a covenant was established between God and the people (Exodus 24:3-8; Hebrews 9:19-21).

107. What is this covenant called in the scriptures?

It is called the first, or the old covenant (Hebrews 8:7-13).

108. Could this Mosaic covenant give eternal life?

The Mosaic covenant only promised a prolonged and peaceful life in the land on the condition they did not forsake the covenant. The promise of eternal life is contained in

the covenant of promise made and confirmed with Abraham 430 years **before** the law (Galatians 3:17-22). Animal sacrifices could not take away sin (Hebrews 10:4-10); those offered by Abraham pointed forward to the purging of the Abrahamic covenant by the blood of Christ. Secondly, God's righteousness required perfect obedience, no one apart from the man God strengthened for himself – the Lord Jesus Christ, could do this.

*Paul said “Not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his (Christ’s) own blood he obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:12).” And again “It is **impossible** for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins...I (Christ) have come to do your will. He abolishes the first (Mosaic) covenant in order to establish the second...through the offerings of the **body** of Jesus Christ once for all” (Hebrews 10:4-10). Bro. Thomas says “We see then, the nature of the Mosaic law purged by inferior blood. It could not give a title to eternal life, and was therefore incapable of imparting everlasting righteousness to any (Galatians 3:21), nothing short of an everlasting righteousness can constitute a man an heir of the kingdom of God in the covenanted land. By obedience to this law no flesh can be justified, for by it comes the knowledge of sin, without the power of deliverance. (Romans 3:20, 28). ‘It made nothing perfect, but the bringing of a better hope did.’ (Hebrews 7:19).” (Contending for the Faith: Mystery of the Covenant of the Holy Land Explained, pg. 161).*

What then was the purpose of the law?

The law was designed to separate the nation of Israel from all other nations as a peculiar people unto Yahweh, an example to all other people. Its statutes were designed to always bring God to the people's mind in all aspects of their daily living. The law revealed to man the sinfulness of sin, that apart from God he had no hope. The law graphically set this forth by uncompromisingly cursing all who did not obey it in every detail. As no one was able to live a life without committing sin, the law directed the true Israelite to the coming of the promised Messiah and Redeemer who will deliver him/her from the bondage of sin and death and from the curse of the law. It did this in the sacrifices and offerings, which pointed forward to the one great offering Yahweh had set forth in the covenants of promise in Eden and to Abraham, which were fulfilled in Christ. The

shadow institution of the law pointed forward to His sacrificial death, which declared Yahweh's righteousness in the condemnation of sin in the flesh, in Christ who was the sinless (without blemish in character) partaker of Adamic condemned nature. Every time a faithful Israelite offered a sacrifice, he was directed to think of the promised Seed and what Yahweh would accomplish in Him. He then in faith like Abraham, who saw the day of the Lord and was glad, looked forward to the time when Messiah would come.

"Wherefore the law", says Paul "was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (Deuteronomy 4:6-8 & 28:9-10; Jeremiah 16:16; Zechariah 8:23; Romans 3:19-20; Galatians 3:10; Romans 3:21-23; Genesis 3:15; Genesis 15 & 22; Hebrews 9:8-14; Romans 8:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:15; John 8:56; Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:24).

109. Why is the law given through Moses referred to in scripture as the first or the old covenant, considering there was the covenant made with Abraham before it?

Although the covenant of the Law of Moses was the last to be given, it was the first to come into force. It was the law of Israel's national life for many hundreds of years before the confirmation of the covenant made with Abraham through the shedding of the blood of Christ. (Galatians 3:17-19; Romans 15:8; Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:24-26).

110. When we are baptized, are we under the Mosaic covenant today?

No. It was taken away, totally fulfilled in the death of Christ who redeemed the believers who were under the law from the curse of the law. When baptized, we are brought into relationship with the new everlasting covenant purged by the blood of Christ in contrast to the old covenant which Paul calls the 'ministration of death,' because it cursed all who could not keep it perfectly.

The 'law of Christ' says James, is the 'perfect law of liberty', because it liberates the believer from the bondage of sin by forgiveness through the "better" sacrifice of Christ, his resurrection and eternal priesthood (Hebrews 9:23; 7:11-12,18-22,25). This provided a new powerful motivating force in our lives to obey God's commandments, and offers

the hope of eternal life. (Colossians 2:14-17; Matthew 26:28; Galatians 3:10-14; 1 Corinthians 9:21; James 1:25; 2:8-12; Acts 3:26).

CONCERNING ISRAEL AFTER THE GIVING OF THE LAW TO THEIR ENTERING INTO THE PROMISED LAND

111. What happened after the giving of the law to Israel, the building of the tabernacle and the establishment in their midst of all things pertaining to it?

God commanded Israel to march to and enter the land of Canaan and subdue the nations that were there (Numbers 13:1-20; Deuteronomy 1:19-21).

Did Israel do as they were commanded and go straight into the Promised Land?

Their intention was to do so but after sending out twelve spies to spy out the land of Canaan, ten of the twelve brought back an evil report of how great and mighty were the people occupying the land. This evil report made them afraid and they made up their mind not to go but to kill Moses and set up another captain over them who would lead them back into Egypt (Numbers 13:13-33 & 14:1-10; Deuteronomy 1:22-23 & 32-33).

What did God do to them for this disobedience?

Having showed His glory visibly in the camp to protect Moses, He ordered the whole congregation to go back into the wilderness. They were to wander for 40 years until all of the men over 20 years of age were dead (Numbers 14:10-35; Deuteronomy 1:34-40).

Did Moses enter the Promised Land?

No.

Why not?

Towards the end of Israel's wilderness-wandering Moses disobeyed a command by smiting the rock (which was symbolic of Christ) twice, instead of speaking to it to bring forth water unto the children of Israel. He and Aaron took the glory of this occasion to themselves instead of giving it to Yahweh (Num. 20:11-12).

Do you think Moses will enter into the Land of Promise eventually?

Yes, in the kingdom age. He died in faith not receiving the promises but seeing them afar off by faith (Hebrews 11:23-28 & 39-40).

112. What happened at the end of Israel's forty year wandering in the wilderness?

At the end of the forty years, the Israelites came to Canaan from the eastern side of the river Jordan. When the nations on that side had been conquered Moses died. This eastern side of the Jordan later became the inheritance of the tribes Reuben, Gad and half the tribe of Manasseh. The children of Israel crossed the Jordan and attacked the nations of Canaan, which became the inheritance of the other nine and a half tribes (Deuteronomy 2 & 3; Joshua 13:23-33, 14, 18:1-10; Psalm 105:43-45).

Who led Israel into the Promised Land?

Joshua (Joshua 1 & 4:14-24).

What was the first city they came to?

Jericho.

How did they take Jericho?

Yahweh commanded them to march around it for seven days. On the seventh day they were to march around it seven times, after which Joshua commanded the trumpets to be sounded by the priests and the people to shout. Yahweh then caused the great walls of the city to fall down and Israel by this means destroyed its inhabitants saving only Rahab and her family (Joshua 6).

What was the next city they came against?

Ai (Joshua 7).

Why didn't they take it at first, 36 Israelites losing their lives in the attempt and causing all Israel to be greatly troubled?

Achan of the tribe of Judah sinned and tried to conceal the fact that he had taken some of the accursed things of Jericho, which Yahweh said had to be utterly destroyed (Joshua 7).

What is the lesson in this for us?

One person's action can affect the whole ecclesia and endanger their spiritual lives.

Under Joshua Israel destroyed the seven nations of Canaan and divided the land by lot and settled to live in it according to the laws Yahweh had given them through Moses. Did they continue in obedience to these laws?

They continued faithfully as long as Joshua was alive and the old men who outlived him. After that, they turned from the Law of Moses and began to do as the Canaanites did who lived amongst them, not having been utterly destroyed as Yahweh had commanded them. They forsook the worship of Yahweh and worshipped the idols of the Canaanites. (Judges 2:6-13; Psalm 106:34-39).

ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES

113. After the death of Joshua and the elders that outlived him, what was the consequence of Israel turning away from the Law of Moses?

God brought them into great trouble by allowing the neighboring nations to gain the upper hand over them and drive them out of their houses, taking possession of their goods and land. (Judges 2:14-15; Psalm 106:40-43).

Did these troubles destroy Israel?

No. When they got into trouble they repented of their disobedience and cried to God. Time after time during a period of 450 years, God raised up Judges who delivered them. (Judges 2:16-23; Acts 13:19-20).

Did these Judges succeed each other in an unbroken line and can you name some of the Judges?

There were intervals between different Judges during which neighboring people oppressed Israel because of her sins. After Joshua came Othniel, Ehud, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair, Jephtha, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson and Eli. (The Book of Judges; 1 Samuel 1-3).

114. Who was the last Judge?

Samuel.

What change took place in the days of the last of these Judges?

Israel desired a king that they might be like the other nations. They came to Samuel and asked him to appoint them a king. (1 Samuel 8:1-5).

ISRAEL DESIRES A KING

115. What was Yahweh's reply to Samuel and who was Israel's first king?

Yahweh spoke to Samuel saying, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." Yahweh was Israel's first king and Israel was God's kingdom. (1 Samuel 8:7 & 12:12).

That is true, nevertheless Yahweh commanded Samuel to comply with their wishes.

Who did Samuel anoint to be king?

Samuel anointed Saul, son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, to be their king. (1 Samuel 9:20-27; 10).

116. What sort of king did Saul prove to be?

Saul began humbly and faithfully but then he departed from Yahweh's commandments, disobeying several times in important matters. (1 Samuel 13:13 & 15:19; 1 Chronicles 10:13).

117. What was the occasion and important words Yahweh through Samuel addressed to Saul as a result of his disobedience?

Saul was commanded to go and utterly destroy Amalek but he saved the best of the cattle, the sheep and their king alive. He blamed the people for doing so saying the animals were for sacrifices for Yahweh but Samuel said, “Hath Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of Yahweh, He hath also rejected thee from being king.” (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

This passage you quoted is most important because it shows Saul's sin was faithlessness for he was more conscious of the people than God. We see the very same spirit in the world today. To get large numbers, leaders of religious groups strive to please the people and in the process disregard God's word. The end result is that belief of the Gospel- The things concerning the kingdom of God and those things we have discussed concerning the Name of Jesus Christ and baptism are either not taught as essential for salvation or altered according to the thinking of the flesh. Saul's stated motive for saving the animals alive was for the purpose of sacrifice but this contrary to Yahweh's expressed wish. This illustrates the fact that apart from the principle of the manifestation of God's truth and love in a person's heart and actions while under trial, then there was no pleasure in those sacrifices offered under the shadow institution which preceded the sacrifice of Christ. It illustrates the principle for all ages under which God's people have lived, that unrighteousness shall not inherit the kingdom of God, and that he only is righteous who does righteousness. We are commanded to “work out our salvation” by “patient continuance in well doing” and that he only that endures to the end shall be saved. Christ is the judge of who will be fit to be saved and he will impartially give to every man according to his/her works (1John 3:7; Philippians 2:12; Romans 2:7, Matthew 10:22; Revelation 20: 12, 13).

PART 5

THE COVENANT MADE WITH DAVID

“It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the desolation of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation to the ends of the earth’ (Isaiah 49:1-3, 5, 6, 8). The Lord Jesus, the servant of YAHWEH, then, is in reserve at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, for the purpose of a future manifestation, not to destroy the earth and to burn up the wicked, but to fulfil the covenants of promise; in putting an end to the desolation of Canaan, restoring the tribes to their native land, re-establishing the commonwealth of Israel, enlightening the nations, regenerating society, filling the earth with the glory of the Lord, establishing his sovereignty in the world, and in rewarding the saints. All this is to be accomplished when the Lord comes. The God of the fathers will then remember the covenants which he began to fulfil when he called Israel out of Egypt under Moses; and when he called Jesus out of Egypt in the days of Archelaus. These were but earnest of the good things to come, in the manifestation of which the promises will be perfected in every jot and tittle of the word...”.

“If Jew or Gentile aspire to this glorious station in the Age to come, ‘the prize’ is attainable on the simple condition of believing the things concerning the kingdom and the name of Jesus Christ, and of being baptized; and thenceforth walking as becomes men, who are to be, not only the rulers, but the companions of Christ, and examples to the nations in righteousness, equity, and faith. The time, however, for collecting together the nobility of the kingdom is almost elapsed. It has been continuous with the desolation of Jerusalem. She was to be ‘trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled’ (Luke 21:24). These times are almost accomplished. Only a few more years remain, and then ‘the accepted time and day of salvation’ will have passed. The door into the kingdom will be shut, and no more can obtain a right to enter in. Men who may survive the worse than Egyptian plagues coming upon them, may live in the future age in hope of immortality when the age has passed away; but in the glory and honor of

Shiloh's 'everlasting dominion', they will have neither part nor lot in the matter.” (Elpis Israel Part 2 chapter 5, ‘Things concerning the Name of Jesus Christ’ pg. 318 – 311).

118. Who did Yahweh appoint to replace Saul and what sort of man was Saul’s replacement?

David, the son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah, was a man after Yahweh’s own heart. (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22; 1 Kings 15:5).

Did David ever sin?

Yes. Principally in the matter of Uriah’s wife but David sincerely repented of this and humbly submitted to Yahweh’s correcting hand. (2 Samuel 12; Psalm 51 & 32).

David knew that there was no provision in the Law of Moses, which could redeem him from his great sin but he implicitly believed Yahweh was able to go beyond law in the manifestation of His grace and forgive. What principle does this speak to us of?

The righteousness of faith, which is imputed to us when we are baptized into Christ through Whom our iniquities are forgiven and our sins covered if like David we manifest his belief and repentance. (Romans 4:5-8).

119. What was the covenant Yahweh made to David concerning the everlasting nature of his kingdom and throne?

Yahweh through the prophet Nathan said to David, “And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish His kingdom. He shall build a house for My Name, and I will establish the throne of His kingdom forever. **I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son.** Even in suffering for iniquity I will chasten Him with the rod of men, and with the stripes due to the children of Adam. But my mercy shall not depart away from him as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thy house and thy kingdom shall be established **forever before thee:** thy throne shall be established forever.” (2 Samuel

7:11-16; Adam Clarke's Translation quoted by Dr. Thomas – Elpis Israel Part 2 chapter 5 'The Priesthood of Shiloh' pg. 310 & 320).

What was the substance of this promise referred to in Isaiah as “an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David” (Isaiah 55:3)

This covenant which has reference to the throne and kingdom of God was all David's desire and his hope of salvation because it promised him a resurrection to eternal life. David was given this assurance of eternal life by being promised that his house, kingdom, throne and king, who would sit upon his throne, would be God's son as well as David's descendant and all this would be established in David's presence, forever (Psalm 89:3, 4,19-28, 34-37).

How did Yahweh say this was to be accomplished?

Though this son of promise was to be raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David, the covenant states that this Son was also to be begotten of God – Emanuel, 'God with us'. This gave him a predisposition to the mind of God that he might do His Father's will, and thereby set forth that He was truly God's Son. He obtained a title to resurrection by perfect obedience – his faith made perfect through suffering, and by the sacrificial death required to declare the righteousness of God, abolished the law of condemnation for himself, and all who like David, believe and obey God's word. David was therefore promised that by this exalted son, his house and kingdom would be established for ever before him (2 Samuel 23:5; Psalm 132:11, 89:3-4, 24 & 37; Isaiah 53:4,5; Refer Clauses 7-10 of the Statement of the Faith; Elpis Israel Part 2 Chapter 5 pg. 309-323).

These promises are referred to as “an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David,”(11 Samuel 23:3-5) because of the eternal nature of its blessing and the fact David was and will be the recipient of Yahweh's grace, righteousness being imputed to him in the way earlier discussed. Who is the Seed referred to in the covenant through whom this blessedness will be eternally realized to David?

The Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 1:1; Acts 2:29-36; Romans 1:1-4; Hebrews 1:1-5; Revelation 22:16).

Wasn't the covenant made with David fulfilled in Solomon?

It was typically fulfilled in Solomon. Its real fulfillment is to be in Christ who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh that "sin in the flesh," might be condemned. Christ would be declared Son of God and heir to David's throne by His resurrection from the dead. Solomon could not have been the seed of promise, for David speaking of the "everlasting covenant," which was his "salvation" and all his "desire," saw Solomon sit upon his throne over Israel before he died. Nevertheless, David said concerning the promise that "He (Yahweh) make it not to grow (in his lifetime)." (1 Kings 8:20; Acts 2:29-30; Luke 1:32; Romans 1:2-4; 2 Samuel 23:3-5).

120. What is implied by the words of the promise when Yahweh speaking to David says, "Thy house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee"?

The everlasting establishment of David's throne and kingdom has not been realized from the death of David to the present day because the promise is that it must exist perpetually "before" or in the presence of David. The Apostle Peter said, "David is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us until this day." "He is not ascended into the heavens." Therefore the covenants of promise remain unfulfilled. David was, like Abraham, promised a resurrection from the dead and a change of nature to immortality. (2 Samuel 7:16; Acts 2:29 & 34; Hebrews 11:32 & 39-40; 1 Corinthians 15:13-14 & 17-23).

How can we be assured this will occur and when will it happen?

These things have been assuredly established by the resurrection of Christ, which gave assurance to all men that Yahweh has appointed Christ as the Holy One of Israel, to rule the tribes of Israel as His kingdom and the world in righteousness, as His kingdom's empire. This will occur at Christ's second appearing. (Isaiah 9:7; Jeremiah 33:15, 6 & 3:17; Isaiah 24:23 & 2:3; Daniel 7:14; Acts 17: 31; Matthew 25:31).

There are, as we have seen, two everlasting covenants of promise upon which the kingdom of God is based - the one made with Abraham and the other with David. The Abrahamic Covenant gives the land of Canaan to their Seed (that is Christ) forever. The

Davidic Covenant promises that the kingdom and throne established upon it will be established forever in the presence of a resurrected immortal David. They are called David's because his family or house alone can possess the kingdom.

121. How do we become a part of David's house and heirs according to the Davidic Covenant?

By belief in the Gospel preached to Abraham and David and by being baptized into their Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ. By this means we become part of Abraham's seed and "heirs of the kingdom." At Christ's return He will, says the prophet Amos and Apostle James, "set up" David's kingdom, which will then be in "ruins" and all Gentiles will seek after Yahweh, "upon Whom My Name is called." The people for the Lord's Name are the saints (Jew and Gentile) who are the "heirs of the kingdom." (Galatians 3:26-29; Matt.1:1; Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:14-17; James 2:5; Revelation 5:9-10; Isaiah 49:1-3, 5-6 & 8; Elpis Israel pg. 304 - 311).

The kingdom and throne of David does not exist beyond the skies in heaven as the churches teach, it must then once have existed and is not just a matter of promise?

As previously stated the kingdom Christ comes to "set up" is the "building again," "restore again," "the tabernacle of David," "the kingdom of Israel," which was "the kingdom of God." (Psalm 22:28, 114:1-2; 2 Chronicles 13:8; 1 Chronicles 29:23; Acts 15:16 & 1:6).

THE HISTORY OF THE KINGDOMS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

122. What happened to the kingdom of God after the death of King David?

Solomon his son reigned in his stead. Yahweh blessed him but he married many strange wives, who in his old age caused him to depart from worshipping Yahweh in the way David had done with singleness of heart. After the death of Solomon, as a punishment for his sins, ten tribes revolted from the government of David's house and set up a king of their own, Jeroboam, son of Nebat, who established a separate kingdom in the Northern part of Palestine. (1 Kings 4:1, 11:11-13 & 12:1-9).

What was the new kingdom of the ten tribes in the north called?

