

The Berean Christadelphian

*A monthly magazine devoted wholly to the exposition and
defence of the Faith once for all delivered to the Saints,
with the object of helping to make ready a People prepared
for the coming of the Lord. Opposed to the unscriptural
teachings of the papal and protestant churches of the world.*

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*“They received the Word with all readiness of mind,
and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things
were so. Therefore many believed.”—Acts 17: 11.*

CONTENTS

ECCLESIAL NEWS: Winnipeg	Inside Front Cover
May Answers	Inside Front Cover
Fraternal Gatherings: Hye, Worcester	Inside Front Cover
EDITORIAL: Choking the Word	161
THE DIABOLOS (Bro. Thomas)	163
FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS SUFFERINGS (Bro. Roberts)	178
THOU ALSO SHALT BE CUT OFF (Salvation Conditional on Obedience)	185
I Shall Be Satisfied With Thy Likeness	Inside Back Cover
Bible Questions	Back Cover
The Divine Standard the Only Way of Life (R.R.)	Back Cover

We are anxious to send the Berean FREE to any desiring it that way. Please do not hesitate to request it. If you know of any who might like it, please send us their names.

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

\$4.00 per yr (only for those who desire to pay—free to others)

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Ecclesial News

WINNIPEG, Manitoba—3449 Assiniboine Grove, R3K 0H5—Bro. Joseph Jackson.

WE send loving greetings to the brethren and sisters. Being in isolation, our activities are somewhat limited, but we rejoice to say we have had visitors since last writing which helps us on our journey to the Kingdom. Sis. Annetta Jones of the Richard ecclesia visited us in December. Sis. Kay Wolfe from the Houston ecclesia spent a short while with us mid-winter, which was quite a change for her from the warm climate of Texas. Bro. Gordon Jones of Richard spent a few days with us, assisting us on Sunday with the word of exhortation. Accompanying bro. Gordon from Richard was Sid Jones, a Sunday school scholar.

Taking advantage of the long weekend in April, we motored to the Lethbridge ecclesia. A variety of scenery was unfolded as we travelled the 750 miles: from flat prairie countryside to the hilly region of Alberta. Two blocks from the home of bro. & sis. Pickford we could see, in the distance, the Rocky Mountains reaching like outstretched fingers scraping the sky. Truly we are reminded of the great power of Yahweh, and the deep meaning behind 2 brief words: *God created.* .

We live in exciting and stimulating days. As each day dawns, true watchmen on the tower witness the storm clouds of war billowing on the horizon. Elections in Italy and USA, earthquakes in divers places, pestilence, famine, revolutions and counter-revolutions: Russia's rise in power looms as the predominant black cloud, sucking all these other clouds to her side. Yes indeed,

"What I say unto you, I say unto all: WATCH!"

—is a statement which rings in our ears.

With united love, Mizpah

May Answers (Israel indented)

KINGS OF JUDAH AND ISRAEL

Saul—Rejected

David—Poet, musician, shepherd

Solomon—Wisdom and folly

Rehoboam—Forsook old men's counsel

Jeroboam I—Solomon servant; made Israel sin

Abijah—Slew 500,000 of Israel

Asa—Defeated Zerah; diseased in feet

Nadab—Wicked; slain besieging Gibbethon

Baasha—Slew whole house of Jeroboam

Elah—Drinking self drunk in Tirzah

Zimri—Ruled 7 days; died palace fire

Omri—Prevailed over Tibni; mighty king

Ahab—Foreign wife stirred to evil

Jehoshaphat—Ships broken/Ezion-geber

Ahaziah—Fell thru lattice; Ekron god

Jehoram—Shot in back fleeing

Jehoram—Slew all brethren; Edom revolt

Ahaziah—Athaliah son; visit Israel; killed

Jehu—Drove furiously; slew Ahab seed

Athaliah—Killed seed royal; Treason!

Joash—Slew H.P.'s son; servants slew him

Jehoahaz—Syria oppress; sought Lord; saviour

Jehoash—Broke Jerusalem, wall; Elisha/arrows

Amaziah—Served Edom gods; slain/Lachish

Jeroboam II.—41 yrs; restored Israel; Damascus

Uzziah—Husbandry; incense; became leper

Zachariah—6 mos; killed; last of promised line

Shallum—Killed king; 1 mo; slain/Samaria

Menahem—10 yrs; taxed rich to buy off Pul

Pekahiah—2 yrs; evil; killed by Pekah

Pekah—With Rezin against Judah; Isa. denounce

Jotham—16yrs; built towers/etc; no wrong listed

Ahaz—Shut Temple; serve Syria gods; fgt. Pekah

Hoshea—Served Shalmaneser;

conspired with Egypt

Hezekiah—Babylon embassy; lift heart; humble

Manasseh—Babylon captive; humble; restored

Amon—2 yrs; served idols; slain by servants

Josiah—Good king; Passover; died/war-wounds

Jehoahaz—3 mo; wicked; captive to Egypt

Jehoiakim—11 yrs; rebel/Babylon; burial/ass

Jehoiachin—Captive/Babylon; "Write childless"

Zedekiah—Profane prince, sons slain; blinded

FRATERNAL GATHERINGS (If the Lord will)

HYE: Monday to Sunday, July 26 - August 1

Bro. Nick Mammone, 70 W. 34th, San Angelo, Tx. 76901, Ph. (915) 653-5187

WORCESTER: Saturday & Sunday, October 9-10

Bro. Edgar Sargent, 8 Proctor St., Ashburnham, MA 01430, Ph. (617) 827-5890

IMPERFECT COPIES OF THE BEREAN

These are bound to occur occasionally (blank pages, etc.). If you receive one, please just drop us a card. We shall be very happy to replace it.

WE are gratified with many requests for back issues of the Berean. We hope to begin to send them about the middle of August. We plan to notify individually (overseas by air) when they are shipped. Most back issues to 1950 are still available.

Choking the Word

"Some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it"—Luke 8: 7

IN the parable of the sower, Jesus uses the word-picture of a man sowing seed on various kinds of soil. It is a beautiful and impressive illustration of the results of the proclamation of the Word of Life. It is the same seed in each case, but how different the results! One case is the above: the Good Seed among Thorns.

Many of us when thinking of "thorns" might think of certain large bushes, or even small trees, that are common in Canada and the United States. But the word refers here to the briars, brambles or thistles that are common to the East. This fits better with the words of Jesus, "The thorns *sprang up*." The thorn seeds were hidden in the soil, as sin in our flesh, waiting to spring forth.

These thorns grow in luxuriant abundance and, unless the farmer takes the proper, diligent action, they grow very rapidly and choke, or smother, the grain. The application that Jesus made in this illustration is well suited to the purpose of the parable, and carries a depth of wisdom that challenges serious consideration—

"He that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the Word; and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of this life, choke the Word, and *he becomes unfruitful*."