The kingdom of Israel was frequently spoken of by the prophets as “Ephraim,” from the leading tribe of the ten. (The Books of Kings, Hosea etc.).

Was the new kingdom of the ten tribes ruled by the Law of Moses as when David and Solomon reigned over them?

No. Jeroboam abandoned the Law of Moses and led the ten tribes into idolatry, from which they never departed. (1 Kings 12:26-30).

123. Israel had a total of 19 kings including Jeroboam. Did they have any good kings?

No.

What happened to the kingdom of Ephraim?

It was overthrown by the Assyrians and carried away into captivity, scattered among the nations in approximately 721 BC from which scattering the ten tribes have not as yet been re-gathered.

Of what tribes did the kingdom of David consist after the revolt of the ten under the leadership of Jeroboam?

The kingdom of David consisted of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah. (2 Chronicles 11:12).

124. By what name were the kingdom of David’s successors known, and how many kings did it have?

The kingdom of David was known as the kingdom of Judah. It lasted 393 years after the revolt of the ten tribes. It had 19 kings some of whom like Hezekiah and Josiah were good but after the death of Josiah it had a succession of wicked kings who brought the nation to ruin. (The Books of Chronicles).

125. Who was Judah’s last king and what did Yahweh say to this wicked prince?

Zedekiah was the last king and Yahweh through the prophet Ezekiel said to him, “Thou profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, Thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem; and take off the crown: this (Zedekiah) shall not be the same (Son of David spoken of in the covenant), exalt him that is low (Christ), and abase him that is high (dethrone Zedekiah). I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him.” (Ezekiel 21:25-27).

Whose coming is contemplated here, and whose right to David’s throne is it?

Shiloh which when translated means “He whose it is,”— the Lord Jesus Christ. (‘Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon’; Genesis 49:10; Isaiah 11:10-12; Revelation 22:16-20).

The above passage describes three over turnings in relation to the Jews occupying Jerusalem as the place of the throne of David. To what do they refer?

The first overthrow was by Yahweh’s hand providentially directing Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. He took Jerusalem, destroyed Solomon’s Temple and carried the people away in a series of deportations into Babylon where they remained for 70 years. After this period there was a restoration under Ezra and Nehemiah in consequence of a decree of Cyrus, king of Persia, who by Yahweh’s hand had conquered Babylon. Though Judah’s commonwealth was established, the kingdom of David was never restored. This commonwealth of Judah was ruled by governors and later by the family of the Macabees but never again by the descendants of David. The establishment of Judah’s commonwealth prepared the ground for the coming of Christ born in Bethlehem about 540 years after the return of the exiles from Babylonian captivity. The second overthrow is that which Christ sent against Jerusalem because of her sins in AD70 when the Romans broke up the Jewish State. Since that time in fulfillment of Christ’s words of the Mount Olivet Prophecy, the Jewish State and in particular Jerusalem, has been “trodden down of the Gentiles until the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” This down-treading concluded in 1967 when after the six-day war the Jewish State for the first time in 1900 years occupied Jerusalem again. The establishment of the Jewish State in these latter days is necessary that prophecy might be fulfilled. For the third overturning is to be executed by Gog

(Russian/European Confederacy joined by other nations), which will invade the Middle East in our near future and take Jerusalem. At this crisis the Lord Jesus will come with His immortal saints and destroy this great host in the Battle of Armageddon and set up God's kingdom on earth, once again reigning from Jerusalem. (Chronicles; Ezra; Nehemiah; Matthew 24; Luke 21; Ezekiel 38 & 39; Revelation 16:14-16; Isaiah 2:2-3).

WHAT CHRIST TAUGHT CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD

126. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, what does the Gospel Record state He went from city to city preaching?

The things concerning the kingdom of God. (Luke 4:43 & 8:1; Matthew 6:33).

What is the kingdom of God?

As other earthly kingdoms it will have a king, a territory (the first dominion i.e. the land covenanted to Abraham), and a secondary dominion or empire which will encompass the whole earth, an aristocracy and subjects. As stated in Daniel chapter 2, the stone power (Christ and the immortal Saints) "shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever". This stone power that smites Nebuchadnezzar's image (the kingdom of men) shall become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth. (Daniel 2:44 & 7:13-14; Micah 4:8; Haggai 2:22; Zechariah 14:9; Revelation 11:15).

For what purpose will Yahweh send Jesus Christ personally to the earth, at the close of the times of the Gentiles?

Christ will come to set up Yahweh's kingdom on the earth. (Acts 3:20-21; Psalm 102:16 & 21; 2 Timothy 4:1; Acts 1:6, 11; Daniel 7:13-14).

Where will the kingdom of God be set up?

It shall be established on the territory covenanted to Abraham and his Seed (the Christ) as an everlasting possession – the land of Canaan. (Genesis 13:14-17, 15:18; Ezekiel 36:34-36; Isaiah 60:14-15, 61:4-5 & 62:1-4).

127. Does the kingdom of God as taught by the Lord Jesus have any relation to the ancient kingdom of Israel?

As mentioned earlier with regard to the Promises made to David, the kingdom of God set up in the earth in the “latter days,” will be the kingdom of Israel restored. (Micah 4:6-8; Amos 9:11 & 15; Ezekiel 37:21-22; Jeremiah 23:3; Matthew 19:28; Acts 1:6).

We know that the Lord Jesus Christ will be its king (Luke 1:32-33; Revelation 5:12-14) but when does scripture say this kingdom will be established?

In the “latter days,” at Christ’s second appearing when “every eye shall see Him,” as real as when He was on the earth before. (Daniel 2:28 & 44; 2 Timothy 4:1; Acts 1:11 & 3:21; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Revelation 1:7).

What will be the capital of this kingdom?

Jerusalem (Micah 4:2; Jeremiah 3:17; Isaiah 2:1-4, 11:9-10, 24:23 & 32:1 & 16).

128. Will Christ reign alone in the kingdom of God or will others reign with Him?

The immortal saints will comprise the aristocracy and governing body of the kingdom of God and will reign with Christ. (2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 5:9-10; Isaiah 32:1; Matthew 25:34; Daniel 7:18; 1 Corinthians 6:2; Psalm 149:7-9).

Who are the immortal saints?

They are those who believed and obeyed the Gospel of all generations, developed by resurrection, found worthy at the judgment seat of Christ and subsequently changed - this corruptible putting on incorruption and this mortal putting on immortality. With Christ as their head they constitute the collective “seed of Abraham,” in whom all nations will be blessed, and comprise “Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets,” as well as all in their age of like faithfulness. (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 15: 53; Ephesians 1:1 & 13; Daniel 12:2; Luke 13:28; Revelation 11:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; John 5:28-29 & 6:39-40; Luke 14:14; Matthew 25:34 & 46).

129. Will the kingdom be composed of the same nation that it formerly consisted of, namely the Jews – the twelve tribes – both Judah (Jews in the land at Christ’s return) and Israel (those Jews scattered among the nations of the earth)?

Yes. The restoration of the kingdom again to Israel will involve the saving and purifying of the remnant of Judah after the battle of Armageddon and the ingathering and purging of God’s people Israel or the ten tribes from all nations of the earth. The purpose being that they might be reinstated in the land of their fathers and be constituted a holy and righteous nation. (Isaiah 11:12 & 24:23; Jeremiah 31:10; Zechariah 8:7-8; Ezekiel 36:34-36 & 37:34-36; Isaiah 51:3, 60:15 & 62:4; Jeremiah 3:17; Micah 4:7-8; Joel 3:17; Romans 11:12-15 & 25-26).

*Bro Thomas in Elpis Israel under the subsection “Abraham the heir of the world” (Romans 4:13) asks a most important question in relation to that time when Abraham and Christ will jointly possess the land of Caanan, “what will be their relation to the world at large?” He answers “It is written of Christ, ‘He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They (the Arabs) that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish, and of the isles, shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: ALL NATIONS SHALL SERVE HIM. His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be **blessed** IN HIM; all nations shall call him blessed.’ (Psalm 72:6-11, 17).”*

*“According to this testimony, it is proved that the nations, or families, of the earth will become the people of God as well as Israel, who will have the pre-eminence among them as the inheritance of the Lord; and so **Israel and the nations will constitute a kingdom and empire, which will then compose ‘the World,’** and be blessed in him and Abraham; whose subjects will reciprocate the benefits bestowed upon them, and serve their god-like rulers with heart-felt loyalty, and blessings upon his name for ever.” (Elpis Israel Part 2, chapter 2 “Abraham the heir of the world” pg. 248)*

Thus in forty years the little kingdom of Judea will have become “a great mountain,” or empire filling the whole earth....The ‘Economy of the Fullness of Times’ will now have fairly commenced, and the Day of Christ in all the glory of the Sun of Righteousness have opened in all its blessedness upon the nations of the earth. The gospel preached to Abraham, saying ‘In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed,’ will be a reality. (Elpis Israel Part 3 pg. 466).

THE SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST, THE RESURRECTION, RESPONSIBILITY AND JUDGEMENT

130. You have spoken of the return of Christ to the earth, where is He now?

He is in heaven at the right side of the Majesty on high. (John 3:13; Ephesians 1:20-23 & 4:8-10; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3).

What is He doing?

He makes intercession for the saints and providentially works in their lives that they may be given every opportunity to be conformed to His Image, that they who have been “called” may be “justified” and at last “glorified.” Yahweh has also given all power into the hands of the Lord Jesus that through the work of the angelic host, which Christ now commands, world events may be providentially arranged to at last bring the earth to the climax of the ages as described in the Apocalypse. (Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:26-34; Revelation).

Have we any proof that Jesus will return?

The Apostle Peter said, “We have something more sure, **the prophetic word**, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.” This sure prophetic word has revealed many things, which indicate the Lord’s near return. (2 Peter 1:19).

Are there any signs that His return is near?

Yes, the partial restoration of Israel to the land of promise after the Second World War and their retaking of Jerusalem in 1967. The European Union slowly reverting to what once existed under the Holy Roman Empire and the fall of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe. In the Middle East we have witnessed what the world media has providentially called “The Arab Spring”, and the counter revolutions that have taken place which have led to Russia’s military presence in Syria, north of Israel. Recently we have witnessed the exit of Britain from the EU which must, according to Ezekiel 38, oppose Russia and its confederacy which includes Germany and France when it invades Israel at “the time of the end”. The moral deterioration and violence of the world in general, the pride of man, his God-denying religion and sciences all point to Christ’s near return. (Ezekiel 38:11-12; Zechariah 14:2; Luke 21:29-32; Revelation 16:13-14; Luke 17:26-27).

131. What will be the first work Christ does when He returns prior to the establishment of the kingdom?

At the appearing of Christ before the establishment of the kingdom, Christ will order the angels to assemble all those who are responsible to judgment, living or dead. The dead He will bring from their graves; the living He will gather from many parts of the earth so that all must appear before His judgment seat that they may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. (2 Timothy 4:1; Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; 1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10-12).

132. Will all be raised from the dead?

No. Only those who know the revealed will of God as set forth in the Gospel. Those who by their knowledge are responsible, whether they are obedient to the Gospel call or disobedient will be summoned before the judgment seat. (Mark 16:15-16; Ephesians 4:17-18; Psalm 49:19; 2 Corinthians 2:15-16; Romans 2:2, 8-9 & 16; John 3:19 & 12:48).

*The apostle Paul reminded the Ephesians of the hopeless position of the nations because of the “futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the **ignorance** that is in them” (Ephesians 4:17-18).*

If having understood the Gospel and one refused baptism, could such a one avoid being raised for judgment?

No. It is the “light” of God’s word that makes one responsible not baptism, which is the first act of obedience in responding to the Gospel call. Jesus said, “The **word that I have** spoken the same shall judge him in the last day.” (John 9:41; Psalm 49:20; Romans 5:13; John 15:22 & 12:47-48; John 3:19; James 4:17).

133. What nature will those raised for the purpose of judgment possess when they come forth from the grave?

The responsible dead are raised mortal so that they with those who remain until the coming of Christ might be judged at one and the same time, Christ separating the sheep from the goats. The worthy are changed receiving the gift of God, “this **mortal** must put on immortality,” and again Christ “shall change our vile body.” (2 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Matthew 25:31-34; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Philippians 3:21; 2 Corinthians 5:2-4)

What will happen to these two classes, the sheep and the goats?

The unfaithful (goats) will be consigned to shame to suffer accordingly, as the Judge shall think they deserve and at last will be devoured by “the second death.” The faithful (sheep) will be invested with immortality, and exalted to reign with Jesus as joint heirs of the kingdom, co-possessors of the earth, and joint administrators of God’s authority among men in everything. (Matthew 25:41; Luke 13:28; Daniel 12:2; Luke 12:47-48; Revelation 20:15 & 21:8; Galatians 6:8; Romans 6:21, 2:7 & 8:11; Revelation 5:10; Psalm 49:7-9; Luke 22:29-30)

134. What becomes of those who are not responsible?

Yahweh’s purpose does not require all of mankind. They constitute the material and building blocks from which He selects what will be ultimately used in his spiritual house. He nevertheless sends his blessings on both the just and unjust; those who are not responsible die, having inherited the same sentence of death common to all the children

of Adam; and pass out of memory as if they had never been. (Matthew 5:45; Psalm 49:19-20; Jeremiah 51:57; Isaiah 26:14; Psalm 88:5; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 4:18)

CONCERNING CHRIST AS THE VANQUISHER OF THE GENTILES AND THE RESTORER OF ISRAEL

135. How does the plan and purpose of Yahweh with Israel and the earth develop after the judgment seat of Christ?

- After the resurrection and judgment (Dan.12:2-3; 2 Tim.4:1) of all the responsible, the immortal saints with Christ as their head will engage in a series of confrontations with the Gogian forces (Russia /European Confederacy Eze.38; 39) in those regions south of Jerusalem and in Egypt (Isa.34:6, 8; 63:1-3; Dan.11:40-45).
- This will culminate in the battle of Armageddon (Rev.16: 12-16), which takes place in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Zech.14:2; Joel 3).
- Coinciding with Armageddon is a mighty earthquake (Eze.38:19), which completely alters the geography of Jerusalem and much of Israel (Zech.14:4-5), clearing and preparing the area around Mount Zion for the construction of Yahweh's House of Prayer for all nations Eze.40-48).
- After the miraculous destruction of Gog's mighty host by which "the tents of Judah" are saved first (Zech.12:7) the land of Israel over a period of seven years will be cleansed of all its implements of war (Eze.39:9).
- The building of the House of Prayer for all nations will commence and the Aionian Gospel (or the Gospel of the kingdom age) will be preached in which the ten tribes (all Jews living outside of Jerusalem) are commanded to return to the Promised Land (Rev.18:4; Matt.24:31; Eze.36:24-28; Eze.37:21-22; Jer.31:8-11; Isa.11:12).
- The nations are also warned to submit utterly to the dictates of Israel's Messiah who has come not only to set up God's kingdom in Israel but to rule all of the earth with its territories to be ruled by those He will appoint over them (Psa.2:6-12; Rev.14:6-7).

- The Roman Catholic Church will oppose the reign of Christ. Rome (Babylon the Great) will come into remembrance before Yahweh and will be totally destroyed as a warning to all the nations (Rev.14:8-10; Rev.16:17-21; Rev.18:1-3).
- The European nations will not submit and will rise up through the instigation of the Papacy to destroy the Jews and overthrow their king. Christ will then in a series of catastrophic judgments destroy these European powers (Rev.19:19-20; Eze.20:38; 39:21-25; Micah 7:15-17).
- At last the ten tribes, which will be purged of all rebels by many judgments, after the type of when Israel came out of Egypt under Moses, will be reunited with Judah in the land of promise.
- All opposition around the world will be subdued to the righteous reign of Christ Who will sit upon the throne of David in Jerusalem (Micah 4:6-8; Acts 3:19-21; Luke 1:32-33), His twelve Apostles judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt.19:28; Luke 22:30) and His Immortal Saints will be rulers over all the earth (Dan.7:19, 28; Luke 22:30).

For further reading refer to “Mystery of the Covenant of the Holy Land explained” by bro. Thomas.

Will the Jews be a righteous nation in the day of their restoration?

Yes. A new covenant will be made with them under which all their sins will be forgiven. The law of God will be written in their hearts and minds and all will know and love God from the least to the greatest. (Isaiah 60:21; Jeremiah 31:31-34).

136. The kingdom of God thus divinely constituted will continue for how long and what will be the nature of Earth’s inhabitants during this blessed time?

The kingdom of God will continue one thousand years during which sin and death will still exist among the earth’s subject inhabitants. It will however, be in a much milder degree than is now our experience, for the curse, which came upon the earth as a result of man’s initial rebellion against Yahweh, will be lifted to a great extent. Life expectancy

will be greatly prolonged and the world will be in a blessed and happy state. (Revelation 20:4-9 & 11:15; Isaiah 65:20; Ezekiel 44:22 & 25; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

137. What will Yahweh require of the nations during this one thousand-year reign of Christ?

The nations will be required to come up yearly to Jerusalem to worship and be judged at God's House of Prayer, such a temple as has never been seen upon the earth for size and magnificence. The land of Israel will be turned into a paradise and the temple will stand in the centre of the land in a section of that glorious country, which will be dedicated wholly to Yahweh. A law will be established, which shall go forth to the nations for their "instruction in righteousness," resulting in the abolition of war to the ends of the earth, and the "filling of the earth with knowledge of the glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea." (Zechariah 14:16-19; Ezekiel 40-48; Haggai 2:9; Isaiah 60:7 & 13; Micah 4:1-3; Isaiah 42:4, 11:1-10 & 2:4; Habakkuk 2:14).

In what relation will the nations of the earth stand to Israel and their glorious king?

The nations of the earth will all be subject to Christ and give honour to the Jews of whose blessedness they will share. (Isaiah 60:9-18; Zephaniah 3:14-20; Zechariah 8:23).

YAHWEH'S PURPOSE DEVELOPED DURING THE MILLENNIUM

Bro. Thomas in Elpis Israel shows the purpose of the first 6,000 years of God's plan is to furnish His kingdom and empire of nations with its king and an adequate number of immortal rulers. The purpose of the millennium is to people the globe when under its eternal and incorruptible constitution with sufficient immortals to at last fill the earth with His glory. "The revealed mystery of God's will, which He has purposed in His own mind, is first to found a kingdom and empire of nations, which He will bestow on the crucified and resurrected King of the Jews, and upon all those who believe the doctrine, or word, concerning it, and become obedient to the faith; and secondly, at the end of 7,000 years from the foundation of the world, to renovate the globe, and to people it with immortal men 'equal to the angels', who shall all have attained to the eternal state and to the possession of all its transcendent glories, on the principle of believing His 'exceeding

great and precious promises', and of lovingly and voluntarily obeying His laws." (Elpis Israel Part 1 pg. 184).

138. What is Yahweh's purpose with this millennial reign of Christ?

The mission of the kingdom age will be to subdue all enemies and finally death itself, by opening the way of life to the nations, which they will enter by faith during the thousand years, and (in reality) at their close. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Revelation 21:4 & 20:12-15; Isaiah 25:6-8).