Do these words of Jesus impress us? Do they cause us to think seriously about our own standing in relation to him—to "examine ourselves"? Are we letting our potential service to God be choked by the pressure of present things? How easily (and fatefully) these things crowd into our busy lives, and how fleshly desirable many of them are! The "care of this world" is one of the deadly thorns that choke the Word: the cares or concerns that encompass us on every hand: our employment, our homes and their contents, and all other worldly possessions, activities and involvements.

From attention to these things we develop a worldly fever that burns into our inmost being and, if unchecked, will scorch the tissues of the inner man, and he will become "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." He may still hold the *form* of godliness to outward appearance, but by his world-filled mind he will effectively deny the power of God unto salvation

On another occasion, Jesus used this term "cares" in relation to the day of his coming, and it is worthy of serious thought to note how he groups it with other perhaps more obviously dangerous and unholy things—

"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and *cares of this life*, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

We are warned to *take heed*, to be alert, because of 3 things: surfeiting or dissipation, that is, indulging in the pleasures of the flesh; drunkenness; and the ordinary *cares of this life*. Why? Because all these things weigh down the heart and fill the mind and make us unprepared and in an unsuitable state for the coming of the Lord, which is the only really important consideration. We may think cares are things that come upon us for which we should receive sympathy rather than warning, but most of them— those Jesus speaks of—we bring on ourselves by blindly following the world's ways and lifestyle, instead of the unworldly Christ-pattern. It is possible to be dissipated and drunken in a scriptural sense without realizing it. It happens when we thoughtlessly let our desires run their own course, and we do not resolutely "gird up the loins of our minds" and keep them on the service of God and things of the Spirit. Therefore, said Jesus—

"*Watch . . . and pray . . . and take heed to yourselves*."

The 2nd thorn is the "deceitfulness of riches." One does not need to have many thousands in order to possess "riches" in the New Testament sense, for the word simply signifies bountifulness or plentifulness, a snare that most of us today are caught in. Riches are deceitful in many ways. They create an entirely false picture of life, and we almost inevitably begin to trust in them—

"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall" (Prov. 11:28).

Paul puts his finger right on the danger spot when he says—

"They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition; for the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have been seduced from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Tim. 6:9-10).

When Jesus says that riches are *deceitful*, and how hard it is for those who have riches to enter the Kingdom, it is high time to examine ourselves and see whether we are using what we have for God's service or our own desires.

The 3rd thorn is "pleasures of this life." This is one of the most deadly and fatal enemies of all who aspire to a place in the Kingdom. They are deadly because they are designed and invented to cater to desire, to satisfy the cravings of the flesh and gratify the natural mind, and this affluent age is full of them.

We recognize that to separate ourselves from the world and all its attractive but passing pleasures, and to endeavour to walk with Christ in complete dedicated service to God, creates an endurance and self-denial that may bring a sense of loss and loneliness into our lives, if we are not resolutely spiritually minded. The Way of Life is crucifying to the flesh: we must keep the glorious goal brightly before the eye of faith, or we shall be drawn aside to death.

This is not the only age where these problems have been encountered. Even in the days of the apostles, and the presence and manifestation of the Holy Spirit, we learn of one of Paul's once faithful companions who later succumbed to the allurements of his day. Writing to Philemon, Paul spoke thankfully of Demas as his fellow labourer. A few years later, writing to Timothy from prison, he said—

"Demas hath forsaken me, having loved the present world" (2Tm. 4:10).

For a short period of unsatisfying animal pleasure, Demas gave up eternal life! If close companions of the apostles could be so influenced by the attractions of the world, should we not beware of the dangers by which we are surrounded, which are far greater and more tempting today than they were in apostolic times?

There are many good reasons why Christadelphians—the Brethren of Christ—cannot indulge in the pleasures of this life, or fraternize with those who have no use for God or His Word. One of the foremost is that stated by Jesus. They "*choke the Word*," and the deluded victim becomes "unfruitful" in the necessary works and service of God. How significant are the words used by Jesus! To "choke" is to stifle, strangle or suffocate, to check growth or progress. And this is *exactly what happens* to our "first love" if we become lovers of pleasure, for the natural mind becomes increasingly dominant and aggressive, and the spiritual mind withers.

When we believe the glorious Gospel of Life, and are baptized into Christ, our minds should be occupied with the things of the Kingdom, by which we will—

"Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Human joys and earthly pleasures, glittering as they are, are shallow and fleeting, and are not to be compared with the joy that will thrill the hearts of those who shall—

"Come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away" (Isa. 51:11).

Let us ever remember that wonderful word "everlasting," and let our minds dwell joyfully upon it: it makes all present self-denial and disappointment appear as nothing. As we read these Spirit words of the Age to Come, we see that *lovers of this world's pleasures would find themselves entirely out of place in such an environment*, and would seek in shame and confusion to hide themselves like Adam from the presence of the Lord. What then shall we do? What is the way of wisdom? Shall we walk with the half-hearted and lukewarm, whom Jesus will spue out of his mouth—or shall we "*walk worthy of God*" so that at his coming he will welcome us with joy, and give us to eat of the Tree of Life which is in the Paradise of God.

—Editor

The Diabolos

"*He (Jesus) partook of flesh and, blood that THROUGH DEATH he might destroy that having the power of death, that is, the devil (diabolos)*"—Hebrews 2:14

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

THE irreconcilable enmity is that which God said He would put between the serpent and the woman, and between the woman's seed and the serpent's seed: that is, between the serpent-adherents of falsehood and the righteous constituents of the Bride; and between the Chief of the political organization of the serpent community and the great Captain and Husband of the Bride (Gen. 3:15).

These are the 2 great parties into which mankind were to be divided, and between whom there was to be an irreconcilable enmity until one or the other of them should be exterminated from the earth. The 2 chiefs are the heads of each contending party, contemporary with each other upon the earth —contemporary at the bruising of the *heel* of the one, contemporary also at the bruising of the *head* of the other: 2 adverse POWERS *incarnated* in 2 irreconcilably hostile organizations of mankind.

The believers in the devil of the Gentiles could do no more than they have done towards explaining the origin of the world's miseries. The thinking of the flesh attributed their origin to the God-hating malevolence of a personal devil, existent before the formation of man. The Bible, on the contrary, refers them all to SIN as their cause, and to divinely-appointed EVIL *as the punishment of sin*.

The popular notion is a clumsy effort of the carnal mind to explain things too high for it; and the scripture testimony it adduces to sanctify its absurdity only exposes it to contempt. It tells us that this pre-existent immortal devil was 'Lucifer, Son of the Morning' (Isa. 14:12). Would anyone that understands the prophets be so infatuated as to dream of proving the pre-Adamic existence of the devil by such passages as this? The record concerning Lucifer is part of a prophecy of the overthrow of Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty by the Medes and Persians, commencing with the beginning of Isa. 13 and ending at 14:27. Lucifer is Belshazzar, who was so named 181 years before his fall because he was the *light bearer*, or sun, of the Chaldean heaven. The prophet, in vision, seeing him prostrate as "a carcase trodden under feet," exclaims (Isa. 14:16)—

"Is this the *man* that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms, that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof?"