139. What happens at the end of the millennium?

Paul tells us that Christ "must reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet". The scriptures prophesy that there will be a general rebellion led by a Satan (adversary) who no doubt is envious of the King of Glory. This devil goes forth to Gogue's magogian people and falsely accuses the king and his saints. In deceiving them he raises an innumerable army to try to re-establish the kingdom of man or Satan's kingdom as it had existed one thousand years previously as the sole authority of all the earth. But at the moment when they think they have the victory "encompassing the camp of the saints and the beloved city" Yahweh will deliver His king; for "fire shall come down from God out of heaven, and shall devour them." After this, at the close of one thousand years, there will be a general resurrection and judgment for those mortals who lived during this period. The result of this second resurrection and judgment at the end of Christ's one thousand-year reign will be the final extinction of the wicked, and the immortalization of those who have come into harmony with the Divine mind during Christ's reign. Only immortals will then inhabit the earth for all those out of harmony with Yahweh will have been destroyed. (Revelation 20 & 21:5-8; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

Will the kingdom then come to an end?

The kingdom will never end but it undergoes a change at the close of the millennium. This will be after death has been abolished from the earth. It is at this remarkable epoch that Christ will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all and in all. (Luke 1:33; 1 Corinthians 15:28 & 26; Revelation 21:4; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25).

140. Do you agree that Yahweh’s great purpose at the end of the millennium is to at last destroy the law of sin and death, the “devil” or “sin in the flesh,” from the earth?

Yes. All those who please God during their lives through this period of one thousand years will enter into life eternal, just as those who enter into life eternal at Christ’s second appearing before the kingdom age commences. Any of this class who die during the kingdom age will then be raised and glorified. If they are alive when the millennium comes to a close then after the second judgment they will be changed. Their number will be much greater than the number of those who become immortal at the beginning of the thousand years. They will be the harvest, while those accepted at the second appearing of Christ will be the first fruits. (1 Corinthians 15:26; Revelation 20:12; Revelation 14:4).

*Bro. Thomas states in Elpis Israel “When sin is eradicated from the world there will be no more death; for death and sin are boon companions; as it is written, ‘The wages of sin is death’. The abolition of death presupposes the extinction of **sin in the flesh**; and consequently that the animal nature of man has been transformed (not evaporated, but changed) into the spiritual nature of the Elohim...Religion begins in the third chapter of Genesis, and finds the record of its end in the last two chapters of the Revelation. Its abolition is expressed in these words: ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them as their God. And he shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and there shall be **NO MORE DEATH**, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And there shall be **NO MORE CURSE**’. (Rev. 21:3-5; 22:3) Then will the victory be complete. **The Sin-power and all its works** will be finally abolished; and an eternal jubilee gladden the hearts of men, in whom God will be all and in all. (1 Cor. 15:28)” (Elpis Israel Part 1 chapter 5 “The Way to the Tree of Life” pg. 168-169)*

When death is thus abolished from the earth, will the earth be destroyed?

No. The earth will endure forever, filled with the glory of God and His deathless, rejoicing people. (Revelation 22:3-5; Habakkuk 2:14; Psalm 78:69, 2:8 & 37:18; Revelation 11:15)

*Bro. Thomas concludes Elpis Israel with these stirring words: "Such is 'the end, when the Son shall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father that God may be all and in all' (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 21:3). The separation between God and Man began with the transgression of the first Adam; it continues till the end of the 7000 years, when sin and death are utterly eradicated, and harmony again established in this orb of his glorious universe. Earth will have been delivered from **moral and physical evil** by his power administered and displayed through the Lord Jesus Christ, who, though 'subjected to the Father,' will have the pre-eminence over all 'his brethren' through the endless duration of ages. The last resurrection, which is implied in the development of 'the end' (Rev. 20:6), will bring up from the dust the sleeping dead of the previous thousand years. Those who are accounted worthy of eternal life will receive it, and be added to the saints of the 'first resurrection.' Thus a population will have been provided for the earth, which, instead of being destroyed, will be renovated, and all things belonging to it made new (Rev. 21:5). The earth and its inhabitants will be incorruptible, undefiled and unfading. God, according to his word, will have made 'a full end of all nations,' except that of Israel; which will be the sole occupant of the globe, and every Israelite, 'an Israelite indeed,' 'equal to the Elohim,' and crowned with glory and honor throughout all ages. During, the thousand years their nation will consist of three classes, Christ and the saints, righteous Israelites in the flesh, and those who 'die accursed,' but when perfection comes, there will be but one class, and all will be immortal. The purpose of God, in the formation of the earth, will be accomplished; and 'the headstone of the creation will be brought forth with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it. (Zechariah 4:7)'" (Elpis Israel Part 3 'The Second Exodus' pg. 470).*

PART 6

OUR CONDUCT AS SERVANTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Bro. Roberts says in the Bible Reading Companion “While faith turns a sinner into a saint, obedience only will secure a saint’s acceptance at the judgment seat of Christ, and that a disobedient saint will be rejected more decisively than even an unjustified sinner. The rule or standard of obedience is to be found in the commandments of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ speaks very plainly on this subject in the following statements: ‘Ye are my friends if you do whatsoever I command you’, ‘Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded’, ‘If ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them’, ‘Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom...but he that doeth the will of my Father’, ‘Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves’, ‘He that saith I know him and keepeth not his commandments is a liar’. All these are summed up in this saying of his – ‘If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love.’ Before we can keep his commandments, we must know them, and in order to know them to any purpose, we must remember them.’ Bro. Roberts concludes this excellent section with the words ‘What excellent men and women are those who keep all these commandments! Where are they? Lord, increase their number.’”

*It has been our custom at the beginning of each of the parts of the Baptismal Review Book to quote a section from Elpis Israel. Having come to this final part which is so important, we could do no better than to go to a section where bro. Thomas combines two most important scripture which bears directly upon the subject of ‘our conduct as servants of righteousness’. The two passages bro. Thomas combines and then makes a comment upon, are Exodus 34:6-7 and John 14:15. He states “God is not merely an intellectual, He is also a **moral**, being. ‘The Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God’; yet ‘merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations of **them that hate me**; and showing mercy unto thousands of **them that love me, and keep my commandments**’. Such is the name, or character, of God; hence, as all His works must glorify Him, they must redound to (or reflect on) His praise as a merciful and*

*gracious, a just, holy, and truthful, being...there remained but one other (principle), according to which He could officer His kingdom and empire; and at length fill the globe with an order of beings 'equal to the angels'. Upon this principle He has worked from the foundation of the world to this day...He (God) placed him (man) under a law, which required **belief of God's word and obedience**...the principle of life namely, belief of **whatsoever** God saith, and voluntary obedience to His law. This is the principle to which the world is reprobate (or condemned); and to a conformity with which all men are invited, and urged by the motives presented in the scriptures; even all who would inherit the kingdom of God, and afterwards inhabit the earth for ever, on an equal footing with the angels of the universe...**The law of the Lord is perfect, and without a single exception.** There are no 'perhapses', or 'maybes'; it is not 'yea and nay, but Amen in Christ Jesus'. The only way to the kingdom of God, and to a participation in the eternal constitution of the world, is in the path of **a faithful obedience to the law of God.** Now from these testimonies it is plain, that to attain the rank of the sons of God in the eternal world...without respect to age, sex, or condition, must **believe and obey the truth;** for 'without faith it is impossible to please God'. This rule provides for no exceptions; but declares the principle without qualification. If faith then be required, it is manifest that God designed to move men by **motive**, not by necessity —but **by intellectual and moral considerations.**" (Elpis Israel, Part 1, chapter 6, 'The present world in relation to the world to come' pg. 180).*

141. Having come to this knowledge do you think you know all?

No. I realize that I am only a babe in the truth.

How will you continue to grow?

The Apostle Peter says we ought to "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Peter 2:2).

This is true. Salvation depends upon us first understanding and then becoming one with the Divine ideas, principles and affections set forth in His word. This wonderful process you have commenced starting with your belief of the Gospel, is by no means complete. It

takes a lifetime of constant continuance in well doing and a diligent seeking of God in His word to partake of the “Divine nature” mentally and morally so as to be transformed into the image of Christ our Lord.

The Lord Jesus also highlights the essential need of something else in the daily life of His servants, which He says, “men ought always to,” do “and not to faint.” (Romans 2:7; 2 Peter 1:4; Romans 12:1-2; Chapter 8:29; Ephesians 2:10). What is it?

Like the prophet Daniel, we must always pray. (Luke 18:1).

The Lord shows in Luke 17 and 18 that the men or women of faith looking for the coming of Christ witness their faith by constant prayer and that the judgment seat will at last administer the results of faithful prayer. If we have not sought the Lord’s coming in constant prayer, confessing our sins and seeking forgiveness then our sins will not be blotted out.

142. Do you understand the solemn duty acceptance of the Gospel call and response to it through the waters of Baptism, introduces a man or woman?

I understand that one who becomes Christ’s through belief in the Gospel and baptism ceases to be his/her own. One becomes Christ’s property, no longer “servants of sin,” but now, “servants of righteousness.” We are commanded to “yield your members (body) as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness.” We become Christadelphians – brethren or relatives of Christ and our service and chief affections must be directed to Him. (Romans 6:4, 6, 11-13, 17-23; Matthew 12:50).

The Apostle Paul says, “We are not our own for we are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit (i.e. in your mind) which are God’s.” The Apostle Peter says we have not been, “redeemed with corruptible things...But with the precious blood of Christ...” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

This being the case, how can we glorify God in our body and mind?

A servant of God must endeavor to the best of their ability, to live a life of sacrifice, to crucify the flesh with its lusts and affections. To bring our life into conformity with our Lord's teachings and example, to obey Him in everything, to do good to all, especially those of the household of faith and to spread the saving knowledge of the truth whenever opportunity arises. (Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 2:20; 4:19; 5:22-25; 6:10, 14; Matthew 5:14-16).

Bro. Thomas says "A man cannot honor God more than in believing what He promises, and doing what He commands." (Elpis Israel Part 1, chapter 3 "Gods Law and how sin entered into the world").

143. What is a servant of Christ's attitude towards the ways of the present world?

The Apostle John states, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world...For all that is in the world – the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life – is not of the Father, but is of the world." Therefore, we must set our hearts against defiling habits and worldly pleasures such as smoking, drinking, indecent fashions, amusements, entertainments, associations and affiliations; for says James, "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." (1 John 2:15-16; James 4:4).

That is true and is very important. Paul reminds us that the servants of Christ are "the temple of the Living God," and as such he asks, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" He then answers, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord...and I will receive you." (1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17).

The Apostle Paul taking hold of the analogy of a soldier exhorts the believer to "endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." He goes on to say, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." (2 Timothy 2:4).

Can the servant or soldier of Jesus Christ take part in politics or voting?

No. Paul states we are like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, “strangers and sojourners” of this world. We with the Father of the faithful look for “a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” The Lord said, “My kingdom is not of this world,” and Daniel says, “The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will...” We do not know who Yahweh will set up or remove and when God’s kingdom is set up it will be manifested in destructive opposition to every form and system of human government, which kingdoms will become the Lord’s’ and His saints. It would be totally against Christ’s teachings and principles to vote, for the continuance of any of the “powers that be,” though we must be subject to them, pay our taxes and obey their ordinances where these do not conflict with the commandments of Christ. (Hebrews 11:9-10; John 18:36; Daniel 4:17 & 25; Daniel 2:4 & 7:22, 27; 1 Peter 2:13; Romans 13:1-7; Acts 4:19; Matthew 6:24).

Can you join the armed forces or accept non-combatant service (i.e. civilians who are not taking direct part in hostilities but are nonetheless under military control), work under military supervision/police force or take an oath of allegiance?

No. It is against the laws of God as presented to us by Christ for His children to have any connection with the military combatants or non-combatants – civilians who are under military control, police force or take oaths (Matthew 5:21-22; 43-48; 34-37; Romans 12:14-21; 13:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:15).

Note the Berean statement No. 8. MILITARY SERVICE. page 151).

SUING AT LAW AND JURY SERVICE

144. Can we go to law against anyone for any reason or in any way?

No. I believe the principles of the law of Christ, which forbids violence, coercion, resistance to and retaliation for evil, forbid the use of the law or the powers of the law against anyone in any way. To do so in any way is to violate the whole spirit of Christ. (Matthew 5:21-23, 39-48; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; 1 Peter 2:19-23; 1 John 2:6; Romans 12:14-21)

Do you believe you can perform jury service?

Again this is totally inconsistent with the spirit of Christ. Christ commands us, “Judge not, that ye be not judged...” Christ by His own example said to one who asked Him to judge in matters of earthly affairs, “Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?” The spirit of Christ elevates the servant of Christ to the example of the Lord, which is totally at variance with the requirements of the civil and criminal codes. The servant of Christ stands related to the Divine government of the future age, which the Lord, the righteous judge will administer at “His appearing and kingdom.” (Matthew 7:1-5; Luke 12:13-14; James 2:13; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Isaiah 11:3).

THE LOVE OF MONEY

145. Would it be right to buy tickets in Pools, Lotteries and Art Unions etc?

No. Scripture states we should not put our trust in uncertain riches but in Yahweh, nor should we labour to be rich for “the love of money is the root of all evil.” In contrast, the servant of Christ gives to those who ask and relieves the afflicted. (Proverbs 14:21; 23:4; 1 Timothy 6:6-8; Romans 12:3; James 1:27).

INDIVIDUAL OFFENCES

146. What is one’s responsibility when made aware of a brother or sister’s offence?

If you take offence at what another has said or done, you are bound to meet that other brother/sister in private conversation between the two alone. If it is a matter of sin, this private conversation’s aim is for the recovery of the offender. If in such a serious matter the offending brother/sister does not hear you, you must take one or two other brethren to the offending brother/sister in a humble, gentle spirit to convince the brother/sister of their error. If this still fails to bring forth a change then the matter must be placed before the ecclesia. (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1; James 5:19-20).

If the nature of the offence is personal problems, what should be your attitude?

The vast majority of experiences in ecclesial life are not to be made subject to such a process, which should be reserved for sin (known or heard of) which could exclude from the kingdom of God if unrepented of.

We must always remember that “he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy,” and our desire is that we ourselves will on the Day of Judgment before Christ, “be judged by the law of liberty.” The Spirit of Christ made plain in our lives will forgive offenses against us for if we cannot forgive others neither will God for Christ’s sake forgive us. A brother or sister imbibed with Christ’s spirit does not heed all words spoken hastily and practices the habit of returning good for evil, blessing always, cursing never but to seek reconciliation, exercising forgiveness to the uttermost extent as Christ’s commandments require. (James 2:12-13; Matthew 7:1-5, Chapter 6:12-15; 1 Peter 2:21-23; Romans 12:9-21)

HOLY SPIRIT

147. Do you believe we can possess the holy spirit today when baptized or afterwards?

No. The spirit gifts were limited to the first and second centuries through the laying on of hands by the apostles to the Jews and Gentiles. Once these chosen men died, the ability to pass it on passed away with them. (1 Corinthians 12; 13:8-9; Ephesians 3:11-13).

FELLOWSHIP

148. What do you understand by the doctrine of fellowship?

It is a practical doctrine, which first separates men and women from the world by their belief in the truth. The truth is made up of a series of essential doctrines, which must be recognized by all who are in the truth. It then associates those separated from the world in obedience to Christ’s commands in fellowship with the Father and with His Son and those of like mind in union. (1 John 1:3-7; John 12:46; 2 Corinthians 6:17; Galatians 3:28; Hebrews 10:25).

Would you be prepared to fellowship someone who though he believes the same doctrines is nonetheless prepared to fellowship those who do not?

No. It is the duty of the friends of the truth to uphold it as a basis of union among themselves, firstly by refusing to receive those who deny any of the truth's essential elements and secondly, to refuse those who though they may believe the truth themselves are willing to ignore its denial among those in fellowship. (James 3:17; 2 Peter 2: 1-2; 2 John 10-11).

This is most important to understand. It was the failure of the first and second century ecclesias to uphold the doctrine of fellowship, which led to the apostasy. It is the reason why Berean Christadelphian ecclesias do not fellowship other Christians or even other Christadelphian groups because of open error amongst them or in their denial of this vital doctrine, which acts as a wall around the truth to defend it against being lost. (Acts 20:28-30; 2 Timothy 4:1-4; Jude 3-4, 10-13; Revelation 2:14-16, 20).

Please refer to the article written by Bro. Roberts on Fellowship with particular reference to section titled 'The Second Series' page 157) items 5-10.

Bro Roberts makes the important case for a written basis of fellowship. He says "Examination implies a recognized basis of fellowship; that is, a definition of the doctrines that are recognized as the truth. Examination would be objectless if there were no such definition recognized, whether written or understood. It is necessary to have the truth defined. It is not enough for an applicant to say he believes the Bible, or the testimony of the apostles. Multitudes would profess belief in this form, who we know are ignorant or unbelieving of the truth, and, therefore, unqualified for union with the brethren of Christ. The question for applicants is, do they believe what the Scriptures teach? To test this, the teaching requires definition. This definition agreed to, forms the basis of fellowship among believers...A mere understanding as to the definitions of truth to be received is apt to become dim and indefinite, and the way is open to the gradual setting in of corruption. So long as it is understood that the written definition is not an authority, but merely the written expression of our identical convictions, there is not only

no disadvantage, but the reverse, in reducing the faith to a form that shuts the door against misunderstanding.” (Ecclesial Guide No. 34)

Such a basis of faith is found in A Statement of the Faith forming our Basis of fellowship (pg. 127) Doctrines to be rejected (pg. 130), the Commandments of Christ (pg. 132), and a Restatement (pg. 141) which has been necessary as a result of compromise and wrong doctrine of other Christadelphian fellowships.

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

Bro. Roberts writing in the Ecclesial Guide reminds us of the importance of Christ’s command. He says “It is a law of the house that each brother and sister must meet at the table of the Lord on the first day of the week for the breaking of bread. Nothing but denial of the truth in the assembly or overt disobedience of the Lord’s commandments among them, can justify a brother or sister in absenting himself or herself from the breaking of bread. Such will deceive themselves if they think a private breaking of bread will be accepted in lieu of breaking bread with the assembly. It is the latter the Lord has required of us, and it is the latter we must render. What is true of one is true of more. Nothing but rejection of the faith or the law of Christ by the assembly can justify the formation of a separate assembly...” (Ecclesial Guide No. 39). Note the following passages which make allusion to the apostles’ example of when the brethren and sisters came together as an ecclesia to break bread (1 Corinthians 11:20-26; 16:2; Matthew 28:1; John 20:19; Acts 20:7; Acts 2:42).

DIVORCE, REMARRIAGE, MARRIAGE OUTSIDE THE TRUTH AND POLYGAMY

149. In relation to brethren and sisters of Christ, what is the basic principle governing the marriage bond?

“What God has joined together let not man put asunder,” is the basic principle governing the marriage bond. The Lord shows that divorce is a complete departure from Yahweh’s will as set forth at the beginning in the creation of man and woman. The Lord Jesus

elevates this Divine principle in the lives of His disciples and forbids remarriage after divorce. (Matthew 19:4-6; Chapter 5:31-32; Chapter 19:8-9)

That is true. The Berean Christadelphians believe that the two evils of divorce and remarriage are not only contrary to Divine command, but are in direct violation of the deep principles of the mind of Christ. (Matthew 5; Chapter 7:1-5)

What about marriage outside of the truth?

Marriage outside of the truth is forbidden both by general principles of scripture and by express command, Paul states that brethren and sisters ought to marry “only in the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 7:39)

*Bro. Roberts writing in the Ecclesial Guide states: “The truth may come to man or woman in the married state; in that case, the man or woman is not to leave the unbelieving wife or husband if there be willingness on the part of the partner to continue the association. This Paul plainly lays down (1 Corinthians 7:12-13). But if the unbelievers depart, he says, ‘Let them depart: a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: God hath called us to peace.’ **This departing, however, does not release from the matrimonial bond. ‘Remain unmarried’ is, in such a case, the apostolic command – verse 11”.***

May I ask in the light of Paul’s inspired words what if one’s wife/husband is being unrepentantly unfaithful?