How dark must that mind be that can press a prophecy of the fall of a *man* from the throne of a pagan empire into the service of demonstrating the existence of a personal devil before the creation of man upon the earth!

The Bible doctrine of the devil is its teaching concerning sin.

This is certainly an important subject, and one which it is desirable everyone should understand. The Gentiles do not understand the teaching of the Scriptures concerning sin; so it is impossible that they can know anything about the devil and Satan exhibited in the testimony of God.

Sin is the **synonym** of *devil* in the text we placed at the head of this article. I do not mean it to be inferred, however, that I hold that the word sin is the meaning of the words *devil* and *Satan* wherever they occur in the English version of the Scriptures. The words devil and devils occur about 120 times in the English version, but they are not all represented by the same word in the original. Two distinct words are used. In 82 places the word is *daimon* and its derivatives, which ought never to be translated devil, either in the sense of a personal devil or of sin. Of these 82, only 4 are in the Old Testament, where it is 'devils,' and not 'devil.'

In 38 passages the original word is *diabolos*.* Now, if the word 'devil' be the correct rendering of *diabolos*, it is certain that it cannot be the proper interpretation of *daimon*. Consequently, to render *daimon* by 'devil' must lead to error. I do not therefore affirm that 'sin' is synonymous with 'devil' in those texts which have *daimon* in the Greek; but that where the original is *diabolos*, the radical idea is 'sin.' I conclude that, distinct Greek words being used, the ideas represented in the 2 classes are distinct, though rendered by the same English word; and that, consequently, all arguments in relation to the Devil as derived from the 82 appearances of *daimon* would be deceptive and of no weight, because the devil is not referred to therein at all.

*The 38~places where *diabolos* occurs are: Matt. 4:1,5,8,11; 13:39; 25:41; Luke 4:2,3,5,6,13; 8:12; John 6:70; 8:44; 13:2; Acts 10:38; 13:10; Eph. 4:27; 6:11; 1 Tim. 3:6,7, 11; 2 Tim. 2:26; 3:3; Titus 2 : 3; Heb. 2 :14 ; James 4: 7; 1 Peter 5: 8; 3 times in 1 John 3:8; Jude 9; Rev. 2:10; 12:9,12; 22:2,10.

In our prefatory text, the words are, literally: "The having the power of death, that is, the devil (*diabolos*)" This *diabolos*, or devil, whatever it may mean, the apostle says *Jesus came to destroy*. It is, therefore, not an immortal devil but one which, sooner or later, will be annihilated by the power of Jesus, the Woman's Seed.

To destroy the devil is to take away the devil from the world; that is, to take away the sin of the world. Hence, said John the Baptist concerning Jesus—

"Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

This is the mission of Jesus, to take away every curse from the earth (Rev.22:3; 21:5), and certainly when this is accomplished, *diabolos* and all his works shall be destroyed (1 John 3:8).

Now to accomplish this great work of destroying the devil and his works, Paul says Jesus became flesh and blood; therefore subject to death like his brethren that he might die. I can understand this if the devil means sin, but on the hypothesis that *diabolos* means the Gentile devil, I confess I can see no sense in it. Why should Jesus become flesh and blood to destroy such a devil that the world believes in? —the devil which men suppose is to torment their species with fire and brimstone in all eternity?

If the devil to be destroyed be such an one as is supposed, Jesus ought to have appeared in the nature of angels, and not in the weakly nature of the seed of Abraham. He would then have been strong and invulnerable; and an overmatch for the foul fiend, perhaps—though if mere strength were required, I see not why the angels could not have given him his quietus 1000s of years ago.

But no. The angels—even all the host of them—could not, and cannot, destroy *diabolos*, or the Bible devil which torments our race, upon the principles laid down by eternal wisdom. This *diabolos* is the thing that has "the POWER of the death" which subjects all the living to corruption. It has this power now, even over the saints, though the King of Saints is no longer holden of it. It will retain this power till their resurrection, when they will be subject to its control no more.

It will still, however, retain its hold upon humanity for 1000 yrs. longer. But when that long period is accomplished, the "rest of the dead," who are to inhabit the earth for ever with the saints and their king, will be extricated from its deadly embrace, for—

"The last enemy, DEATH, shall be destroyed" (1 Cor. 15:26).

Ah! *Death* is the last enemy. Yes, and the *first* enemy was SIN, who introduced death into the world, for—
"The wages of sin is death" (Rom.6:23).

Here are cause and effect face to face. Human tradition makes the popular devil the first enemy and the last, the Alpha and Omega of all their woes. But not so the Bible. *Sin* was the first, and *death* will be the last; because sin being taken away, death, its penalty, will be abolished as a matter of course.

Sin must be destroyed. This is a victory that must be obtained before God can with honour to Himself abolish death. But the destruction of sin has a deeper meaning than simply putting down rebellion. *Death cannot be abolished so long as sin exists in the flesh*, for—

"The body is dead BECAUSE OF SIN" (Rom.8:10).

Sin is the physical principle within us that makes us mortal.

* * *

That *diabolos*—rendered 'devil' in the common version—is SIN, appears from the expressions of Paul in various parts of his writings. He says—

"That having the POWER of death is *diabolos*" (Heb. 2:14).

The 'power of death' is that which causes death. In a venomous serpent, the 'power of death' is in its fang or sting. Remove this, and the most deadly reptile is perfectly innocuous. It has lost its power—not of locomotion—but of inflicting death.

So if the power that makes death work strongly within us could be removed, we should never die. It is that POWER Paul calls *diabolos*. It is not death, but the death-producing power which is in every man, young and old, saint and sinner. Therefore *diabolos* is in every human being.

Having ascertained, then, that the power of death resides in *diabolos*, if we can ascertain what is the death-power, we at the same time learn who or what *diabolos* is. Let us, then, ask Paul a few questions—

"Venerable brother, you have said that *diabolos* hath the power of death. Will you kindly inform us what that power is?"

"Readily. It is death's sting, and that sting is SIN, which is strengthened in its workings by the law of God which is contrary to it—(1 Cor. 15:55-56).

"Why do you triumphantly enquire, O death, where is thy sting?"

"Because, in speaking of the mortal and corruptible body common to all the saints putting on incorruptibility and life, I saw that the sin in our flesh, which stings us to death, would be extracted, and the body consequently healed; and that, although we had been severely wounded in the heel, so to speak, we should

recover, and so cheat death of many victims. In other words, in the case of Christ's brethren, they would get the victory over him, and verify the saying, 'Death is swallowed up in victory'."

"*You have said that 'The body is mortal because of sin' (Rom. 8:10-11). Pray how does the body get quit of this deadly principle, so as to be pronounced victorious over death?"*

"In 2 ways, according to the believers acted upon. First, by resolution into dust, and reorganization thereof into body made incapable of decay by the creative Spirit of God in the hands of the Lord Jesus. This is resurrection life. Secondly, by an instantaneous change wrought in living flesh and blood by the energy of the Spirit, which will destroy the sin-power or sting, which gives place to that which hath the power of life, that is, the Spirit."

"*But if the Spirit have the power of life, how is it that Jesus styles himself THE LIFE?"*

"And so he is—For as the Father hath life in Himself, so He gives also to the Son to have life in himself (John 5:26). The Spirit, which 'imparts life because of righteousness' (Rom.8:10) is placed at the Lord's disposal 'That he should give eternal life to as many as God has given him' (John 17:2). The spirit-life, therefore, of the saints is hid with Christ in God, and when he who is their life shall appear, then shall they appear with him in glory (Col. 3:3-4)."

'*Sin in the flesh,*' then, and *the Spirit of God,* are the 2 antagonistic principles to which human nature is amenable in the present and future states. The former hath the power of death, and is termed *diabolos*. The latter hath the power of life, and is styled '*the Lord the Spirit*' (2 Cor.3:18; 1 Cor.15:45).

Human nature is styled '*sinful flesh*' (Rom.8:3), and Paul speaking of himself as sharing therein says—

"In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:17).

Sin in the flesh, then, is a very evil thing. It is that principle that works within us what is not good in thought and feeling; and these workings the apostle styles 'the motions of sins' (Rom.7:5)—the physical and mental emotions which, when yielded to, work transgressions of the law of God. So that when a man is tempted, he is not tempted of God, nor of such a monster as the Gentile Devil, but—

"Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it will bring forth sin. And sin, when it is perfected, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-15).

This is the philosophy of temptation, so to speak. Man is made up of certain desires. He desires what he sees, hears, feels, tastes, and smells. In other words, he desires the gratification of his senses. There is nothing *essentially* evil in this. The evil lies in their *inordinate* gratification. Now, between the ordinate or regular, and the inordinate or excessive, God has placed His law. He has said—

"*You may desire, but you may not inordinately desire: or if you do, you may not gratify that desire contrary to My law, under penalty of death.*"

Abstractly, there was no harm in picking up sticks on Saturday. But when God said—

"Thou shalt do no manner of work on the 7th day."

—then this abstractly harmless thing became a high crime against heaven, and brought forth death to him who perfected the desire to gather on that day. Thus the divine law defines what is irregular and therefore not to be done by those who would enjoy God's favour.

Now, if God had given no law to His people (and He has given law to none else), they would not have known what He deemed regular and what excessive, what right and what wrong. In truth, there would have been no such distinction. There would have been neither virtue nor vice, and the only course would have been for a man to follow his instincts. In this there would have been no sin, for—

"Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).

—and where there is no law, there can be no transgression (Rom. 4: 15). Had the Lord God not forbidden to eat, there would have been no sin in Adam's eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. The pleasantness of the fruit in Eve's sight, the appreciation of its goodness for food, and a desire to be as wise as the gods, or elohim, were things in harmony with the nature God had given them, and which He pronounced 'very good.' But when He said:

"*Ye shall not touch the tree under penalty of death.*"

—there was a law given that made the gratification of that nature sin. Hence it was as true of them as of the apostle, who says—

"I had not known sin but by the law. For I had not known lust (inordinate desire) except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet'" (Rom. 7:7).

They coveted, being enticed by their own lust, which drew them away from the Eden-law. The desire to eat was conceived within them *by the suggestion from without, setting the flesh to think and reason without subjection to the given law.*

The thinking and reasoning in harmony with their nature alone, was sophistry, and led them to conclusions in direct opposition to the divine law. Had they allowed the commandment to guide their reasoning, they would have reasoned logically, and God's thoughts and ways would have been approved and cheerfully acquiesced in. But the reverse of this was the fact, and sophistry led them in the way of death, as it has all their posterity ever since.

"By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20).

Therefore those who are ignorant of the law do not know when they sin. This is the case of those 'without law,' who are consequently under 'times of ignorance.' Nevertheless, they sin though they know it not. And sin and ignorance work death, and 'alienation from God's life' (Eph.4:18); for 'The wages of sin is death' (Rom.6:23), and renewal unto life is by knowledge (Col. 3:10)—

"Ye have put on the New Man which is renewed in *knowledge.*"

Thus sin had the power of death in Adam's case, and in that of all his descendants. There was no sin in the terrestrial system till he ate. The serpent could not sin because no law was given to it, and where there is no law there is no sin, and can be none. Sin entered the world—*not by the Serpent*—but by Adam, as it is written:

"Sin entered into the world *by one MAN*, and death by sin; and so death penetrated into all men, because in him all sinned" (Romans 5:12).

Adam's nature was animal: very good of its kind, as was the nature of all the other creatures. He would not have returned to dust if he had continued obedient. He would doubtless have been—

"Changed in the twinkling of an eye"

—on eating of the Tree of Life. But, being disobedient, his sin determined his fate, and that of the creatures. It doomed them all to death according to law. This sin became the death-power; for had there been no sin, there would have been no death. Though death *could* have ensued without sin, *it would not have been permitted to do so.* But desire being conceived for an unlawful object, this unlawful desire enticed to a forbidden action. The enticement was yielded to, and shame and fear—the evidences of guilt—resulted. Thus a new mode of thought, the sophistry of sin, took possession of human nature, and *caused it to fall.*

Sin reigned, and Adam obeyed it in the lusts of his body, yielding his members instruments of unrighteousness to sin. The sophisticated thinking of the flesh gained strength, and became in him and in his posterity the rule or law of their nature. This is termed in Scripture the 'law of sin,' the presence of which within him, every man may know by the passions, or 'motions of sins,' at work there to bring forth fruit unto death.

Because of this, it is also styled '*the law of sin and death,*' to which the flesh or humanity is subject. Cain was conceived under the activity of this law of nature. Hence it is said to have been *ek ton poneerou*: 'from evil,' that is, from sin (1 John 3:12). This was his origin. Had he been begotten before the tempest arose in his parents' nature which caused them to fall, he would not have been a murderer. But like produces like, and sin in activity produces pre-eminent sinners. The storm of passion had subsided, and a repentant mind had been established, ere Abel was conceived. When he was born he was welcomed as 'from the Lord,' and though born of sinful flesh, he did not derive his origin under the impulses of transgression, but in parental reconciliation to the divine law. Thus these 2 sons were the one from the evil, the other from the good: that is, of the devil, and of the Lord.

* * *

The word 'sin' is used in 2 senses. First, to represent that combination of principles within us which in excitation is manifested in passion, evil affections of the mind, diseases, death and corruption. They are called sin because their manifestation was permitted as the consequence of transgression. And this (transgression) is the 2nd sense of the word, as it is written—

"Sin is the transgression of law."

Transgression was the effect of the *unbridled inworking of humanity*; and when the transgression was complete, or 'finished,' that inworking and its result were **BOTH** styled '*SIN.*'

This unbridled inworking, yielded to, is licentiousness, and is exceedingly deteriorating to flesh and blood. It degenerates the human organization, and produces what is observed in the barbarous and savage races of mankind.