*It is clear that the apostle Paul has the Lord’s **basic principle governing the marriage bond** (Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-12; Mark 10:2-12 & Luke 16:18) in mind for he even prohibits **separation**. He cannot have in mind the exceptional circumstance of unrepentant adultery or “porneia,” (Matthew 5:32 & 19:9) for separation would be the sad consequence of unrepentant sin in this case. Yahweh himself separated and for a time put away his erring wife for the sin of unrepentant fornication or harlotry. (Ezekiel 16; Jeremiah 3) May we however remind you of Bro. Robert’s words of the Christadelphian*

1882, “There is nothing in the law of Christ to interfere with the remarriage of a man and woman who have been previously divorced from one another. The law of Christ rather favors every kind of reconciliation and triumph of peace.”

I just want to make a quick comment on the subject of **Polygamy**. As the truth is being preached all over the world via the internet the truth may find some interested friends in such circumstances. As a general comment, once an interested friend has come to a full understanding of the gospel they will understand that polygamy was a custom dating from pre-Mosaic times. The law found it in existence and made it subject to regulation. But we are not, therefore, to infer for it a divine character. The law similarly regulated divorce: but Jesus told the Jews it was because of the hardness of their hearts that they were suffered to put away their wives (Matt. 19:8); that “from the beginning, it was not so.” On the same principle, polygamy was tolerated without being expressly sanctioned. **“From the beginning, it was not so.”** Adam had but one Eve; Noah, but one wife. “And wherefore one?” enquires the prophet Malachi on this subject: “That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore, take heed to your spirit and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.” - (Malachi. 2:15.) Paul distinctly recognizes “one wife” in his general allusions to marriage and in his comparison of the ecclesia to the spouse of Christ. - (Titus 1:6; Ephesians 5:31, 33; 1 Corinthians 7:2, 12–27.) Bro. Roberts in an article 1875 Christadelphian says of the mortal population during the kingdom age, “Now as the law of the future age will be the divine law proceeding from Zion (Is. 2:3), we may be quite sure that a provisional, accidental, abnormal, and hurtful institution like polygamy will find no place.”

If one finds the Truth in a country that permits polygamy and is himself in an existing polygamous relationship, we believe Paul’s governing principle of 1 Corinthians 7 is a guide to how circumstances should be dealt with. “If not, as God has divided to each, each as the Lord has called, so let him walk. So I command in the ecclesias.” (v.17); “Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called.” (v. 20); “Brethren let every man, wherein he is called, therein **abide with God.**” (v. 24). What Paul means by this is don’t change your circumstances and if you do so, only for the purpose of being able to better serve Christ, but ensure in this process, we do not break “the commandments of

God.” (v.19). “But,” by “faith wrought through love” (Galatians 5:6) obey God’s commands even if that means we have to suffer, as Paul suffered with Christ, in the sure hope “that we may be also glorified together”. (Romans 8:17). “Therein abide with God.” The Lords words in Matthew 19 and his deliberate **emphasis on God’s purpose at the beginning** strongly instructs that any desire to add further wives to an existing marital arrangement would not only be contrary to Paul’s inspired general advice, but far more importantly would stand in stark contrast to the Lords understanding of what ought to govern the **spirit** of all earnest men who desire fellowship with God.

150. I know you have mentioned this but we cannot emphasize enough the importance of daily prayer and the reading of the Holy Scriptures- You understand this?

Yes I do.

*Bro. Roberts reminds us in the Bible Reading Companion that, “Salvation depends upon the assimilation of the mind to the Divine ideas, principles and affections, exhibited in the Scriptures...Spiritual-mindedness can only grow with a man/woman by daily intercourse with that mind, there unfolded...The infallible advice then to every man and woman anxious about their salvation is **read the scriptures daily.**”*

151. The Lord Jesus said “No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God” and again “Whosoever does not bear his own cross, and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’” Have you counted the cost of discipleship, are you prepared to become a Christadelphian or a brother/sister of Christ and to live your life in accordance to his teachings? (Note: Luke 14:25-35; Luke 9:62)

Yes! I thank Yahweh for having learned the truth in these dark days and I shall rejoice to offer myself as a living sacrifice unto the Lord that I may through Yahweh’s grace, be accepted in the day of Christ and enter into His everlasting joy.

I believe you have given a good confession. Another brother is present who may ask you any question that he feels I have not covered.

The Apostle Peter when convinced that those of the house of Cornelius truly believed in the Lord Jesus Christ commanded them to be baptized into His sin-covering Name. We are convinced that you believe these great and precious truths and so we ask the applicant to please prepare him/herself for baptism.

AT BAPTISM

The Presider asks:

Can any forbid the waters of baptism to the candidate?

We come now to this wonderful occasion and use the baptismal formula commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ to His apostles. “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:19) which Dr. Thomas so beautifully explains, that we are baptized into the Name of the Father (Yahweh) Who was manifested in His Son, (the Lord Jesus Christ), by the power of the Holy Spirit¹.

What is your full name?

Do you believe the things concerning the kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ?

Yes I do with all my heart.

Upon this public confession of your faith, you are baptized, by God’s commandment, into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, for the remission of your sins.

**“The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face to shine upon
you and be gracious to you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon
you and give you peace.”
(Numbers 6:24-26)**

¹ Refer to Eureka Vol. 1 Section II No. 2 “Deity manifested in Flesh” (Red edition pg. 85)

A STATEMENT OF THE FAITH Forming Our Basis of Fellowship

THE FOUNDATION.—That the book currently known as the Bible, consisting of the Scriptures of Moses, the prophets, and the apostles, is the only source of knowledge concerning God and His purposes at present extant or available in the earth, and that the same were wholly given by inspiration of God in the writers, and are consequently without error in all parts of them, except such as may be due to errors of transcription or translation (2 Tim. 3:16; 1 Cor. 2:13; Heb. 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 Cor. 14:37; Neh. 9:30; John 10:35).

TRUTH TO BE RECEIVED

I.—That the only true God is He who was revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by angelic visitation and vision, and to Moses at the flaming bush (unconsumed) and at Sinai, and who manifested Himself in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the supreme self-existent Deity, the ONE FATHER, dwelling in unapproachable light, yet everywhere present by His Spirit, which is a unity with His person in heaven. He hath, out of His own underived energy, created heaven and earth, and all that in them is (Isa. 40:13-25; 43:10-12; 44:6-8; 45:5; 46:9-10; Job 38, 39, and 40; Deut. 6:1-4; Mark 12:29-32; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; Nehem. 9:6; Job 26:13; Psa. 124:8; 146:6; 148:5; Isa. 40:25-27; Jer. 10:12-13; 27:5; 32:17-25; 51:15; Acts 14:15; 17:24; 1 Chron. 29:11-14; Psa. 62:11; 145:3; Isa. 26:4; 40:26; Job 9:4; 36:5; Psa. 92:5; 104:24; 147:4-5; Isa. 28:29; Rom. 16:27; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Chron. 16:9; Job 28:24; 34:21; Psa. 33:13-14; 44:21; 94:9; 139:7-12; Prov. 15:3; Jer. 23:24; 32:19; Amos 9:2-3; Acts 17:27-28; Psa. 123:1; 1 Kings 8:30-39, 43, 49; Matt. 6:9; 1 Tim. 6:15-16; 1:17).

II.—That Jesus of Nazareth was the Son of God, begotten of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, without the intervention of man, and afterwards anointed with the same spirit, without measure, at his baptism (Mat. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:16; Acts 2:22-24, 36; Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; Gal. 4:4; Isa. 7:14; Matt. 3:16-17; Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 61:1; John 3:34; 7:16; 8:26-28; 14:10-24).

III.—That the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth on the earth was necessitated by the position and state into which the human race had been brought by the circumstances connected with the first man (1 Cor. 15:21-22; Rom. 5:12-19; Gen. 3:19; 2 Cor. 5:19-21).

IV.—That the first man Adam, whom God created out of the dust of the ground as a living soul, or natural body of life, "very good" in kind and condition, and placed him under a law through which the continuance of life was contingent on obedience (Gen. 2:7; 18:27; Job 4:19; 33:6; 1 Cor. 15:46-49; Gen. 2:17).

V.—That Adam broke this law, and was adjudged unworthy of immortality, and sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken—a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity (Gen. 3:15-19, 22-23; 2 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 7:24; 2 Cor. 5:2-4; Rom. 7:18-23; Gal. 5:16-17; Rom. 6:12; 7:21; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22; Psa. 51:5; Job 14:4).

VI.—That God, in His kindness, conceived a plan of restoration which, without setting aside His just and necessary law of sin and death, should ultimately rescue the race from

destruction, and people the earth with sinless immortals (Rev. 21:4; John 3:16; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 John 2:25; 2 Tim. 1:1; Titus 1:2; Rom. 3:26; John 1:29).

VII.—That He inaugurated this plan by making promises to Adam, Abraham, and David, and afterwards elaborated it in greater detail through the prophets (Gen. 3:15; 21:18; Psa. 89:34-37; 33:5; Hosea 13:14; Isa. 25:7-9; 51:1-8; Jer. 23:5).

VIII.—That these promises had reference to Jesus Christ, who was to be raised up in the condemned line of Abraham and David, and who, though wearing their condemned nature, was to obtain a title to resurrection by perfect obedience, and, by dying, abrogate the law of condemnation for himself and all who should believe and obey him (1 Cor. 15:45; Heb. 2:14-16; Rom. 1:3; Heb. 5:8-9; 1:9; Rom. 5:19-21; Gal. 4:4-5; Rom. 8:3-4; Heb. 2:15; 9:26; Gal. 1:4; Heb. 7:27; 5:3-7; 2:17; Rom. 6:10; 6:9; Acts 13:34-37; Rev. 1:18; John 5:21-22, 26-27; 14:3; Rev. 2:7; 3:21; Matt. 25:21; Heb. 5:9; Mark 16:16; Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 3:22; Psa. 2:6-9; Dan. 7:13-14; Rev. 11:15; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 14:9; Eph. 1:9-10).

IX.—That it was this mission that necessitated the miraculous begetting of Christ of a human mother, enabling him to bear our condemnation, and, at the same time, to be a sinless bearer thereof, and, therefore, one who could rise after suffering the death required by the righteousness of God (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; Gal. 4:4; Isa. 7:14; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 2:14-17; 4:15).

X.— That being so begotten of God, and inhabited and used by God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, Jesus was Emmanuel, God with us, God manifest in the flesh—yet was, during his natural life, of like nature with mortal man, being made of a woman, of the house and lineage of David, and therefore a sufferer, in the days of his flesh, from all the effects that came by Adam's transgression, including the death that passed upon all men, which he shared by partaking of their physical nature (Matt. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 2:14; Gal. 4:4; Heb. 2:17).

XI.—That the message he delivered from God to his kinsmen the Jews, was a call to repentance from every evil work, the assertion of his divine sonship and Jewish kingship; and the proclamation of the glad tidings that God would restore their kingdom through him, and accomplish all things written in the prophets (Mark 1:15; Matt. 4:17; 5:20-48; John 10:36; 9:35; 11:27; 19:21; 1:49; Matt. 27:11-42; John 10:24-25; Matt. 19:28; 21:42-43; 23:38-39; 25:14 to the end; Luke 4:43; 13:27-30; 19:11-27; 22:28-30; Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:44).

XII.—That for delivering this message, he was put to death by the Jews and Romans who were, however, but instruments in the hands of God, for the doing of that which He had determined before to be done—namely, the condemnation of sin in the flesh, through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all, as a propitiation to declare the righteousness of God, as a basis for the remission of sins. All who approach God through this crucified, but risen, representative of Adam's disobedient race, are forgiven. Therefore, by a figure, his blood cleanseth from sin (Luke 19:47; 20:1-26-48; John 11:45-53; Acts 10:38-39; 13:26-29; 4:27-28; Rom. 8:3; Heb. 10:10; Rom. 3:25; Acts 13:38; 1 John 1:7; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Pet. 3:18; 2:24; Heb. 9:14; 7:27; 9:26-29; Gal. 1:4; Rom. 3:25; 15:8; Gal. 3:21-22; 2:21; 4:4-5; Heb. 9:15; Luke 22:20; 24:26, 46-47; Matt. 26:28).

XIII.—That on the third day, God raised him from the dead, and exalted him to the heavens as priestly mediator between God and man, in the process of gathering from among them a people who should be saved by the belief and obedience of the Truth (1 Cor. 15:4; Acts 10:40; 13:30-37; 2:24-27; 4:27).

XIV.—That he is a priest over his own house only, and does not intercede for the world, or for professors who are abandoned to disobedience. That he makes intercession for his erring brethren, if they confess and forsake their sins (Luke 24:51; Eph. 1:20; Acts 5:31; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 8:1; Acts 15:14; 13:39; Heb. 4:14-15; John 17:9; Heb. 10:26; 1 John 2:1; Prov. 28:13).

XV.—That he sent forth apostles to proclaim salvation through him, as the only Name given under heaven whereby men may be saved (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19-20; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 26:16-18; 4:12).

XVI.—That the way to obtain this salvation is to believe the Gospel they preached, and to take on the Name and service of Christ, by being thereupon immersed in water, and continuing patiently in the observance of all things he has commanded, none being recognized as his friends except those who do what he has commanded (Acts 13:48; 16:31; Mark 16:16; Rom. 1:16; Acts 2:38, 41; 10:47; 8:12; Gal. 3:27-29; Rom. 6:3-5; 2:7; Matt. 28:20; John 15:14).

XVII.—That the Gospel consists of "The things concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ." (Acts 8:12; 19:8, 10, 20; 28:30-31).

XVIII.—That "the things of the Kingdom of God" are the facts testified concerning the Kingdom of God in the writings of the prophets and apostles, and definable as in the next 12 paragraphs.

XIX.—That God will set up a Kingdom in the earth, which will overthrow all others, and change them into "the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ" (Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14; Rev. 11:15; Isa. 32:1, 16; 2:3-4; 11:9-10).

XX.—That for this purpose God will send Jesus Christ personally to the earth at the close of the times of the Gentiles (Acts 3:20-21; Psa. 102:16,21; 2 Tim. 4:1; Acts 1:9, 11; Dan. 7:13).

XXI.—That the Kingdom which he will establish will be the Kingdom of Israel restored, in the territory it formerly occupied, namely, the land bequeathed for an everlasting possession to Abraham and his Seed (the Christ) by covenant (Mic. 4:6-8; Amos 9:11, 15; Eze. 37:21-22; Jer. 23:3, 8; Gen. 13:14-17; Heb. 11:8-9; Gal. 3:16; Lev. 26:42; Mic. 7:20).

XXII.—That this restoration of the Kingdom again to Israel will involve the ingathering of God's chosen but scattered nation, the Jews; their reinstatement in the land of their fathers, when it shall have been reclaimed from "the desolation of many generations"; the building again of Jerusalem to become "the throne of the Lord" and the metropolis of the whole earth (Isa. 11:12; Jer. 31:10; Zec. 8:8; Eze. 36:34-36; Isa. 51:3; 60:15; 62:4; Jer. 3:17; Mic. 4:7-8; Joel 3:17; Isa. 24:23).

XXIII.—That the governing body of the Kingdom so established will be the brethren of Christ, of all generations, developed by resurrection and change, and constituting, with Christ as their head, the collective "Seed of Abraham," in whom all nations will be blessed, and

comprising "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets," and all in their age of like faithfulness (Dan. 12:2; Luke 13:28; Rev. 11:18; 1 Thess. 4:15-17; John 5:28-29; 6:39-40; Luke 14:14; Matt. 25:34, 46).

XXIV.—That at the appearing of Christ prior to the establishment of the Kingdom, the responsible (namely, those who know the revealed will of God, and have been called upon to submit to it), dead and living—obedient and disobedient—will be summoned before his judgment seat "to be judged according to their works," and "receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Rom. 2:5-6, 16; 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rev. 11:18).

XXV.—That the unfaithful will be consigned to shame and "the second death," and the faithful, invested with immortality, and exalted to reign with Jesus as joint heirs of the kingdom, co-possessors of the earth, and joint administrators of God's authority among men in everything (Matt. 7:26; 8:12; 25:20-30; Dan. 12:2; Gal. 6:8; 5:21; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 10:26-31; 2 Pet. 2:12; Rev. 21:8; Mal. 4:1; Psa. 37:30-38; Prov. 10:25-29; 1 Cor. 15:51-55; 2 Cor. 5:1-4; James 1:12; Rom. 2:7; John 10:28; Matt. 5:5; Psa. 37:9, 22, 29; Rev. 5:9; Dan. 7:27; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Pet. 1:11; Rev. 3:21; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:10; Psa. 49:7-9; Luke 22:29-30).

XXVI.—That the Kingdom of God thus constituted, will continue a thousand years, during which sin and death will continue among the earth's subject inhabitants, though in a much milder degree than now (Rev. 20:4-9; 11:15; Isa. 65:20; Eze. 44:22, 25; 1 Cor. 15:24-28).

XXVII.—That a law will be established which shall go forth to the nations for their "instruction in righteousness," resulting in the abolition of war to the ends of the earth, and the "filling of the earth with the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea" (Mic. 4:2; Isa. 42:4; 11:1-10; 2:4; Hab. 2:14).

XXVIII.—That the mission of the Kingdom will be to subdue all enemies, and finally death itself, by opening up the way of life to the nations, which they will enter by faith, during the thousand years, and (in reality) at their close (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 21:4; 20:12-15; Isa. 25:6-8).

XXIX.—That at the close of the thousand years, there will be a general resurrection and judgment, resulting in the final extinction of the wicked, and the immortalization of those who shall have established their title (under the grace of God) to eternal life during the thousand years (Rev. 20:11-15; 1 Cor. 15:24).

XXX.—That the government will then be delivered up by Jesus to the Father, Who will manifest Himself as the "All-in-All; sin and death having been taken out of the way; and the race completely restored to the friendship of the Deity (1 Cor. 15: 28).

DOCTRINES TO BE REJECTED

1.—That the Bible is only partly the work of inspiration—or if wholly so, contains errors which inspiration has allowed.

2.—That God is three persons.

- 3.—That the Son of God was co-eternal with the Father.
- 4.—That Christ was born with a "free life."
- 5.—That Christ's nature was immaculate.
- 6.—That the Holy Spirit is a person distinct from the Father.
- 7.—That man has an immortal soul.
- 8.— That man consciously exists in death.
- 9.—That the wicked will suffer eternal torture in hell.
- 10.—That the righteous will ascend to the kingdoms beyond the skies when they die.
- 11.—That the devil is a supernatural personal being.
- 12.—That the Kingdom of God is "the church."
- 13.—That the Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ merely.
- 14.—That Christ will not come till the close of the thousand years.
- 15.—That the tribunal of Christ, when he comes, is not for the judgment of saints, but merely to divide among them different degrees of reward.
- 16.—That the resurrection is confined to the faithful.
- 17.—That the dead rise in an immortal state.
- 18.—That the subject-nations of the thousand years are immortal.
- 19.—That the Law of Moses is binding on believers of the Gospel.
- 20.—That the observance of Sunday is a matter of duty.
- 21.—That baby-sprinkling is a doctrine of Scripture.
- 22.—That "heathens," idiots, pagans, and very young children will be saved.
- 23.—That man can be saved by morality or sincerity, without the Gospel.
- 24.—That the Gospel alone will save, without the obedience of Christ's commandments.
- 25.—That a man cannot believe without possessing the Spirit of God.
- 26.—That men are predestined to salvation unconditionally.
- 27.—That there is no sin in the flesh.
- 28.— That Joseph was the actual father of Jesus.
- 29.—That the earth will be destroyed.

- 30.—That baptism is not necessary to salvation.
- 31.—That a knowledge of the Truth is not necessary to make baptism valid.
- 32.—That some meats are to be refused on the score of uncleanness.
- 33.—That the English are the ten tribes of Israel, whose prosperity is a fulfillment of the promises made concerning Ephraim.
- 34.—That marriage with an unbeliever is lawful.
- 35.—That we are at liberty to serve in the army, or as police constables, take part in politics, or recover debts by legal coercion.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF CHRIST

The Commandments of Christ are the most practically important part of our Basis of Fellowship. Unless we are striving at all times to keep them before our minds, and to comply with them, we are no part of the Body of Christ. Here are the "works" whereby our "faith" is manifested as alive or dead. Let us meditate on them constantly, and make them the foundation of all our actions.

-
- 1.—Love your enemies: do good to them that hate you (Matt. 5:44).
 - 2.—Resist not evil; if a man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also (Matt. 5:39, 40).
 - 3.—Avenge not yourselves: rather give place unto wrath: and suffer yourselves to be defrauded (Rom. 12:18-19; 1 Cor. 6:7).
 - 4.—If a man take away thy goods, ask them not again (Luke 6:29-30).
 - 5.—Agree with your adversary quickly, submitting even to wrong for the sake of peace (Matt. 5:25; 1 Cor. 6:7).
 - 6.—Labour not to be rich: be ready to every good work, give to those who ask: relieve the afflicted (1 Tim. 6:8; Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:16; James 1:27; Titus 3:1).
 - 7.—Do not your alms before men: let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth (Matt. 6:1-4).
 - 8.—Recompense to no man evil for evil: overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:17, 21).
 - 9.—Bless them that curse you; let no cursing come out of your mouth (Matt. 5:44; Rom. 12:14).
 - 10.—Render not evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing (1 Pet. 3:9).

- 11.—Pray for them that despitefully use you and afflict you (Matt. 5:44).
- 12.—Grudge not; judge not; complain not; condemn not (James 5:9; Matt. 7:1).
- 13.—Put away anger, wrath, bitterness, and all evil speaking (Eph. 4:31; 1 Pet. 2:1).
- 14.—Confess your faults one to another (James 5:16).
- 15.—Be not conformed to this world: love not the world (Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15).
- 16.—Deny any ungodliness and worldly lusts. If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off (Titus 2:12; Matt. 5:30).
- 17.—Servants, be faithful, even to bad masters (Eph. 6:5-8).
- 18.—Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate (Rom. 12:16).
- 19.—Owe no man anything (Rom. 13:7-8).
- 20.—In case of sin (known or heard of), speak not of it to others, but tell the offending brother of the matter between thee and him alone, with a view to recovery (Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1).
- 21.—Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart (Matt. 22:37).
- 22.—Pray always; pray with brevity and simplicity; pray secretly (Luke 18:1; Matt. 6:6-7).
- 23.—In everything give thanks to God and recognize Him in all your ways (Eph. 5:20; Prov. 3:6).
- 24.—As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also so to them (Matt. 7:12).
- 25.—Take Christ for an example and follow in his steps (1 Pet. 2:21).
- 26.—Let Christ dwell in your heart by faith (Eph. 3:17).
- 27.—Esteem Christ more highly than all earthly things: yea, than your own life (Luke 14:26).
- 28.—Confess Christ freely before men (Luke 12:8).
- 29.—Beware lest the cares of life or the allurements of pleasure weaken his hold on your heart (Luke 21:34-36; Matt. 24:44).
- 30.—Love thy neighbour as thyself (Matt. 22:39).
- 31.—Exercise lordship over no one (Matt. 23:10-12).
- 32.—Seek not your own welfare only, nor bear your own burdens merely, but have regard to those of others (Phil. 2:4; Gal. 6:2).
- 33.—Let your light shine before men: hold forth the Word of Life. Do good to all men as ye have opportunity (Matt. 5:16; Phil 2:16; Gal. 6:10).

- 34.—Be blameless and harmless, as the sons of God in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15).
- 35.—Be gentle, meek, kind-hearted, compassionate, merciful, forgiving (2 Tim. 2:24; Titus 2:2; Eph. 4:32).
- 36.—Be sober, grave, sincere, temperate (Phil. 4:5; 1 Pet. 1:13; 5:8).
- 37.—Speak the truth every man with his neighbour: put away all lying (Eph. 4:25).
- 38.—Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men (Col. 3:23).
- 39.—Be watchful, vigilant, brave, joyful, courteous, and manly (1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:6-10).
- 40.—Be clothed with humility: be patient toward all (Col. 3:12; Rom. 12:12; 1 Pet. 5:5).
- 41.—Follow peace with all men (Heb. 12:14).
- 42.—Sympathize in the joys and sorrows of others (Rom. 12:15).
- 43.—Follow after whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely of good report, virtuous, and praiseful (Phil. 4:8).
- 44.—Refrain utterly from adultery, fornication, uncleanness, drunkenness, covetousness, wrath, strife, sedition, hatred, emulation, boasting, vainglory, envy, jesting and foolish talking (Eph. 5:3-4; Gal. 5:19-21).
- 45.—Whatever you do, consider the effect of your action on the honour of God's Name among men. Do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 3:17; 10:31).
- 46.—Reckon yourselves dead to all manner of sin. Henceforth live not to yourselves, but to him who died for you, and rose again (Rom. 6:11; 2 Cor. 5:15).
- 47.—Be zealous of good works, always abounding in the work of the Lord, wearying not in well-doing (Titus 2:14; Gal. 6:9).
- 48.—Speak evil of no man (Titus 3:2).
- 49.—Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly (Col. 3:16).
- 50.—Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt (Col. 3:8; 4:6).
- 51.—Obey rulers: submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake (Titus 3:1).
- 52.—Be holy in all manner of conversation (1 Pet. 1:15-16).
- 53.—Give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully (1 Tim. 5:14).

THE COMMON CONSTITUTION OF BEREAN CHRISTADELPHIAN ECCLESIAS

- 1.— That we are a Christadelphian ecclesia.
- 2.— That we accept and profess the doctrines and precepts of Christ, as taught in the apostolic writings, and defined (positively and negatively) in the annexed Statement of Faith and Epitome of the Commandments of Christ.
- 3.—That we recognize as brethren, and welcome to our fellowship, all who have been immersed (by whomsoever) after their acceptance of the same doctrines and precepts.
- 4.—That we meet on the morning of every first day of the week for the breaking of bread, worship, and exhortation; and in the evening, for the exhibition of the truth in its invitation to the alien to become fellow-heirs of the Hope of the Gospel; also on the evening of one day in the week, for the study of the Holy Oracles, when the meeting is not otherwise engaged; also that we meet once a quarter to receive and consider the reports of the serving brethren, and at special meetings as may be required: the third quarterly meeting in the year to be also the annual meeting for any annual business that may require to be transacted.
- 5.—That we mutually engage to submit to the order and arrangements preferred by the greater number.
- 6.—That brethren holding offices among us shall be described as "serving brethren;" and that the denomination of each particular office shall have "brother" or "brethren" associated with it (for the sake of preserving the family character of our assembly in harmony with the mind of Christ).
- 7.—That in the appointment of these, we shall have in view, and strive always to follow, the directions given by Paul as to the qualifications that ought to exist.
- 8.—That our serving brethren shall consist of _ arranging brethren, and _ presiding brethren, a recording brother, an assistant recording brother, a finance brother, assistant finance brother, and such other brethren as the arranging brethren shall appoint to attend to various matters of detail, such as door-keeping, visiting, examining, etc. (See Rule 26.)
- 9.—That the arranging brethren, presiding brethren, recording brother, assisting recording brother, finance brother, and assistant finance brother shall be elected every three years, in accordance with Rule 11.
- 10.—That no brother shall be eligible for appointment as arranging brother, presiding brother, speaking brother, recording brother, assistant recording brother, finance brother, or assistant finance brother, for the first two years after his immersion (or resumption of fellowship, in case he has been separated), except by the unanimous consent of the arranging brethren; but any qualified brother may be elected for any number of times, who has not lost the Scriptural qualifications.
- 11.—That the mode of election shall be by ballot, before which there must be a nomination in writing, signed by _ brethren, and handed to the Recording brother, to be read by him at the week-night meeting fourteen days before the annual meeting. There shall be no canvassing for

votes. Votes obtained by canvassing shall be invalid. Nomination shall not be necessary in the case of retiring brethren, whose previous service shall stand in lieu of nomination. All names nominated (together with the names of retiring brethren) shall be submitted in a printed voting form to the brethren and sisters, who shall be required to put a mark before the name of each brother whom they desire to be appointed. Election to take place in the case of those having the highest number of votes. In all elections of serving brethren by vote, it shall require the voice of at least one-third of those voting before a brother be considered appointed to any office. In case of failure of election in any case from the application of this rule, or from any other cause, the arranging brethren shall have power to fill the vacancy.

12.—That the function of the arranging brethren shall be to arrange for the conduct of the meetings, fix speaking appointments, and decide all matters affecting the working of the ecclesia.

13.—That the arranging brethren shall meet once a quarter, namely, on the Monday previous to the quarterly business meeting, but they may meet as much oftener as necessary. Any brother desiring a special meeting of the arranging brethren to be held during the quarter shall be at liberty to convene such a meeting by handing a written request to the recording brother, signed by brethren, specifying the nature of the business requiring attention. (This is not to apply to cases of personal accusation, unless accusers have first taken the course prescribed by Christ.)

14.—All meetings shall be announced beforehand to the ecclesia, except where the nature of the business does not admit of delay; and that the brethren and sisters shall be at liberty to attend and take part in the deliberations that may take place, but not to vote in the decisions that may be taken.

15.—That their decisions shall have immediate effect, but may be reversed by the ecclesia at the quarterly meeting, only, however, in so far as they affect the future.

16.—That the arranging brethren shall (by the Recording brother) read the minutes of their proceedings every three months, to the brethren and sisters in quarterly meetings assembled, for confirmation or otherwise.

17.—That the recording brother, assistant recording brother, finance brother, and assistant finance brother, shall attend all the meetings of the arranging brethren, and have power to vote in their decisions.

18.—That the presiding brethren shall do duty week by week in alphabetical rotation, or provide substitutes from their own number: the brother presiding on Sunday to preside at all meetings during the subsequent week, except at tea-meetings and business meetings, for which the arranging brethren shall make special appointments; the duties of the presiding brethren to be limited to the conduct of the assemblies.

19.—That the recording brethren shall (a), keep a record of all the proceedings of the ecclesia; (b), receive and communicate all applications intended for the ecclesia or the arranging brethren; (c), remind the ecclesia of meetings to be held, or other matters affecting them; and presiding brethren and speakers of their several appointments; (d), take note of all moneys received by the finance brother, and (e), generally keep the working machinery of the ecclesia in motion.

20.—That the finance brother shall receive and disburse the funds accruing in any way to the ecclesia, with the co-operation and cognizance of the recording brother, and shall report quarterly to the ecclesia for confirmation.

21.—That the following order be observed at our Sunday meetings—MORNING: 1, singing; 2, reading two of the Scripture selections for the day according to the *Bible Companion*; 3, brief fraternal announcements; 4, prayer; 5, singing; 6, exhortation (not to exceed half-an-hour); 7, breaking bread, and drinking wine, after thanks for each; 8, collection; 9, singing; 10, prayer. EVENING: 1, singing; 2, reading; 3, prayer; 4, singing; 5, lecture; 6, singing; 7, prayer.

22.—That no business be introduced for consideration at any Sunday meeting, and that the doors always be closed during singing, Scripture reading, or prayer.

23.—That special meetings of the ecclesia may be convened by the recording brother at the request of the arranging brethren; or, by the written requisition of _ brethren, whose requisition, however, before it shall have full force, shall be submitted, without discussion to the vote of the ordinary week-night meeting of the ecclesia the next ensuing Thursday. If the vote is against it, the meeting shall not be held. At all such meetings it shall require a _ part of the ecclesia to form a quorum.

24.—That all applications for immersion or admission to fellowship must be reported to the Recording brother, whose duty it shall be to announce the same to the ecclesia at the first Sunday morning meeting thereafter, and to make arrangements for the necessary examination. The result of such examination to be announced on the following Sunday; after which, in the absence of objection, immersion or admission to fellowship to take place. This rule not to apply to persons from a distance, passing on.

25.—That in each district, a suitable number of visiting brethren and sisters, nominated preferably by the brethren and sisters residing in the district shall be appointed by the arranging brethren to communicate at least once a month with brethren and sisters absent from the table, with a view to ascertain the cause of absence, and administering comfort in cases of sickness, and in cases of need. Such visiting brethren and sisters to report to the recording brother anything coming under their notice which the ecclesia ought to know.

26.—That a convenient number of brethren and sisters be appointed by the arranging brethren to confer, in conjunction with the recording brother, with persons applying to be immersed or admitted into the ecclesia, with a view to ascertaining if the requisite qualifications exist.

27.—That all funds and property belonging to the ecclesia, shall legally vest in the arranging brethren for the time being, as trustees for the general body, to whose direction they shall at all times be subject as to the disposal thereof.

28.—That any brother holding any office in the ecclesia, may be removed at any time by the vote of the majority of the whole ecclesia.

29.—Behaviour unworthy of the Name of Christ (see 1 Tim. 3.; Titus 1.), shall, when proved against any brother, to the satisfaction of the arranging brethren, have the effect of cancelling any appointment such brother may hold, without a vote of the ecclesia; and the appointment shall in that case be treated as vacant, and steps taken to fill it accordingly.

30.—That any brother departing from any element of the One Faith, as defined by us in our Statement of Faith, shall, on proof of the fact being given to the satisfaction of the arranging brethren, cease to be in fellowship, without a formal vote of withdrawal, on the fact being announced to the ecclesia.

31.—That no accusation or matter of evil report against any brother shall be listened to in public or private, until the brother bringing or reporting the accusation shall have taken the course prescribed in Matthew 18: 15-18; and any brother refusing to take this course while persisting in his accusations, or in alienation on account of it, shall himself be considered and dealt with as an offender against the law of Christ.

32.—That absence from the established assembly of the brethren for the breaking of bread, except from illness or other lawful reason, is an offence against the law of Christ; unless the said assembly shall tolerate the rejection of any element of the Truth of the Gospel, or shall sanction doctrines or practices inconsistent with the commandments of Christ.

33.—That none shall, even for a legitimate cause, separate themselves from the assembly, without first stating, in writing to be addressed to the recording brother, the cause or causes of impending separation; and asking the same to be considered, with a view to their removal, at a special meeting, at which they consent to be present and take part.

34.—That no brother or sister withdrawn from by, or out of fellowship with, another ecclesia shall be received in fellowship until the cause shall have been investigated, and found such as to warrant the reception of the said brother or sister; but that this investigation shall not take place without first asking the said other ecclesia to take part in the proposed investigation; that if the said other ecclesia shall refuse their co-operation in the said investigation, the matters in question shall be investigated without them; that if, on the other hand, they consent to take part in it, they shall, after the re-investigation conducted in their presence, have equal voting power with the first ecclesia, and that no decision shall be valid without the concurrence of a majority of the assembly so constituted of the two ecclesias fused together in equality of numbers; if one ecclesia exceeds the other in number, the equality to be obtained by arrangement.

35.—That in case of another ecclesia, after either of these processes, receiving into fellowship any brother and sister from whom we have withdrawn, or who may have separated from us, we shall not consider it a cause of separation from them, regarding the case as one of difference of judgment as to facts merely. We shall be content in that case to maintain our own withdrawal from the brother or sister in question. Should they, on the other hand, receive such, without re-investigation or without asking our concurrence in any re-investigation that may take place, we ourselves shall apply to the said ecclesia for re-investigation in the form defined by the last rule, and only in case of their refusal shall we consider that their action in the case has furnished a cause of separation.

*(NOTE: Bro. Roberts wrote, "Rule 35 of the Birmingham Constitution has no reference to cases where first principles are in question. The rule relates solely to disputed questions of **personal action and character**, as to which it is possible for even two men to be righteously disagreed in their opinion concerning a third person"—Christadelphian, April, 1887.)*

36.—That marriage with the alien is an offence against the law of Christ. That those who maintain the contrary are unfit for fellowship with those who "consent to the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus." That when offence takes place in the matter, the ecclesia shall signify their disapproval by resolution, sent to the offending brother or sister; after which the brother or sister shall only retain their places among the brethren by admitting their offence. All communications in the case to be in the form and spirit required by Rule 31.

37.—That any Sunday School established in connection with the ecclesia shall be under the control of the arranging brethren. The ecclesia to elect every_year(s), in the mode observable in the case of other serving brethren, a superintendent, secretary, assistant secretary, and treasurer, who shall appoint the teachers, and, in conjunction with them, manage the school in matters of detail.

38.—That none of the foregoing rules be altered except by a ballot of the whole ecclesia; and a month's previous notice of intention to propose such alteration (which shall be signed by at least _ brethren) must be given to the recording brother, who shall read the same at each intervening week-night meeting.

**A Restatement of The Always-Held Berean Position
ON CURRENT PROBLEMS AMONG THOSE USING THE NAME
"CHRISTADELPHIAN"**

Agreed upon by the Berean Fellowship in 1960, and printed in the July 1960 issue of "The Berean Christadelphian Magazine."

In the late 1950's, because of compromise and degenerating conditions in other groups, it became desirable that the Berean Fellowship restate its original and always-held position on several matters of truth being called in question elsewhere. This was taken very slowly, over a period of years, so all would have ample time to study and comment on the material. With two very minor and secondary exceptions (see notes on Nos. 4 and 6), the Berean Restatement was unanimously adopted as expressing the mind of the whole Body. We invite the fellowship of any who are wholly of one mind with us. The 1960 Restatement follows:

This is not a new basis of fellowship; nor is it an addition to, or an alteration of, our Basis of Fellowship. It is simply a reiteration of the position the Berean Fellowship has held on these matters from the beginning. It is a call back to the old, established position of sound Christadelphianism. Our desire and endeavour is to give as strong and clear a presentation as possible on the basis of the established Berean position of nearly 40 years (written in 1960: it's now 60 years), without making any change or innovation. We are most comfortable in our minds when we are firmly within the sound framework laid down by sincere and able brethren of one, two, and three generations ago.

The long delay (it was between two and three years) in issuing this Restatement, since it was first proposed, has been used to imply that we are not united. We believe it is desirable to clarify this point. From the very beginning, the overwhelming majority fully accepted the original draft of this Restatement. The normal course would have been to publish on this established basis of a preponderant majority. From the beginning, the total of those who have desired any change has been numerically very small.

But we have aimed for the ideal of unanimous and enthusiastic approval in every detail. Therefore we have believed it best to move, very, very slowly whenever there was the slightest objection or reluctance of any kind.

We believe the greatest value of the Restatement is in the promotion, through mutual patience and understanding, of a deeper spirit of unity and fellowship and—above all—love among ourselves. Its value in relation to those outside our fellowship, though great, is secondary to this.

We have been extremely reluctant to make decisions on the final wording if even one brother objects. We have hoped and worked and prayed for complete unanimity, not wishing to offend any, or to override the wishes of a single one.

We believe it is possible, however, that in trying to fully satisfy every wish of every individual we have perhaps not given full weight to the desires of the many who were satisfied

from the beginning, and who have repeatedly expressed the strong desire that it be carried forward.