Man left to himself can never improve, but must always get worse and worse, because his nature is subject to 'the law of sin and death,' which is degenerating in its operation. The only real antagonist to this law is *divine truth*—
"The Word of the Truth of the Gospel" of the Kingdom (Col. 1:5).

If this can be made to take root in a man's heart, it becomes there a rule of thought and action, incessantly antagonizing the 'law of sin.' This rule is termed '*the law of the Spirit of Life*.' Between these 2 laws there is a deadly enmity, for 'the law of the Spirit of Life' is the '*law of God*'; and the other law—the 'law of sin'—is rebellion against it. God's law is from without: sin's law is born in us.

The law of God is implanted by *reasoning the mind into conviction of His testimony alleged*. It is the Gospel transferred from the prophets and apostles to the believer's heart, and is contrary in every particular to the 'thinking of the flesh,' which is sin thinking within us. Now it is men the least fleshly who can understand these things best. Hence Paul was well skilled in the matter. Says he—

"I find a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man . . ."

—the '*new creature*' formed within him by God's knowledge—

". . . but I see another law in my members (the law of sin) warring against the law of my mind (the law of the Spirit), and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom.7:21-23).

A man in whom the Truth has no place cannot understand this, because he is subject to only one of these laws, namely, the law of sin and death. His experience and that of the apostle do not agree. It is only the true believer who can sympathize with the apostle—he in whom the Truth is most active: he can discern the evil of his nature most acutely. Such a man can exclaim with Paul (v. 24)—

"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

—from this 'law of sin and death' to which my body is subject.

There is but one man that can deliver, even Jesus Christ the Lord, who partook of flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy this law of sin and death from the body, that is, *diabolos*. Paul, fully aware of this, thanks God in prospect of it (v. 25). And there he leaves it in the patience of hope, continuing 'for his mind' the mode of thinking erected within him by the Truth, as opposed to the unenlightened thinking of the flesh—subject to the law of God, but, for the flesh, to the law of sin.

This is the wretchedness of our case, that however approved of God for character, our flesh—because still subject to the law of sin—is still burdened by that innate power, or *diabolos*, which reduces to death, corruption, and dust.

* * *

But how does Jesus through his death destroy the devil? I could not answer this question if by 'devil' is to be understood the Gentile devil. But the devil Paul refers to in Hebrews is '*that having the power of death*,' which we have seen is sin. The question therefore is: *How does Jesus through his own death destroy sin?*

It is by making his life blood an offering for sin, which offering is perfected by his resurrection, as it is written (Rom.4:25)—

"He was delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification."

Now this sacrifice of Jesus becomes sin-destroying in every one who believes the Gospel of the Kingdom preached in his Name, and is sprinkled with his blood in being baptized into him. All the past sins of such a believer are cancelled or forgiven, and there is engrafted in him a principle, even *the Word believed*, called 'the law of the Spirit of Life,' which in the remission has 'made him free from the law of sin and death' (Rom.8:2); so that sin no longer reigns in his mortal body, that he should obey it in the lusts thereof.

He is 'made free from sin' as the *sovereign of his mind and actions*; and has become the servant of God, Whose will it is his study to learn and obey in all things; thus bringing forth fruit unto holiness, the end of which is everlasting life (Rom.6:22), when he shall be planted in the likeness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Such a resurrected man is like Jesus, incorruptible and immortal. The power of death is no longer in him, but thoroughly eradicated from his nature, which is then 'equal to the angels.' And as he is then, so will all the brethren of Jesus be freed from *diabolos* and, therefore, subject unto death no more.

But though at the resurrection of the just, *diabolos* be destroyed to this extent, it is still strong and rampant in the rest of mankind, and consequently has then yet to be eradicated from among them-, for it is Christ's mission to destroy *diabolos and the works thereof*: in other words, to—

"Take away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

This is his honour as the result of his obedience unto death. The first part of the work is to restrain sin, apocalyptically styled 'binding *the Dragon, the Old Serpent*' (Rev. 20:2); who is designated also by the words *diabolos* and *satanas*—the former being rendered 'devil,' and the latter left untranslated.

The last part of the enterprise is to *destroy* sin, so that thenceforth there shall not exist upon the earth a single man having *diabolos*—or 'that having the power of death'—in his nature. That is, that all the inhabitants of our planet, without exception, shall be incorruptible and deathless. The *restraining* of sin is to be effected a 1000 years before its *destruction*—the destroying process consummating the work of the millennial reign.

* * *

The sin-power in an individual man, uncontrolled by the law of God, is strong for evil, and ferocious as a beast of prey. It converts a man, as the phrase is, 'into a devil'; and permits him to stick at nothing. The works of such a man are (Gal. 5:19-21)—

"Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like . . ."

—the doers of which, the apostle says—

"... shall not inherit the Kingdom of God."

The Gentile devil cannot be fabled to do worse than this. Now when, instead of one such reprobate, there are 200 * million of the like associated together in one community, the power of the evil is increased so many million times. But the increase of the power does not alter the *nature* of the evil. It is still sin in the flesh, having the power of death, and, therefore, the *diabolos*.

* Bro. Thomas is speaking of the Papal dominion.

Now, what things that community of sinners wills, contrives, & does, are the '*works of sin,*' termed by John (1:3:8), 'the works of *diabolos.*' These works are civil and ecclesiastical institutions, called in Scripture:

"Things in the heavens, and things in the earth, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers" (Col. 1:16).

They are political aggregations of the works of sin, or *diabolos*. In short, everything that is not of the Seed or Truth of God is a work of sin, and destined finally to be destroyed. The institutions or polity of the 200 millions are a just representation of the character of the vast majority of them, and, therefore, of their nationality.

The individuals being sinners, and for the most part desperate ones, the community they constitute is pre-eminently *diabolos*, or SIN POLITICALLY INCORPORATE. The excessive wickedness of such a body politic is illustrated by the Inquisition and the Popish priesthood—associations of adulterers, thieves, murderers, idolaters, and blasphemers: hypocritical pretenders to piety, but as 'earthly, sensual, *devilish*' as their own 'devil' is supposed to be.

Now a community like this, with an Emperor, Pope, and 10 Kings at the head of it, is represented apocalyptically by a Dragon with 10 Horns. And to show its sin-origin, sin's symbol is associated with it, and it is styled '*the Dragon, the Old Serpent.*' And to show, furthermore, its antagonism to God and His people, it is termed '*diabolos and Satan.*'

In the aggregate it is represented in Daniel by the *Image of a Man* which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. This Man-Image is *Diabolos and Satan* in the climax of Sin's power, glory, and wickedness; and styled by Paul THE LAWLESS (2 Thess. 2:8), whose manifestation is the result of the energy of the adversary, which is not fully developed till the near future.