Circumstances now appear to make further delay undesirable. We are just two minor points short of perfect unanimity: 1) A small group have expressed dissatisfaction with the wording on Conferences, not disagreeing, but fearing misinterpretation: see note there; and 2) A small group, not disagreeing with the item, desired further wording on Divorce: see note there.

The Restatement As Approved In 1960

As the trends in the Reunion movement become clearer, and many who have joined in that movement are now seriously reconsidering their position, a restatement of the Berean position on various problems that have confronted the Brotherhood, has become desirable.

This article has been many months in preparation. It has been submitted to all Berean ecclesias and brethren and sisters, and has received their approval. Two drafts were submitted, the third (this present form) incorporating as far as possible all suggestions received as a result of the circulation of the first two. While it is not to be taken as a formal, official, all inclusive document, nor in any way as an addition to the Statement of Faith, it does represent the considered, united viewpoint of the Berean Fellowship in regard to the principal issues that have arisen. It is not necessarily meant to be final and exhaustive: other problems can be considered later as circumstances require.

At the outset, let it be clearly understood there is no desire to criticize others. Our purpose is simply to present our own position, with particular relation to the present circumstances. Reference to others will be kept to the minimum required to make our position and its reasons clear.

* * *

OUR IDENTITY AND OUR NAME

First and foremost, we have been increasingly impressed with the great value and importance of a clear distinction and identity in fellowship. The Berean Fellowship has maintained a clear, separated position since 1923, since it was first necessary to stand aside from loose fellowship and toleration of error.

We desire to continue the benefit and advantage of this long identity and stability. We firmly believe that the stand taken in 1923 was right and necessary for the preservation of the Truth. We freely recognize and confess mistakes in methods and attitudes due to the inherent weakness of the flesh and the natural limited perception of the human mind. But the general foundation and course of our fellowship from the first, we believe, in God's mercy and guidance, to have been sound.

In our approach to the problems and opportunities arising from the present developments, this determination to maintain the value of our clear, separate position will be, God willing, our guiding principle. We earnestly desire, yea, need, the strength and support of all earnest brethren and sisters. We know that all who are at one with us in heart will agree with the reasonableness of our request that they seek our fellowship on the basis of a recognition of the soundness and correctness of the long established stand of the Berean Fellowship. In this way they will contribute to the strength of the continuity of our position, and share its advantages with us. All who are truly on one mind with us will readily agree to restrict their fellowship to those who are identified with the Berean position. To consent to a union of fellowship on any other basis would be to sacrifice the strength and stability that our consistent stand since 1923 has built up.

Some have objected to the name "Berean" on the ground that it implies a claim to certain characteristics, and denies them to others. We would like to point out that it does not imply presumption any more than the name "Christadelphian"—Christ's Brother—can be said to. It is not meant to imply any claim or presumption, but rather a dedication and allegiance and aim toward certain scriptural characteristics.

But (it is asked), is not the name Christadelphian sufficient? Sadly, we believe all must agree upon consideration that it is not. A name is simply to identify and distinguish. Therefore when any name is used by more than one separate group, some further identification is necessary.

Our determination to decline to consider merging with other groups and adopting any other name is not that we consider there is any special virtue or importance in the name itself, but because it represents a continuous position and outlook established over many years. We derive comfort and strength and stability from this consistent, continuous identity, especially in view of the many changes in principles, fellowship, and outlook throughout the Christadelphian world in recent years.

* * *

The second major point we desire to make clear is that we have no intention of imposing any new, official, basic requirement of fellowship. If some, in reading this article, find that certain matters they would like defined are not treated of, or to their mind are insufficiently treated of, we would ask that they receive the following as the explanation.

Our purpose is consolidation, not innovation. We desire to remove any occasion for the charge that we are setting up new requirement. Furthermore, we have been more and more impressed with the conviction that the real solution to many problems lies not so much in restrictive legislation, but in laboring to build and develop a higher and more spiritual plane of thought and action throughout the Brotherhood by the transforming power of the love of Christ.

This is our great aim and fervent desire, and we frankly say that it is to such as are wholeheartedly in harmony with this aim that we appeal. Those who are satisfied with anything less than striving toward the beauty of the perfection of the holiness and goodness and godliness manifested in Christ will not find the Berean Fellowship to be what they desire.

Where this desire exists and flourishes in united zeal, worldly and fleshly things will be cast away freely without the need of legislation, and many problems of conduct that have saddened and divided the brotherhood will be undreamed of. We believe, too, that God will

protect and deliver such a body from many of the problems that have been allowed to trouble the disobedient and worldly.

On the other hand (though not desiring to impose any new requirements), we are equally anxious and determined upon a firm defence and preservation of the original truths and principles upon which the Berean Fellowship has always stood. The following are the principal issues upon which we believe it wise at this time to reiterate our position.

* * *

1. THE NATURE AND SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

It was the determined agreement of the former Bereans who took part in the Jersey City Conference to insist upon an acceptance of the Ten Point Statement on the Nature and Sacrifice of Christ as a minimum safeguard against the erroneous theories long current in the Central group. Under pressure, this determination was not maintained.

We firmly believe that any who do not WILLINGLY AND READILY express their approval of the Ten Point Statement designed to defend Truth and guard against error, are not of one mind with us, and consequently a union in fellowship with such would not be mutually beneficial. The Ten point Statement (formulated by the Los Angeles ecclesia, and accepted by Central in 1940 as a sound basis for reunion on the question) is as follows:

FOUR ERRORS TO BE REJECTED

1. That the nature of Christ was not exactly like ours.
2. That the offering of Christ was not for himself, and that Christ never made any offering for himself.
3. That Christ's offering was for personal sins or moral impurity only. That our sins laid on Christ made him unclean and accursed of God, and that it was from this curse and this uncleanness that Christ needed cleansing.
4. That Christ died as a substitute; that is, that he was punished for the transgression of others, and that he became a bearer of sin by suffering the punishment due for sins.

SIX TRUTHS TO BE ACCEPTED

1. That death came into the world extraneously to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherent in him before sentence.
2. That the sentence defiled him (Adam) and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity.

3. That the word "sin" is used in two principal acceptations in the Scriptures. It signifies in the first place "the transgression of law," and in the next it represents that physical principle of the animal nature which is the cause of all its diseases, death, and resolution to dust.

4. That Jesus possessed our nature, which was a defiled, condemned nature.

5. That it was therefore necessary that Jesus should offer for himself for the purging of his own nature, first from the uncleanness of death, that, having by his own blood obtained eternal redemption for himself, he might be able afterward to save to the uttermost those that come to God by him.

6. That the doctrine of substitution (that is, that a righteous man can, by suffering the penalty due to the sinner, free the sinner from the penalty of his sins) is foreign to Scripture and is a dogma of heathen mythology.

We earnestly desire a fellowship on the basis of a wholehearted oneness of mind, but we believe recent events have shown the fallacy of attempting to build fellowship on any basis involving compromise or insufficient investigation. We believe the principle of uniting first and "straightening things out" later is neither scripturally sound nor practically workable.

There must be a willingness to face the facts of the past that have brought about the problems of the present. Essential truths have been assailed. Friends of the Truth will GLADLY make clear their position: yea, we be ANXIOUS to make it clear.

2. RESURRECTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

On this question, we stand firmly and wholeheartedly upon Article 24 of the Statement of Faith that has been accepted among us since the days of bro. Roberts.

"That at the appearing of Christ prior to the establishment of the Kingdom, the responsible (namely, THOSE WHO KNOW THE REVEALED WILL OF GOD, and have been called upon to submit to it), dead and living—obedient and disobedient—will be summoned before his judgment seat 'to be judged according to their works,' and 'receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad' (2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Rom. 2:5-6, 16; 14:10-12; 1 Cor. 4:5; Rev. 11:18).

This truth is expressed equally clearly in the Instructor by which we have taught our children for the same length of time (the sound, original *Instructor*)—

132: Q: What will Christ do first when he returns?

A: He will assemble all those who are responsible to judgment, living or dead.

133: Q: Who are responsible to judgment?

A: All who know the Truth, whether they submit to it or refuse.

Bro. Thomas (in 1855) defined the same basic principle in his "system of divine truth" entitled "The Revealed Mystery," Article 46—

"...those who have come to an understanding of the Gospel, but have rejected it...come forth from the grave again to encounter the burning indignation of Christ, the Judge of the living and the dead, at his appearing and kingdom..."

We believe that LIGHT is the ground of resurrectional responsibility (John 3:19; James 4:17), and the clear scriptural picture is that the responsible—just and unjust—will be called forth together for judgment at the last day, "at his appearing and his Kingdom" (John 12:48; 2 Tim. 4:1).

This issue was fought through in the past by the pioneers of the Truth. Faithful brethren found that compromise on this basic principle is unsound and impractical. We believe our only faithful course is to maintain a clear and uncompromising position on this as to fellowship, so that we may be of one mind, and may be free to teach our children in a clear trumpet sound without having other brethren whom we support in fellowship undermining our efforts and teaching them otherwise. The Truth cannot prosper under such confused conditions.

This is a serious issue, and goes far deeper than many realize. The prevalent incorrect and hazy conceptions about resurrectional responsibility undermine the one great solemn fact of all existence: the eternal MAJESTY AND AUTHORITY of God over all His Creation. We see it very clearly illustrated in the very beginning: authority, command, responsibility, and a calling to account. Adam was not asked if he desired to make a covenant.

This error engenders an entirely false and unwholesome conception of man's position before his Creator. The issues of life and death depend upon the reality and vividness with which we keep these basic principles before our minds. We believe, therefore, that it would be a disastrous casting away of all the value of the past struggle if we were to unite with any who do not robustly discern, believe, and actively support this basic truth.

There are various shades of error on this question, mutually tolerated within other groups. To open our arms to such on a compromise basis would be to insert the thin end of the wedge.

* * *

3. EVOLUTION

We have been increasingly impressed with the necessity of a strong stand upon the original Christadelphian beliefs regarding Creation.

The attempts to reinterpret the early chapters of Genesis to bring them into harmony with current speculations regarding "geological ages" and "evolutionary development," is a clear repetition in these last days of the fatal trend in the early centuries, when the "learned" and the philosophers took over the ecclesia and remoulded its doctrines to the then current worldly conceptions of "science" and "knowledge."

We reject as unscriptural all theories of this evolutionary nature, such as that Adam was not necessarily the first man, but just the first "real" man—meaning the first "man" whom God chose to endue with "capacity for worship," which is interpreted as "creating" man.

The Berean Fellowship stands strongly on the original Christadelphian belief that the first chapter of Genesis is a TRUE LITERAL RECORD of Creation, and not just a "vision" Moses

saw, representing long ages of Evolution. We believe the simple truth as testified in Exodus 20:9-11:

"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God...For IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Referring to this passage, Bro. Thomas said (Elpis Israel, pages 11-12):

"...The six days of Genesis were unquestionably six diurnal revolutions of the earth upon its axis. This is clear from the tenor of the Sabbath law...Would any Israelite or Gentile, UNSPOILED BY VAIN PHILOSOPHY, come to the conclusion of the geologists by reading the Sabbath law?...Six days of ordinary length were ample time for omnipotence."

We are well aware that the "wisdom of the world" considers this "foolishness," but we are convinced that if we are to be among the accepted, we must decide on which side we stand.

This divine truth is PROVIDENTIALLY provided anchor of our faith. As long as we hold it fast in godly simplicity, we are protected against the drift toward evolutionary speculation.

As to modern speculations and theories about the antiquity and development of the present condition of things on the earth, we feel no need to apologize for, or reinterpret, the simple scriptural record. In the divine purpose, "science" doubtless has been guided in these last days to discover many wonderful facts and truths in order to bring about the desired conditions of the earth. But when they presume to speculate about the past, and attempt to fix ages and periods and relationships and supposed evolutionary developments by methods based on their limited current observations of natural phenomena, they are leaving out of account the one great central fact of the universe that makes all their speculations meaningless: the continuous, ever-present, direct power and control of God in the working of His will. Of such, Jesus said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the POWER OF GOD." (Matt. 22:29).

Apart from divine revelation, man is utterly incompetent to speculate about the remote past. We have no difficulty in dismissing all these idle theories with the words of Paul in the first chapter of First Corinthians, particularly verses 20, 27 and 29:

"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?...God that chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise...that no flesh should glory in His presence."

This is why He confounds their wisdom, and why we KNOW that their supposed "wisdom" in anything to do with His Creation and Purpose is foolishness.

* * *

4. CONFERENCES

Our convictions over many years, greatly strengthened by recent events, are that there is great wisdom in the words of Bro. Roberts to be found in the Ecclesial guide, Article 44:

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS FROM VARIOUS PLACES

"These are beneficial when restricted to purely SPIRITUAL objects (that is, let the brethren assemble anywhere from anywhere, and exhort, or worship, or have social intercourse together). But they become SOURCES OF EVIL if allowed to acquire a legislative character in the LEAST DEGREE.

"Ecclesial independence should be guarded with great jealousy (with the qualification indicated in the foregoing sections). To form 'unions' or 'societies' of ecclesias, in which delegates should frame laws for the individual ecclesias, would lay the foundation of a collective despotism which would interfere with the free growth and the true objects of ecclesial life.

"Such collective machineries create FICTITIOUS IMPORTANCES, which tend to suffocate the Truth. All ecclesiastical history illustrates this."

It is clear from ecclesiastical history that the practice of sending "representatives" to "conferences" was one of the major stepping stones to the Great Apostasy. We have a great fear of the consequences of any delegation of authority or power of "representation," especially when such "representation" is exercised at a distant place. This inevitably leads to centralization and a shrivelling of the individual determination in regard to ecclesial affairs.

We believe that, in the providence of God, the Truth was well established by our pioneer brethren. We believe that that system of Truth has had continuous existence among us, and is held by the Berean Fellowship today. We therefore see no need for potentially dangerous "conferences" with other groups. It is the essential nature of conferences to lead to compromise, and these compromises are often worked out by a few who are not truly representative of the Body, under the pressure of eloquence, emotion, and limited time.

In addition to the general dangers of conferences, there are various specific unsound aspects (all manifested at the Jersey City Conference) upon which we believe it is necessary in the circumstances to make our position clear. The following we believe to be misguided and unsound:

1. Any agreement to limit the investigation and consideration of any aspect of an issue which has affected fellowship in the past.

It is very difficult to maintain soundness of fellowship even when every possible care and precaution is employed. It is impossible when there is an agreement to ignore the facts of the past which have created the conditions of the present.

2. Any agreement to rule out discussion of any other issues than the "original cause" of the separation.

When one group has had to separate from another because of toleration of error, all reason, Scripture and experience teach that—especially after a prolonged separation—great care and thorough, detailed investigation of ALL doubtful points would be required to discover if there is any true basis for considering re-association.

3. Putting any such proceedings under the control of any who are not of our fellowship.

(It is surely absurd to put the erring side in charge of the proceedings.)

*NOTE: A few (who agreed with the principle) feared: 1) this item might be taken to rule out discussion with any who wish to join us; and 2) it might discourage others from seeking our fellowship. Nothing could be further from its intention. The principle at issue is **GIVING AUTHORITY TO REPRESENTATIVES** to assemble at a distance and make decisions, with the subsequent inevitable losing touch and control by the membership. It is a real and serious danger, as history has repeatedly taught. Bre. Thomas and Roberts vehemently warned against this danger.*

* * *

5. SUING AT LAW

We believe, and have always believed, that the Scriptures forbid going to law **AGAINST** another for any cause whatsoever. The command is plain. The addition of the phrase "for any cause whatsoever," does not add anything to the command. It means the same without. But it is added to indicate that we accept the command in its fullness; and to guard against a merely nominal acceptance which nullifies it by "exceptions."

This command regarding going to law against another is part of the basic framework of the principles of the Law of Christ, which forbids violence, coercion, resistance to and retaliation for evil. We are not to use the law, or the powers of the law **AGAINST** anyone in any way. To do so in **ANY** way is to violate the **WHOLE** spirit.

This command is not simply a technicality which can be scripturally circumvented by subterfuge, threats, and the creating of false impression of intentions to use the law. A threat to use the law—whether stated or merely implied with a view to intimidating or coercing—not only violates the command, but adds to it the evil of deception.

This command is an **INTEGRAL AND ESSENTIAL** part of the beautiful way of life in Christ; and a clear perception of this way, and a clear distinguishing of it from the evil, deceptive, self-assertive way of the flesh, will enlarge our hearts and free us from the misconception that compliance with the **LETTER** of the law is sufficient, and a **TECHNICAL** obedience is all that God requires. The basic issue is our own character under trial and development, in the inner battle with the evil of the flesh.

The undermining of this principle of non-retaliation and non-resistance was one of the principal causes of the Berean stand of separation in 1923. This principle was blurred and assailed during the first World War and in the "Constabulary" issue that followed.

We wish to keep this principle clearly distinct from what is termed the "Divorce" question. The issue of suing at law is far deeper and broader than just that. A clear stand on this issue is one of the necessary bulwarks of the true spirit of the Truth in these days.

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6. DIVORCE—in relation to the brethren and sisters of Christ.

We believe divorce is contrary to the commands of Christ. We believe that remarriage after divorce is contrary to the commands of Christ.

"And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord; Let not the wife depart from (*korizo*: put asunder, Matt. 19:6) her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." (1 Cor. 7:10-11).

We believe further that these two evils are not only contrary to divine command, but are in direct violation of the deep principles of the mind of Christ. They will be eschewed as unthinkable by all true brethren and sisters of Christ.

(This is a statement of basic principles only. It goes without saying it was not intended to contravene the teachings of brethren Thomas and Roberts.)

NOTE: One small group, while not disagreeing with anything contained here, strongly desired further wording on this subject. But it must be kept in mind that this is a RE-statement of the Berean position on current problems—not an attempt to formulate any new position, or to go beyond what former brethren have in wisdom and experience established. Bro. Roberts—while at least as earnest and well-grounded as any now living, and at least as anxious to maintain purity and to combat corruption—was very reluctant to attempt sweeping and hypothetical legislation on this.

* * *

7. WORLDLINESS

There are many who have thought the Berean Fellowship too "narrow" and "extreme" on the issue of holiness and separation from the world. We are thankful we have such a reputation, and we shall increasingly do our best to justify it. The sad events in the Brotherhood during the past few years have greatly strengthened our conviction that looseness and worldliness have been the major source of all ecclesial problems, and of the purging trials that have been brought upon us, and that the only solution is an ever greater striving toward godliness.

We intend, God willing, to press increasingly for a closer walk, greater holiness, less worldliness. We are very strongly set against worldly habits, customs, fashions, amusements, entertainments, associations and affiliations. We cannot too often or too strongly remind ourselves and one another of the solemn words of John, James, and Paul:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For ALL that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 John 2:15-16)

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the ENEMY of God." (James 4:4).

"What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath Light with Darkness?...for ye are the Temple of the Living God;...Wherefore come out from among them, and BE YE SEPARATE, saith the Lord...and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

Let us make these Spirit-words our banner and our ensign. Let us, in these closing, evil, Gentile days, show forth the Divine glory of the Beauty of Holiness.

We recognize the existence among us of things and ways that belong to the world. We are greatly troubled by them. WE BELIEVE THAT IT WAS A PREPONDERANCE OF WORLDLINESS THAT LED TO THE COLLAPSE OF A LARGE PART OF THE BEREAN FELLOWSHIP IN 1953. We desire to build more soundly upon the lessons of the past.

Recent events have taught us many things. Those of us that remain have been drawn much closer together in the bonds of love, and of the unity of the Spirit.