When the pre-millennial autocratic empire foretold by Ezekiel shall be fully organized, the SIN-MAN, perdition's son, will stand God-defiant within the walls of Jerusalem. This sin-power, called the devil and satan in the English version, is 'that having the power of death' *manifested in full political and military array.*

And who shall bind this strong one? There will be no power on earth equal to the enterprise. Britain, and the United States (notwithstanding their professed adhesion to Washington's foreign policy—too antiquated for the terrible future) will, on the principle of self-preservation, contend against him. But their efforts will be in vain. The

Binder of the Sin-Man must from heaven descend, as the apocalyptic angel, having 'great power' (symbolized by a 'great chain'), and 'enlightening the earth with his glory' (Rev. 20:1; 18:1).

When he appears, he will strike him such a blow on the feet as to send him maimed, halt, and crippled to the West. After this blow, which is the battle of Armageddon, by which Jerusalem and Israel's land are delivered, no more is heard in Scripture of the Dragon, for, deprived of the dominion of the East, the Sin-power can no longer be represented by 'the Dragon.'

What remains is *diabolos* and *Satan*, the Sin-Adversary, represented by 'the Beast, the False Prophet, and the Kings of the Earth with their armies' (Rev. 19:19-20), styled in Matt. 25:41 'the devil and his angels,' but properly '*the Sin-power and its messengers*' or agents. These are the broken 'pieces' of the Man-Image, which the Sin-Binder will have to reduce to powder after the fracture of its feet (Dan. 2:34-35).

We see from these hints that *diabolos*, or 'that having the power of death' appears in divers parts of Scripture in a sort of personal manifestation. The personality, however, is not that of a single individual, but *the personification of a power* in man and in society antagonistic to God and His people.

Treating of sin in the flesh, the apostle speaks of it reigning, deceiving, and slaying its victims. While sin has the power of death, he says the *strength* of that power is the holy, just and good law and commandment of God. That is, sin would have no power to work death in a man for coveting if the law had not said 'Thou shalt not covet.' It is manifestly good not to covet anything that is your neighbour's. Therefore the law that forbids it is a good law. But if there had been no such law given, to be covetous would not be punishable with death and exclusion from the Kingdom. Hence Paul says:

"The good law was not made death unto me. But it made sin appear sin, *working death in me*; that sin through the commandment might become pre-eminently A SINNER" (Rom. 7:13).

In the common version *kath' hyperboleen hamartoolos* is rendered 'exceedingly sinful.' This is aversion, not a translation. *Hamartoolos* is 'one who deviates from the path of virtue, a vicious person, a sinner'; consequently 'depraved, sinful, detestable.' It is a substantive, not an adjective as rendered in the English version, and therefore ought to be translated as above, 'a sinner.'

Now this exceedingly great sinner Sin, working death in man, the Scripture styles *diabolos*. And it may be pertinently asked, Why is it so called? The following I conceive to be the reason. The attribute most characteristic of sin's character is *deceitfulness*, as it is written:

"Exhort one another daily, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb.3:13).

"Sin taking occasion through the commandment deceived me" (Rom. 7:11).

"Eve being deceived was in the transgression" (1 Tim. 2:14).

"The Serpent beguiled her through his shrewdness" (2 Cor.11:3).

Eve being deceived, the Serpent's part in the transaction was finished. He held no conference with Adam who, the apostle says, 'was not deceived.' Sin, the Seducer, approached him through Eve, whose eyes were open to evil. Sin incarnate in Eve was Adam's tempter—

"With her much fair speech she caused him to yield; with the flattering of her lips she forced him" (Prov. 7:21).

She gave him of the tree, and he did eat; and eating, fell. Thus *sin caused him to fall in casting him across the law line*. Therefore it is called *diabolos*, for this is a noun derived from the verb *diaballo*, which means 'to throw or cast over or across.' *Diaballo* is from *dia*, and *ballo*, 'to throw, cast.' *Diabolos* is one who casts over the line, in a scriptural sense, by misrepresentation and subtlety, which is lying. Hence *diabolos* stands for slanderer, accuser, and whatever else may be affirmed of sin. This is the proper signification of the word, and intelligible to everyone. Its improper meaning is devil, and understood by none.

Sin is the devil of our planet; which few perhaps will believe, being so much in love with it, and delighting in its pleasures wherever they can be found. Gentile superstition is terribly afraid of its devil; but it loves sin dearly and serves it in all its ungodly lusts. The Scripture saith, however (1 John 3:8)—

"He that committeth sin is of the devil [*he is a child of sin*], for the devil sinneth from the beginning [*sin transgresseth ever*]."

This is the unhappy lot of all the world, composed almost exclusively of the children of sin. Therefore the apostle saith—

"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" (1 John 2:15).

* * *

We have ascertained satisfactorily, because scripturally, as it appears to me, that the thing styled in the Greek New Testament *diabolos*, and rendered 'devil' in the English version, is sin in the flesh. He that 'walks according to the *flesh*' 'serves sin,' *diabolos*, or the devil. The mortal body is the '*body of sin*,' or sin incarnate, which with its affections, lusts and transgressions, is styled '*the Old Man*,' than whom no imaginary devil can be more wicked and defiant of God and His law. The Old Man, in his individual, social and political manifestations, is the *diabolos* or devil of the New Testament mystery, and treated of accordingly.

Destroy the ascendancy of the sin-principle of the flesh over the thoughts and actions, and you have a moral development of the New Man. And then eradicate it from the flesh by the Spirit in a resurrection or a transformation to eternal life, and you have the New Man in combined moral and physical manifestation—'equal to an angel' (Luke 20:36). There is no sin in the flesh of the angelic nature: therefore it cannot die. No element of it has the power of death so that *diabolos* exists not in angelic society. The devil has no place there. There being nothing in their nature causing them to transgress, or *cross the line* of the divine will, there are no 'works of sin' among them, but all is just as God would have it.

And it would be so *here*, but for the disturbing principle called SIN. Eradicate this, and 'the will of the Father will be done on earth as it is in heaven'—that is, in angelic society.

If there had been nothing in the constitution of the original nature of man impressible by the suggestions of the serpent, there would have been no *internal* response to the *external* enticement. That internal something was not essentially evil, because—though possessing it—Adam and Eve were pronounced 'very good.' It is not evil to admire the beautiful and to wish to possess it, to desire to gratify the taste, and to aspire to the wisdom of the 'gods' or Elohim.

But all this becomes evil when its attainment is sought by crossing the limit forbidden of God. The seeking to attain, by crossing the line, Paul teaches, was the result—not of innate wickedness—but of deception. The serpent beguiled Eve. Had she been certain of the consequences, she would not have transgressed. She had no experience of evil. God had warned her of danger in the pursuit of knowledge through disobedience. But then, if they were to *go back to the dust*, that is, to die, what was the meaning of that Tree of Lives?

Did not God mean something else? If they crossed the line in relation to the Tree of Knowledge, could they not eat also of that other Tree, and live forever?

There seemed to her mind to be an uncertainty about returning to the dust, *when she lost sight of the law*. This was 'the weakness of the flesh.' There was no uncertainty of consequences so long as she thought God meant what He said. But being deceived on this point, and so made doubtful of it, she ventured to experiment. But however doubtful of what might be, if she had adhered strictly to what God had said, she would still have continued 'very good.'

'Weakness,' both mental and physical, is an *original* element of *animal* nature, as 'power' is of the angelic. Adam's nature was 'very good' as animal nature goes; but still it was weak, and therefore deceivable and terminable. The life principles being weak, the flesh is weak in all its operations, mental and physical. The life of the angelic nature or spiritual body is not manifested on animal principles, but by the direct action of God's Spirit on dust, so organized as to be adapted to its operations. It is, therefore, strong.

When Adam's weak nature began to think and act independently of the divine law, its weakness—before an undefiled weakness—became evil in its workings and deteriorating in its effects; and acquired the name of 'sin' from its having brought forth sin, or transgression of law. The undefiled weakness of the flesh, enticed and deceived by sophistry from without, is the definition of the original temptation. The law of God was weak *through the flesh* (Rom. 8:3), and not through the strength of the serpent.

Had the flesh been strong, the serpent would have been powerless, with all his sagacity. But the weakness, thrown into a ferment by serpent subtlety, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived them, and *by it*, slew them (Rom. 7: 11). The serpent was—

"More subtle (or acute) than any beast of the field the Lord God had made."

It is generally *supposed* the serpent was employed by the devil to beguile the woman. Calmet says—

"It cannot be doubted but that by the serpent we are to understand the devil, who merely employed the serpent as a vehicle to seduce the first woman."

This teaches the existence of an invisible devil before the serpent. The Bible, however, does not teach this. *Diabolos* had no existence before the formation of man; but the serpent had. Moses gives not the slightest hint of the existence of a devil before the creations of the 6th day. The serpent first, then man, afterwards woman, and *lastly* 'diabolos,' or devil. This is the scriptural order of their manifestation: the revelation *in the flesh* of the incitant to transgression, or *diabolos*, being coeval with the Fall. Man existed before the devil, and will flourish in eternal glory after his destruction, when sin and all its works are eradicated from the earth.

Father *diabolos* was not a murderer before he brought our first parents under sentence of death. It was then he 'slew them by the commandment.' The 'beginning' referred to in John 8:44 is the *apo kataboles kosmou*, or 'foundation of the world' laid in its sin-constitution (Gen. 3:14-21). Jesus is there talking to the Jews of their father Sin, whose servants they were. They regarded themselves as the freeborn descendants of Abraham, but he told them they were bondmen to their father Sin—

"Whosoever committeth sin is Sin's *doulos* (or bondservant)"—v. 34.

He offered to make them free of this yoke by the Truth. He says—

"I know that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me because my word hath no place in you" (v. 33).

This murderous disposition constituted them the seed of a *living father*, as well as of the dead Abraham, for Jesus says—

"I speak what I have seen with my Father, and ye do *what ye have seen* with your father" (v. 38).

Here was a question between them of fatherhood. Jesus claimed to be seed of Abraham and God; while he charged them with being seed of Abraham *and Sin*—they were, in other words, *begotten* of sinful flesh, while he was *begotten* of God: sinful flesh being the matrix of both parties. They said, 'Abraham is our father' or begetter. But Jesus objected to this, because they did not do the works of Abraham—showing that he was speaking, not of lineage, but of sonship based on disposition and character.

They contended for purity of lineage—that their fatherhood was not of Gentile idolaters but Jewish believers in God, which constituted them children of God. Jesus charged them with doing the deeds of their father, which they understood to mean of their Gentile paternity, for they said—

"We be not born of fornication: we have one Father, even God" (v.41).

They considered that purity of descent from Abraham constituted them children of God, without regard to character, but Jesus taught them that 'the flesh profiteth nothing' (John 6:63). If men would be—

"The children of God, *being the children of the resurrection*."

—it was by being like Abraham in faith and obedience, which they were not. But being Sin's bondmen, he said to them (v.44—substituting Paul's definition of *diabolos* for 'devil')—

"Ye are of your father Sin, and the lusts of your father [*the lusts of sinful flesh*] ye will do. Sin was a murderer from the beginning [*or from the Fall*], and caused not to stand (*hesteken*) in the Truth [*or law*] because the Truth is not in it. When Sin uttereth a lie, it speaks of its own things; for it is a liar, and the father of it."

This is perfectly intelligible. All men are sin's children who are born of blood, of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man. And they continue such until they 'become sons of God' by becoming Abraham's seed through Jesus as the Christ (John 1:12-13; Gal. 3:26-29).

The devil, or *diabolos*, had a place in the 'beginning' as really as the serpent, and that place was in the flesh.

* * *

It is asked, "Does not the New Testament teach there is a tempter as really as a 'Christ' the tempted?"

In reply to this I remark that in the case of Jesus, *diabolos* and *satan* were both concerned. When he was filled with the Holy Spirit he was 'led'—Mark says 'driven—by the Spirit into the wilderness *to be tempted*, or properly, *to be put to the proof*' under sin—*hypotou diabolou*. Their nature was his nature, for—

"The children of God being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same"

(Hebrews 2:14).

Hence he was sent forth 'in a form of Sin's flesh' (Rom. 8:3), and thus God made him sin—that is, flesh and blood—for us (2 Cor. 5:21) and on account of sin gave judgment against sin in the flesh of Jesus.

The testimonies show that Jesus was '*under sin*' as a man under a burden. He groaned under it in painful travail. While among the wild beasts of the wilderness (a similar situation to the first Adam's), he felt the danger and desolation of his situation, and the cravings of a long-protracted fast. He ate nothing all this time, his life being sustained by the Spirit; and at the end became very hungry.

Luke (4:2) terms this 'being 40 days put to the proof under *diabolos*' or sin. That is, in his case, under the perturbation of weakened flesh and blood. This was before the adversary came to him. His nature was severely tried during this period; and it remained to be seen whether his flesh, thus weakened, would stand in the Truth; or, like Adam's, seek present gratification by transgressing divine law.

The end of the 40 days appears to have been the prepared crisis of the trial. At this juncture one came to test him. Jesus styles him, as he termed Peter, 'Satan,' that is, 'adversary.' This individual, probably, was an angel; for angels were concerned in the matter, as appears from the testimony. Christ's visitor was evidently a person of scriptural information; and as he appeared as a tester *at a time especially prepared* for the trial, I have no doubt he was sent by the same Spirit that led Jesus into the wilderness, there to be put to the proof. I conclude, then, he was 'an angel of light,' not shining with brightness but appearing as a friendly man, well instructed in the Word.

Now Luke attributes what this concealed adversary suggested to *diabolos*, or 'one causing to transgress'—but in this case without success; for they were suggestions to Jesus under the workings of sin's flesh, seeing that—

"He was in all things put to the proof according to the likeness, without offense" (Heb. 4:15).