Reflection and experience have, we believe, taught us the cause of many of the weaknesses and failures of the past. To be in harmony with God, the underlying spirit of any fellowship must be joyfulness, patience, gentleness and love. These Divine attributes are essential parts of the doctrine of Christ. They must permeate and dominate the whole Body. Otherwise the whole fabric will gradually wither, and die spiritually, however it may prosper and grow externally. NONE are Christ's brethren who do not whole-heartedly subscribe to these principles, and actually apply them as the basis of their life.

We have been impressed more and more with the conviction that there can be no communion between looseness and holiness, no fellowship between worldliness and godliness, no oneness of mind and walking together between the mind of the flesh and the mind of the Spirit. True Divine fellowship can only exist between those who are mutually and heartily and joyously dedicated to the principle of pressing on toward PERFECTION.

We are not in sympathy with the overhastiness that has at times been manifested to apply the processes of withdrawal of fellowship. We believe the gentle and loving law of Christ provides and requires a course of humble, patient endeavour toward reconciliation and unity of mind.

Still, the true Body of Christ is a closely-knit unit—by command and by choice—and the spiritual health and welfare of one affects all. Infractions of the Divine law that are defended or persisted in cannot be overlooked or ignored or brushed aside as just some one's "private life" that is none of our responsibility or concern. Such an attitude completely fails to comprehend the glorious, joyful oneness, interdependence and communion of the true Body of Christ.

The great tragedy of compromise and looseness is that it is progressive, and its trend is ever downward. There is no standing still. We are either, by constant effort, drawing toward greater godliness, or we are drifting downward into the ways of the flesh. Paul "ceased not to warn night and day with tears," knowing the flesh and its inevitable tendencies.

We believe all that has happened (the collapse of a large part of the Body into another group) has had the Divine purpose of forcing this realization and conviction upon us. We must repeatedly be put through the purging and purifying process of Divine love. THE WAY OF LIFE AND GODLINESS IS A FAR GREATER AND MORE REVOLUTIONARY THING THAN MOST REALIZE—

"...if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE: old things are passed away! behold, all things are become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17).

* * *

8. MILITARY SERVICE

As we consider current problems arising in Christadelphia, we notice there is a definite trend away from the original position upheld by the brethren of some years ago in respect to military service. There is a present tendency to accept non-combatant service, and service in the Merchant Marines. Work under the supervision of the Military and in munition factories is also making it difficult for the brethren to secure exemption as religious conscientious objectors.

Our position in this respect should be clearly understood, and consistently maintained: not only as a doctrinal principle of our Faith, but also as a way of life to be upheld and exemplified by the purity and holiness of our walk before God, and by our strict adherence to the precept that calls for separateness from all institutions of the world.

In our endeavour to render acceptable obedience to God, we find it necessary to ask for exemption from both combatant and non-combatant service in any branch of the armed forces. And in order that our lives may be found consistent with our convictions in this respect, we should refrain from taking employment in any capacity under the supervision of the Military, or where the principal line of work is the manufacture or supply of arms, munitions, or military equipment to the armed forces.

This is so because it is our sincere conviction that the laws of God, which transcend all human law, definitely and unmistakably forbid His children having any connection with the martial organizations of the country in which they live.

* * *

9. THE FORMULA FOR FELLOWSHIP

There is at present [1960] a movement for a realignment and a new form of reunion on the basis of an acceptance of the "B.A.S.F. without reservation, enforced in fellowship." This is all very well as far as it goes, but we believe that recent events in Christadelphia have clearly shown that just a bare affirmation to this effect is not a sufficient basis for a lasting unity.

Reason, Scripture and experience teach that in each case there must be sufficient investigation to give assurance of oneness of mind. More care will be required in some cases than others, and no simple password can be set down as the only requirement. Certainly MASS AMALGAMATION ON A MAJORITY VOTE is utterly inadequate to preserve the Truth, for the dissenting minority that comes along with the majority may bring every form of error. A majority vote is, as Clause 5 of the Constitution specifies, the brotherly way to determine "order and arrangement," but FELLOWSHIP is an INDIVIDUAL matter.

The only generalization that can be made is that in any consideration of a unity in fellowship, sufficient mutual investigation must be made in each individual case to maintain the Truth among us to the best of our ability.

To avoid any appearance of harshness, or the erection of any unnecessary barriers, we would like to make it clear that we desire it to be as easy and pleasant as possible—in faithfulness

to the Truth—for any to join or to return to us, who have come to a full unity of mind with us on the problems confronting the Brotherhood.

We recognize that it would be the prerogative of each ecclesia to determine the amount of personal interviewing necessary in each particular case. We believe it is a basic principle that the Truth is an INDIVIDUAL matter. Each individual must be considered as an individual; but we are anxious that it be done as gently and unofficiously and briefly as is consistent with the Truth. We have no thought of interrogation just for interrogation's sake, but rather speedy and joyful reception as soon as UNITY OF MIND is established.

However, it is the mind of the Berean Fellowship—particularly in light of the insufficiently-considered mass movements in "fellowship" of the past few years—that this scriptural aspect of INDIVIDUAL consideration should be mutually accepted in any discussion of resumption of fellowship, and should be honoured in principle, though applied in humbleness, kindness, and wisdom.

The events of the past few years have deeply impressed us with the wisdom and truth of the words of bro. Roberts in 1896, speaking concerning fellowship problems near the end of a life of conflict and struggle for the Truth (Christadelphian, Nov. 1896, page 428):

"Our circulation would have been a large one, after 32 years' publication, if we had chosen to broaden out to the diluted forms of truth that are current in sundry quarters...We would rather walk with an afflicted few in the scriptural purity of the Hope of Israel (with all that involves), than run with a prosperous multitude in the loose and polluted ways of the natural man. The looseness may be convenient for the time being, but there hastens a time when it will be highly inconvenient.

"When God speaks again by Christ returned, the inconvenience of this adhesion to His holy, narrow ways will turn to felicitation, joy and gladness...

"Experience over a wide and constantly fermenting field shows that unless there is a resolute adhesion to the position of Divine wisdom, recovered with much difficulty during the last two generations, there is danger of easily losing it all: NOT ALL AT ONCE, BUT POINT BY POINT—ONE POINT AT A TIME TILL ALL IS GONE."

* * *

In conclusion, we cannot too often or too strongly emphasize our deep conviction that there can be no true, sound, strong, spiritual fellowship on any basis other than eager, mutual yearning toward the Divine Beauty of Holiness. There is no other power that can truly unite us spiritually, and mark us out from the rest of the perishing world.

There can be but one True Bride of Christ, and she will be marked by an all-consuming love for her Lord, manifested in a constant striving toward the beautiful ideal of spiritual perfection described in the words of the Spirit through Paul (Eph. 5:27):

"...a glorious Ecclesia, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Without the eager, mutual acceptance of dedication to this divine ideal, all else is meaningless and dead. This must be the heart and power of any true fellowship. The Berean Fellowship is deeply conscious of its many human weaknesses and imperfections, but it is lovingly united in a realization of, and strong desire toward, the great beauty of this pattern of the chosen Bride of Christ.

FELLOWSHIP Its Nature and Conditions

"If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." -- 2 John 10-11

By Bro. Robert Roberts, September 1885

The Truth is professedly and confessedly a "narrow" thing. Jesus declares this in saying- "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life." This "Way" he afterwards speaks of as the "Truth," saying-

"Ye shall know *the Truth*, and *the Truth* shall make you free" (John 8:32).

"Every one that is of *the Truth* heareth my voice." (John 18:37).

The narrowness of the Truth is one of the obstacles to its general adoption. People do not like to be fettered either in doctrine or practice. It is also one of the causes of the *active tendency to corruption* which has manifested itself among those embracing the Truth from the very day it was apostolically established at Jerusalem.

It is inconvenient to be under restrictions in our dealings with fellow men, in the Truth or out of it. If it were a question of choice, we should all prefer absolute freedom. But no one recognizing Christ as the supreme Teacher can think of freedom in this matter. If we make freedom our rule we can only have the freedom of those who set Christ aside altogether, saying in the words of the wicked- "Our lips are our own: who is Lord over us?" (Psa. 12:4).

None who truly knows Christ would desire this freedom. All who sincerely accept Christ will recognize his law as paramount, however irksomely it may work in some of its present relations.

It is one of the narrownesses of the Truth that it demands of those who receive it that they "contend earnestly for it" (Jude 3), even if an angel from heaven oppose or corrupt it (Gal. 1:8-9); and that *they maintain it intact and unsullied among themselves as the basis and association among those who profess it*-refusing to walk with a brother who either disobeys its precepts-

"If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him" (2 Thess. 3:14).

"Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

-or refuses consent to its teachings in vital matters-

"If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 10-11).

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness...from such withdraw thyself" (1 Tim. 6:3-5).

This policy is so contrary to natural friendliness that it is easy to drift away from it, and to invent theories that will relieve us from its unpleasant obligations.

The controversy on Inspiration has forced the reconsideration of this question upon us. We say *re-consideration*, for it was considered and debated in the beginnings of things connected with the Truth in this generation, and satisfactorily disposed of for a time.

The principle cause of our trouble in the present situation has been the divergence of view that has prevailed at the bottom on this fundamental question (see footnote below). Many who have allowed the entirely inspired character of the Scriptures have not been able to see the necessity of *insisting upon that truth in our basis of fellowship*. They have been inclined to leave it as an "open question."

This is the result of a *dim or faulty perception of the apostolic doctrine of fellowship* (a common-sense doctrine) which requires agreement on fundamentals as the first condition of walking together, or co-operating, associating or fellowshipping together in the prosecution of the objects of the Truth. As a brother writing on this question says-

"There is prevalent at the present time a lamentable looseness in regard to what must constitute the basis of fellowship. It arises partly from ignorance, and partly from over-anxiety to increase numbers and keep together divergent elements. This must inevitably result in serious trouble or general declension.

"The Truth's interest is at stake, and no doubt much depends upon our action, as to whether it is yet to be maintained in its purity and simplicity, or lapse into Laodiceanism. The crisis is, doubtless, the most acute that has taken place since it was brought to light in these latter days. It has been brewing for past years. You were reluctant to believe it, and labored to stave it off.

"A too long course of loose discipline and slackness in dealing with wrong principles in doctrine and practice has, no doubt, intensified the evil and made it all the more bitter and grievous and hard to bear.

"I am persuaded that good will result in the case of those many or few who will outlive the storm by keeping a firm grasp of the anchor of the soul, by coming out of this ocean of suffering as gold tried in the fire."

With a view to the thorough ventilation and effectual exhibition of the scriptural principles of fellowship, we append a double series of propositions in which there is some attempt to formulate them in their bearing upon the question which has been troubling the ecclesias.

THE FIRST SERIES

1. "Fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" consists in walking in the Light, as God is in the Light. (1 John 1:3-7)

2. "Fellowship with one another" depends entirely upon our conformity to this first and necessary principle of all fellowship, which John so emphatically lays down in 1 John 1:6-7.

3. "Light" is a figure of speech-a metaphor for Divine wisdom, true knowledge, and accurate understanding.

4. God is the Fountain-head of these incomparable powers. Hence "God is Light, and in Him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5).

5. His Light is manifested to us in three ways: first, in Christ; second, in the Scriptures; and third, in His saints.

6. In Christ: - "I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46).

In the Scriptures: - "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a Light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105).

In His Saints: - "For ye were sometimes in darkness, but now are ye Light in the Lord: walk as Children of Light" (Eph. 5:8).

7. These points being hereby established, they constitute a chain connecting God and man, not one link of which can be removed, or in any respect impaired, without endangering the whole sequence, and breaking the harmony of the Divine relations to us individually.

Take away Christ, and you destroy all possibility of fellowship with God. Tamper with that Bible which he approved, and you equally render Divine recognition of you hopeless, while you remove the only means in visible existence among men which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among them who are sanctified. You destroy the foundation of the righteous, and dissolve in so doing the Household of Christ.

8. "Walking in the Light," therefore, means "Believing ALL things that are written in the Law and in the Prophets," as Paul affirms he did (Acts 24:14), as well as the subsequent writings in the New Testament; exercising "hope toward God" as embodied in "Christ our hope," and "Following righteousness, faith, love, peace with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Tim. 2:22).

9. Without the patient and faithful observance of these things, fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ is impossible, and in consequence fellowship one with another is likewise impracticable.

AGAIN

Is it not a commandment of God that we should receive His Word-His Oracles, the Scriptures-as supreme? Does not Christ enforce it in his "Search the Scriptures" (John 5:39) and elsewhere? Does not Paul teach it in many ways, in regard to both Old and New Testaments?

Admitting this unavoidable conclusion, and reading it in the light which 1 John 2:3, etc., throws upon the conditions of true fellowship-

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 John 2:3-6).

-must we not exact Christ's estimate of the Old Testament, and Paul's of both the Old Testament and his own writings, as a necessary condition to be recognized in our "fellowship one with another," if we wish to secure the end for which we are working, namely- "Fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3).

THE SECOND SERIES

1. In the accomplishment of its mission among men, the Truth acts by separation and association-

a. It separates men from the world: "Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate" (2 Cor. 6:17).

b. It associates those so separated: "Ye are all one...forsake not the assembling of yourselves together" (Gal. 3:28; Heb. 10:25).

It produces these results by the creation of scripturally derived ideas in the minds of those operated upon. By these ideas they are dominated and controlled. They become mentally "new creatures," and manifest the change in their altered relations to men and things around them.

2. But the association of those separated by the Truth is governed by conditions that sometimes interrupt that association. Hence, "Have no company," "Withdraw," "Turn away" are apostolic commands concerning some who have been actually separated by the Truth.

3. The conditions of association relate to two departments of our standing in Christ, which may be expressed as conviction and character. Unity of conviction and mutuality of conformity to a certain standard of action, are the two conditions out of which association and fellowship grow, and by rupture of which, it is necessarily interfered with.

4. This rupture may be only partial in either department, and yet be sufficient to cause suspension of association in fellowship. Apostolic examples-

a. Refusal to recognize that Christ had come in the flesh was made a reason for not receiving men who believed in God and the Kingdom and a number of other elements of truth (2 John 7-11).

b. Idleness was declared a ground of disfellowship where men had otherwise submitted to the commandments of Christ (2 Thess. 3).

5. That the first condition of association is the belief of the Truth, apart from the perception and reception of which, there is no basis of fellowship.

6. That the Truth forming this basis is made up of a number of items or elements that are each essential to its integrity as a whole.

7. That it is a matter of duty to require the recognition of these at the hands of those claiming association with us in the Truth.

8. That we are not at liberty to receive any one who denies or refuses to believe any of them, because the receiving of such would open the way for the currency of their principles among us, with the tendency of leavening the whole community. The elements of the Truth are so mutually related that the displacement of one undermines the foundation of the whole.

9. A man himself believing the Truth, but willing to wink at its denial among those in fellowship in any of its essential elements, becomes, by this willingness, an offender against the law of Christ, which requires the faithful maintenance of the whole.

Faithful servants of Christ cannot unite with such, on the ground that though he hold the Truth himself, such a man is responsible for the error of those he would admit, and therefore becomes the channel of a similar responsibility to those who may endorse him in fellowship- "He that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (2 John 11).

10. That it is the duty of the friends of the Truth to uphold it as a basis of union among themselves by refusing to receive either those who deny any part of it, or those who would receive those so denying.

11. Paul commands withdrawal from "any man" who "obeys not his word...delivered by epistle"

(2 Thess. 3:14). He commands the brethren to hold fast the traditions taught by him "whether by word or epistle" (2 Thess. 2:15).

12. Paul teaches by epistle that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. (2 Tim. 3:16).

13. We are bound to hold fast by this, and refuse association with any man refusing submission to this apostolic tradition.

14. The doctrine of partial inspiration is a nullification of this apostolic tradition; and a doctrine, consequently, from the holders of which we are bound apostolically to withdraw.

15. That the highest sanction of reason supports this apostolic obligation, since logically, the doctrine of partial inspiration, when worked out, deprives us of confidence in the only access we have to the Divine mind in our age.

Footnote: It will be noted that, according to Bro. Roberts, the basic root cause of the Partial Inspiration division was not the Partial Inspiration theory itself, but a fundamental divergence of view on the vital doctrine of Fellowship, which allowed many-while not believing the theory themselves-to fellowship those who did. This is one of the facts that makes majority-vote reunion merely a return to the former unsound condition that required the division.

The Truth Concerning Christ's Offering For Himself First Made a Matter of Fellowship in 1898

The following ecclesial news of May, 1898 is very much to the point. Bro. Roberts, though traveling, was very much in charge of the magazine. Bro. Walker says he did not publish controversial fellowship matters without Bro. Roberts' approval. This happened to be at the height of the Resurrectional Responsibility controversy, though not directly related. It is clear that neither R. Roberts nor C.C Walker considered that the truth concerning Christ offering for himself was Andrewism. They totally opposed Andrewism: they totally approved this fellowship stand. The item is from Bournemouth, and is by G.S. Sherry, whom those familiar with the history of the events of these times will recognize as a prominent and sound brother. --G.V. Growcott

Additional Note: Bro. Growcott published this article in the Berean Magazine without the name of the brother who was withdrawn. We place it back in, not for purposes of embarrassment, but because bro. Fry later, after having been reaccepted at a different Central meeting, published a booklet during the Strickler division. The booklet was called "Echos of Past Controversies", and it was a defense of Central's decision to fellowship A. D. Strickler, a decision that even John Carter later admitted was wrong. ("A Time to Heal", Christadelphian Magazine, 1940) This booklet was circulated in 1978 by Richard Stone, Los Angeles California, Central, to show that his position was consistent with the previous Christadelphian stand. Instead, his using H. Fry's works showed that his views likewise, in Robert Roberts days, would not have been tolerated in fellowship.---JPP

BOURNEMOUTH: "We have had trouble in our midst, which has resulted in division. Bro. H. Fry publicly proclaimed the doctrine that **Jesus was not in a position requiring to offer himself as a sacrifice to secure his own redemption**; that the sacrifice of Christ was required only to effect the salvation of actual transgressors. Jesus being no transgressor, for himself his sacrifice was not needed.

"This teaching **strikes at the root** of the Scripture teaching of the condemnation of sin in the flesh, and also at the doctrinal basis upon which our ecclesia has been founded.

"It was necessary to meet this error in order to maintain the purity of the Truth. After private and collective effort, which proved fruitless, it was decided to re-affirm and define our doctrinal basis of faith upon this subject; and as to those who refuse to acknowledge and accept it, we feel duty bound from such to stand aside. The following propositions were submitted to every member of the ecclesia for acceptance

"1. That the Scriptures teach: That Adam was created capable of dying, but free from the power of death; and when he disobeyed in Eden, he was condemned to death for that disobedience; and that he came under the power of death solely on account of this sin. That in consequence of this offense, all his descendants have been condemned to death, but without the moral guilt of his transgression attaching to them; and that those who are not actual transgressors die under the condemnation they inherit from their first parents.

"2. That the Scriptures teach: That Adam was created very good, and was then utterly devoid of that which the Scriptures style 'sin in the flesh'; that from the time of his disobedience, and in consequence thereof, **he had sin in his flesh**; that sin in the flesh of his descendants, although not involving them in the moral guilt of Adam, has the power of death in them; that Jesus Christ, who was sinless as to character, by his sacrificial death and resurrection put away his sin nature (which was the only appointed means for the condemnation of sin in the flesh; that is, as a basis upon which it, the flesh, could be redeemed), and by which he destroyed the devil and death in relation to himself. That this destruction of sin and death by Jesus Christ has been made the basis of their future abolition in relation to all the righteous.

"3. That inasmuch as the foregoing scriptural truths substantially form part of our doctrinal basis of fellowship, and are **essential** to 'the things concerning the Name of Jesus Christ,' we hereby resolve from this time **to discontinue fellowshiping** all who believe that the descendants of Adam were not condemned to death on account of Adam's sin, or that **Jesus Christ's sacrificial death was not necessary to REDEEM HIMSELF** as well as others from that condemnation, until such time as they repudiate these anti-scriptural doctrines."

It was the same issue in 1923 with Stricklerism, but with R. Roberts gone, action was not so sound.

--Bro. G.V. Growcott

The True Christadelphian Ecclesia

By Brother Robert Roberts

The Christadelphian Ecclesia must have Love.

"This is MY COMMANDMENT" (says Jesus) "that ye love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12 and 13:34).

"We know that we have passed from death into life -- because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (1 John 3:14-16).

"ABOVE ALL THINGS, have fervent love among yourselves, for love shall cover the multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8).

"ABOVE ALL put on love, the bond of PERFECTNESS."

"Let us not love in word, but in DEED and in truth".

It may be objected that we cannot force love; but it should be remembered that love is a spiritual principle required by the Law of Christ, and it should be our pleasure to obey that law. If we cannot do this we cannot please him.

The Christadelphian Ecclesia must have the Spirit of Christ.

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is NONE OF HIS

... as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are Sons of God."

"Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts: IF ye are Sons, then are ye heirs of God!"

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness" (Gal. 5:22-23).

The Spirit of Christ is a gentle Spirit --

"When he was reviled he reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Pt. 2:23).

The Christadelphian Ecclesia must have a living Faith.

"Without Faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6).

The Faith that pleases God is a Faith that works --

"works by Love" (Gal. 5:6) "purifieth the heart" (Acts 15:9)

... "overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4).

"Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26).

Works of the Flesh not tolerated.

The Christadelphian Ecclesia, having CRUCIFIED the flesh with its affections and lusts, does not tolerate the works of the flesh as enumerated in Gal. 5:18-21, of which we appropriately mention --

"Enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension" (RV).

It will be observed that the apostle says with great emphasis that --

"They that do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom."

Fellowship in Christ.

The Christadelphian Ecclesia knows that --

"If we SAY we have fellowship with Christ, and walk in darkness, we LIE ... IF we walk in the Light, **as he is in the Light**, we have fellowship with one another . . . and truly our fellowship is with the Father and Son" (1 John 1).

She knows that righteousness has no fellowship with unrighteousness, no concord of Christ and Belial, no communion of light and darkness. She knows that she walks in the light by keeping the commandments of Christ, who says --

"IF ye love me, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS" (John 14:15).

"Ye are my friends, IF ye do whatsoever I command you"

"Why call ye me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not the things I say?"

Christ's brethren have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. The tares and the wheat cannot grow together in Christ. They can, and do, in the world.

"A Spiritual House."

The Ecclesia, having a LIVING Faith, is made up of --

"lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

It is the --

"Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in it, and if any man defile the Temple of God, **him shall God destroy.**"

Christadelphians are --

"A people taken OUT of the Gentiles for the Name of the Lord."

They are, therefore-

"A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people -- that they might SHOW FORTH the praises of Him Who hath called them OUT OF darkness into His marvelous light."

The Christadelphian Ecclesia is the Bride of Christ --

--and knows that when her Bridegroom comes she must have on the wedding garment, if she would be presented to him as --

"A GLORIOUS Ecclesia, having no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but should be HOLY, and WITHOUT BLEMISH"

The "spots and wrinkles" CAN BE OBLITERATED by the righteousness of Christ, who is always our Advocate with the Father: provided -- that we confess AND FORSAKE our sins, and pray earnestly for mercy and forgiveness.

Her Work and Purity.

The Christadelphian Ecclesia is engaged in the work of "making READY a People PREPARED for the Lord." And having a glorious Hope -- based on great and precious promises -- she will purify herself by --

"PURGING OUT the old leaven of malice and wickedness, keeping the Feast with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

Her work is not a work of ignorance and indifference, which says,

"Christ fellowshipped Judas"

"Let the tares and the wheat grow together..."

"Everyone must give an account for himself..."

"I have nothing to do with what another says or does..."

"Let us have peace ..."

"You must not judge etc..."

-- and this (to be said by) the Ecclesia, or Body of Christ, the "pillar and ground of the Truth," and the "Temple of God" in which His Spirit dwells!!

Her Warfare

The Christadelphian Ecclesia knows she has a great conflict with foes within and without -- the world, the flesh, and the devil -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.

And if she can be the victor in the warfare, through Christ who strengtheneth her, she will receive an eternity of blessed life for her reward. And this the gracious gift of God through Christ.

She knows the gate is strait and the way narrow that leads to life, and though there be few who find it, she is not discouraged. She strives to the end with an honest, sincere, and pure motive. And what she lacks, through the weakness of the flesh, her Redeemer -- in whom she trusts -- will supply by his all-prevailing righteousness to her unspeakable joy and everlasting blessedness.

--Christadelphian, 1887

Appendix

I. Does God hear the prayers of the unbaptised?

Christ is God's high priest only over those who constitute by the divinely appointed means 'God's house' (Hebrews 3:6), and then over the world in the age to come (Zechariah 6:12-13). This fact however does not mean God does not hear the prayers of the unbaptized. It is true that "God heareth not sinners" (John 9:31) i.e. men who live in a daily disregard of God's law. It is likewise true that "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord" but Solomon adds "the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him" (Proverbs 15:8); also note 1 Kings 8:38-39.

The Canaanitish woman who in faith acknowledged herself as a dog under the table of the master and ate the crumbs of that which was fed to the children of Israel i.e. the word of the kingdom, received her earnest request. Likewise the "prayers and alms" of the Roman centurion Cornelius had "ascended as a memorial before God" (Acts 10:4). Let it be noted however from this most important record that such prayers **do not alter a man or woman's relationship to eternal life**, for though "God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that fears him (not according to the precepts of men) and work righteousness (the righteousness of God) is accepted of Him;" it was necessary that the attention of Cornelius and his household be directed to "that word which God sent unto the children of Israel by Jesus Christ." This Cornelius and his household had done, for they had previously abandoned the pagan mythology of Rome as those today must do in forsaking the doctrine of Babylon the Great who has made all nations of the earth drunk (Revelation 17:2) if they desire their prayers to be heard. It is obvious from the record of Acts 10 that Cornelius was also well acquainted with the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, the divine testimony of his miracles, his crucifixion and resurrection.

Bro. Roberts writes "Devout Gentiles, who cast away the gods of the heathen and 'join themselves to the Lord' were known as 'proselytes' (Acts 2:10), and were allowed to worship at Jerusalem as in the case of the eunuch to whom Phillip preached the word (Acts 8:27). A court in the temple was provided for them, and known as 'the court of the Gentiles'. The 'proselytes of the gate', as they were called, were recognized worshippers. They approached God in the only way open to the Gentiles at that time. God never has shut His ear against those who have come to him in the way appointed. But a wider gate was open when Peter was commissioned to announce, in connection with the case of Cornelius, the abolition of 'the middle wall of petition'; and the free admission of the Gentiles, upon the terms then disclosed, as 'fellow heirs of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ of the gospel' (Ephesians 3:6). All Gentiles are at liberty to partake of 'the promise in Christ by the gospel,' **but in no other way**. Such as are inclined to take heart from the case of Cornelius must remember that Cornelius was in the right way, so far as it was possible for a Gentile to be. Therefore, his prayers were heard and the way of life opened to him by an angel." (Christadelphian 1872, Vol 9 Bd 9).

Of this way of life that the angel directed Cornelius to, the apostle Peter had been given by the Lord Jesus the keys of the kingdom to unlock its mystery first to the Jew at Pentecost and then to the Gentile at Caesarea "that **whosoever believeth** in him (Christ) shall receive remission of sins **through his Name**" as the appointed way (Acts 10:43, 47). The name of Jesus and what constitutes that name are placed in the divine institution of baptism, based on an intelligent, childlike belief of the 'things of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ'. The record of

Cornelius shows us that though someone may not yet be in the fullness of the light that the gospel calls us to, God will always hear the prayer of those who humbly seek to ‘worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for **the Father is seeking such people to worship Him**’ (John 4:23).

II. The False Doctrine of Substitution Explained and Refuted

The reviving of the Truth in the 19th century in preparation for the coming of the Lord Jesus through the providential raising up of bro. Thomas lifted the veil of Roman superstition and blasphemy so that the revelation of the mystery which God purposed from the foundation of the world to its glorious manifestation in the Kingdom of God could be understood. While amongst the many denominations, elements only of the gospel are taught, in none of them is the doctrine of the nature and sacrifice of Christ as set forth in the extraordinarily lucid and consistent explanations of bre. Thomas and Roberts can be found.

Without exception, the doctrine that the churches preach on the subject of the nature and sacrifice of Christ, in one form or another, is a Vicarious (substitutionary) atonement. That is Christ offered himself as a substitute for others, in that he took **their** place, punished for the transgression of others, dying **instead** of them. Under this theory, Christ suffered the wrath of God by suffering **their** punishment, paying the penalty of **their** sin. The church doctrine is of a wrathful deity, whose justice can only be appeased by passing sentence upon one who had **absolutely no relation to the sin condemned on the cross**. What lies at the foundation of this extreme Rome-ish doctrine apart from the obvious injustice that it conveys is a **complete denial of the two senses in which scripture uses the word sin**. This is enshrined in the doctrines that define the anti-Christ - that Christ had not come in the flesh which is the touchstone of the doctrine of the Trinity. The other church doctrine which this subject has an obvious essential application is the subject of the devil destroyed in Christ’s death (Hebrews 2:14).

The churches preach that Jesus did not come in the flesh, but in a different holier, purer, without spot, immaculate nature than those he came to save! Therefore his sacrifice was but the crowning act of obedience or dedication to God’s will, illustrating what should happen to sinful man. They preach a substitutionary sacrifice because the Christ they preach bore the **actual** sins of those he came to save, these being imputed to him in some mystical way just before his death. He himself having no relation **in himself** to the sin condemned on the cross, and therefore no need of personal cleansing, purging, or atonement from the defiled nature scripture says he bore.

Roman Catholic doctrine define sin as ‘a moral evil’ and the renowned Catholic theologian Thomas Aquinas says “sin is nothing else than a morally bad act.” Augustine states “there can be no sin that is not voluntary”. Even the churches doctrine of what they refer to as ‘original sin’ i.e. “the hereditary stain” is defined in terms of a ‘moral deformity’ with which we are born on account of our origin from Adam.” This doctrine of ‘original sin’ is explained in terms of inherited guilt, that in some sense we and Adam, being one, bear the guilt for his sin, that in some sense we being in Adam at the time of the fall, we therefore fell along with him. Other variations state that though not directly involved in Adam’s sin, Adam was our representative in Eden and so that in Adam’s sin we sinned, and brought guilt and merited condemnation upon all. “It (original sin) is a moral deformity, a separation from God, it is a real sin which deprives the soul of sanctifying grace; it has the same claim to be a sin as habitual sin which is the state in which

an adult is placed by a grave and personal fault, the ‘stain’ which St. Thomas defines as ‘the privation of grace’...Considered precisely as voluntary, original sin is only the shadow of sin properly so called. According to St Thomas, it is not called sin in the same sense, but only in an analogous sense” (Catholic Encyclopedia Online ‘Nature of original sin’).

Note that the catholic view of ‘original sin’ puts emphasis on sin as a ‘moral deformity’ including what we inherit from Adam! So that wherever the word ‘sin’ appears in the Bible it is interpreted in a moral sense with associated guilt and punishment.

This appalling doctrine denies the key to understanding the atonement. The second sense of how the word sin is used in scripture as applying to the devil – that which has the power of death, or ‘sin in the flesh’ similarly described by Paul as ‘the body of sin’, ‘the body of this death,’ as ‘the law of sin and death,’ as ‘sin in my members,’ and again ‘in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing’, which bro. Thomas correctly states in Elpis Israel we inherit, is “**our misfortune, not our crime.**” This second sense of the word Sin is the essential link that unites Christ with those he came to save. It is the means by which God could **righteously** condemn Sin **literally** in the flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ and thereby declare His righteousness without setting aside any of His principles of holiness, justice and truth. **The denial that Sin refers to a fixed principle in man’s flesh and that the tendency in man to sin originates from this physical condition in his flesh, is the doctrine of the anti-christ.** The doctrine of substitution states that our **actual sins** were ceremonially laid upon Christ at his death, and not as bro. Thomas and Roberts has shown us by God making Christ ‘flesh and blood’ nature (Hebrews 2:14; 2 Corinthians 5:21) common to all men, and subject to the same propensities, which in us, lead to sin. This is the means by which Christ ‘bore our sins in his body on the tree’ (1 Peter 2:24).

One of the chief errors of ‘clean flesh’ teaching is that Christ condemned sin symbolically on the cross rather than literally and physically. This false doctrine denies that flesh is a synonym for sin in scripture; that there is no sin in the flesh as a physical principle. What there is, they who hold this doctrine say, is mortality. There is no acknowledgement the scriptures show that death, as is the tendency to sin originates from a **physical condition which God’s word calls Sin.** Bro. Thomas has shown us that you cannot actually ‘condemn sin in the flesh’ when ‘sin’ is not present. Likewise ‘the body of sin’ cannot be ‘destroyed’ (Romans 6:6) if it is not sin, but merely a ritual body like the animal bodies of the Mosaic sacrifices. The crucifixion was a public condemnation by which sin was condemned by God **in the body** of the Lord Jesus.

Can anyone who stood at the foot of the cross (we have done so via the gospels) and witnessed the scene described therein, by the most deliberate, plain, factual language in the whole Bible, have any doubt as to what was condemned? A determined return by some who once had thrown off the apostasy, to the confused darkness of Roman Catholic theology, have corrupted their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus, so that they are unable to give an answer as bro. Thomas and Roberts on the question of the atonement have. Was it not ‘the son of man’ (John 3:14) who was lifted up, ‘he himself’ (Hebrews 2:14) i.e. ‘the body of Jesus Christ’ (Hebrews 5:10), a body which Jesus himself likens to the brazen serpent (symbol of sinful flesh) which was lifted up in the wilderness (John 3:14-15)? The apostle Paul tells us for what purpose: “Now hath he reconciled **in the body of his flesh through death**” (Colossians 1:21). Likewise the apostle Peter tells us “who his **own self** bear our sins in his **own body** on the tree (1 Peter 2:24). With respect to this passage, bro. Thomas states of the Lord Jesus “Sins born in a **body** prove that body to be imperfect; and characterize it as ‘sins flesh.’” In this same article bro. Thomas shows that in

contrast to the perfect intellectual and moral status of the Lord (Hebrews 7:26 & 4:15) his nature was imperfect. “That nature was flesh of the stock of Abraham compared in Zechariah 3:3 to ‘filthy garments’ typical of the ‘infirmity with which he was compassed’. For this ‘infirmity’ called ‘himself’ – and for all of the same infirmity associated with him by faith in the promises made with Abraham and David, and in him as the mediator thereof – he poured out his blood as a covering for sin... Sin’s flesh is imperfect and well adapted for the condemnation of sin therein.” (Herald 1860 pg. 12) If sin, as scripture shows us, was condemned in the body of Christ, how was it condemned if his flesh was not sin in the second principal sense of how the word is used? To argue otherwise is to make the Lord Jesus Christ a **substitute** where his death only condemned sin in others in a ritual sense, since according to the ‘clean flesh’ error, sin was not present in his body.

This as we have stated is the essential link that binds Christ to us making his death on the cross a declaration of God’s righteousness, holiness and justice and makes his personal perfecting and cleansing efficacious for us as a true representative, and not as a mere ritual substitution. Thus Christ fulfilled the type of the high priest under the Mosaic ‘shadow of good things to come’ (Hebrews 10:1). The high priest was required in his approach to God on behalf of the people to make offering **first** for himself, and then for the people’s sins. This, the apostle says (Hebrews 7:27 & 8:3) Christ by ‘**necessity**’ did, as a **true representative**, for his own salvation from the nature he bore as the sin-bearer, offered once by the offering up of himself. First **by necessity**, says Paul again in Hebrews 9:23, for the “purging” i.e. cleansing or purifying of his own defiled nature. **This is the foundation that has been laid upon which all else is built. It is a work that is entirely founded upon the eternal redemption Christ obtained in himself (Hebrews 9:12) from “sinful flesh” (Romans 8:3).** Let us repeat it is on the basis of this redemption Christ obtained in himself first, that God without the compromise of His principles of holiness and righteousness could raise Christ from the dead, and extend grace to all who diligently seek to understand these principles and have faith in what God has done for us in Christ. This eternal redemption Christ obtained **first**, is then extended to those who humbly submit to the way of salvation God has provided in and through the name of Christ Jesus.

Bro. Roberts in an article written to refute the ‘clean flesh’ theory (see footnote²) one of whose key tenets is that Christ did not need to offer for himself and that he was not cleansed and redeemed by his own sacrifice, put a series of questions of which the following are but a sample.

74a. Paul says the substance of the law or things foreshadowed in it are to be found **in Christ**. (Col. 2:17; Rom. 2:20; Heb. 9:23; 10:1.) This being so, can your theory furnish the antitype to the High Priest offering for himself? (Lev. 16:6.)

² The clean flesh theory denies there is ‘sin in the flesh’ (Romans 8:3) i.e. they do not believe the word sin is used in two principal senses in scripture; that the word sin only applies to transgression of God’s law and not to that physical principle in the flesh which is the cause of death and the tendency to rebel against God’s word. They believe that ‘sin in the flesh’ is only a figure of speech and is therefore not real, denying what Paul states in Romans 7:23-24. They preach that God condemned ‘sin, in the flesh’ (note the added comma) by Christ not committing transgression during his mortal life; that he was our sin bearer by symbolically bearing our transgressions, transferred to him before he died on the cross, suffering the punishment due for sins!

75. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the **scarlet** which entered into the composition of the vail (**that is to say, his flesh?** Heb. 10:20.)

76. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the **uncleanness-imparting bodies** of those beasts burnt without the camp? (Heb. 13:11).

77. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the making **atonement** for the **holy place** (Lev. 16:16)?

78. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the **atonement** made for the **altar**? (Lev. 16:18.)

79. Can your theory furnish the antitype to the **atonement** made for the **holy sanctuary**? (Lev. 16:33.)

80. Can your theory furnish the antitype to **atonement** for the **tabernacle** of the congregation wherein God dwelt? (Lev. 16:33.)

81. If you attempt an answer, do not content yourself with “yes;” but show us wherein all these things which were **typical of Christ**, have their counterpart in a theory which teaches he had not the condemned nature on him, and therefore, needed not to offer for himself.

82. Paul says that as it was necessary that these pattern-things in the Mosaic system should be purged with blood, so it was necessary that the things signified should be purged; but with a better sacrifice, that is the sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 9:23). **The Christ of your theory needed no “purging;” therefore does it not follow that he is not the Christ of Paul, who required purging from the law of sin and death, by his own sacrifice?**

83. Paul says of Christ, “it is of NECESSITY that this man have somewhat also to offer.” (Heb. 8:3.) You say of your Christ, that he was under no necessity to offer himself; but might have refused to die, and entered into eternal life alone. **Is it not clear that your Christ is not Paul’s Christ, with whom it was a necessity that he should offer up himself, for the purging of his own nature, first, from the uncleanness of death, that having by his own blood obtained eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12), he might be able afterwards to save to the uttermost, them that come unto God by him? (Heb. 7:25.)** (The Christadelphian 1873, Volume 10:467-468)

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