The visitor, though styled 'devil,' was not *diabolos* within, as in our case, but an excitant thereof in 'the likeness' or sin's flesh, and therefore his sayings are recorded as those of *diabolos*.

In the second Adam's case, the testing adversary failed to move him from the stand he had taken of absolute obedience to the will of God, whatever might ensue. The adversary appealed to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride or life—but all without effect. The law of the Spirit of Life within him was too strong for these appeals. He extinguishes their effect by the Word of faith which was his shield, and emerged from the trial undefiled.

The tester of his allegiance then left him; and whatever perturbation may have been excited, it subsided into the peacefulness of a conscience void of offense toward God.

* * *

The Serpent, because of his agency in Adam's temptation, became the symbol representative of the evil he had done in the unconsciously immoral use he had made of what he knew by observation, and was able to express in speech. It would be very injudicious to rush to the conclusion that, because the serpent and the angel of light stood related to the 2 Adams as the *diabolos*, or that causing to err, therefore whenever the word *diabolos* occurs it means the serpent or angel of light. Christ was not put to the proof by a serpent, nor by the serpent. Nor was Adam by an angel of knowledge, nor by the angel of light who offered his suggestions to Jesus. They were both probed to the quick; but by *provers* suitable to the times, place and circumstances around them. —HERALD, 1852

WE have not deliberately dropped the Current Events: the temporary omission is just a matter of circumstances. We are also aware some desire shorter items be included, rather than all long articles: we work toward this. And we are mindful that we are far behind in publication: we hope to correct this too. "100 Years Ago," God willing, next month.

Fellowship With His Sufferings

"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation"—1 Peter 1:15
BY BROTHER ROBERT ROBERTS

It belongs to us, brethren and sisters, peculiarly on the present occasion, to contemplate—
"The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow."

Christ was a sufferer in a sense which perhaps few people realize. The majority of persons are apt to look at the cross, and the cross only, and to imagine that the sufferings of Christ relate only to the physical pain he

experienced in being put to so cruel a death, or at most to the anguish of feeling to which he was subjected in being mocked and insulted by a crowd of soldiery.

To those, however, who study Christ's life attentively, and particularly in the light of what the spirit of Christ has testified in the Psalms as to the sufferings of Christ, it becomes manifest that those sufferings were much more widely spread over his life than is popularly imagined; that they consisted largely of the mental suffering caused by the present evil state of things among men; that, in fact, he was—

“A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.”—Isa. 53:3

His sorrow and his grief were of a sort that many—and we might add, that nearly all, are unsusceptible of. Christ had a high conception—far higher than ever we can hope to reach—of what men ought to be, and of the position that God ought to occupy among men, and therefore he felt a pain that none could experience who were not of the same state of mind, in mingling with men who were, on the whole, as regards God, like the brutes.

We find that we come into fellowship with the sufferings of Christ in proportion as we grow up to him, and become like him, drinking in his spirit, sharing his tastes, and laying hold of his hopes. We come to find that it is no empty metaphor which likens the people of God to strangers and pilgrims, having here no continuing city. We come to feel that David did not speak extravagantly when he said,

"My flesh longeth as in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." "I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert."

If you examine the Psalms where these expressions of misery occur, you will find that they all have relation to the moral and mental attitude of the men around him. David suffered from the godlessness of those who became his enemies, and from the proud indifference or brutish inertia of men whose portion is in this life, and who have not set God before them. In this, David was a preliminary exhibition of Christ, for the spirit of Christ was in him and made use of him to paint, in advance, so to speak, the portrait of the inner personal experiences of the Lord.

Now anyone who lays hold of the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, with the result which those things were given to produce, will feel in fellowship with his sufferings on these points; he will feel alone; he will feel that the present is an evil world in a high sense; he will feel a pilgrim in the midst of it. It is well to see this; for in proportion as we see it, we are able to reconcile ourselves to our position and to go through our course with much less chafe than we should experience if we were to go upon the supposition that we were to find things satisfactory in the present.

If we act upon the idea that we are now to find edification, comfort, pleasure in all around, or to any great extent anywhere, we shall be grievously disappointed, because we shall be finding at every step that it is impossible at present to realize the aspirations of our hearts: impossible for a great variety of reasons. Even if the *world* were all we could wish, we are now *in ourselves* only flesh and blood, and that is a weak thing both physically and spiritually.

We do not require to live in the first century to fellowship the sufferings of Christ. We may have thought so in the first days of our spiritual childhood. We all, no doubt, had the idea that we required to be put in prison, and to have the officer of the law come into our houses and take our things, or that we should be led forth to the stake or have our heads cut off, before we should suffer with Christ.

We come to see the fallacy of that idea as we grow older. In one respect we are called upon to endure a more difficult martyrdom than the faggot or the block. Many have undergone *that* kind of martyrdom whom Christ will not acknowledge in the day of his coming. In the early centuries, many rushed into that kind of martyrdom upon the same principle as that which leads the votaries of the Roman Catholic religion to submit to painful penances.

Wicked people feel that God has a claim on them, so to speak, and they want to pay Him off and be independent; whereas the true worship which God exacts excludes that feeling entirely, and brings us to the recognition of the fact that we *cannot* pay God off. All we can do is to obey Him in thanksgiving for His goodness in offering us forgiveness on the recognition of our position.

The age of true martyrdom has not passed away. We are invited to offer ourselves as *living sacrifices to God*, and that is a far more difficult kind of sacrifice to offer than that which is at an end almost as soon as the pain is felt. Death by the sword or at the stake is sharp, short, and decisive, *but a living sacrifice is a living martyrdom*. It is a living mortification—a tedious and protracted suffering; it is a waiting for God in the midst of a crooked and perverse

generation; it is an obeying of commandments which are irksome to the natural man it is submitting to a trial which is not joyous, but grievous.

How is that? Because God forbids those who are invited to be heirs of His kingdom to be friends with the world, or to seek for pleasure in the present time. Those who are at liberty to be friends with the world, and to seek for pleasure in the present time, have a great deal to entertain them; and those who accept the calling to which God has called all who have ears to hear, experience the deprivation; though I admit that after a while, the deprivation is felt in a different direction.

What I mean by that is this: they do not feel the deprivation of present gratifications such as they are called upon to leave, for they learn to *hate* these, seeing that they are built on the wrong foundation. The world disregards God; they follow pleasure for its own behoof, and a saint learns to have no pleasure in anything from which God is absent, so that if he could, he would not take part.

But he feels the deprivation in another way. He learns not only to hate *those* things, but to love *another* set of things, and the things he loves are not present to him except by faith. If they were present to us now, there would be thousands who would make the exchange. But then, they would do it for the sake of getting something better than they had, and God is not pleased to bestow the highest good on that principle. He offers the highest good on condition of pleasing Him, and not pleasing ourselves. This uninviting religion of faith gives us that opportunity. God is not pleased with anything short of it.

"Without faith it is impossible to please Him."

But He *has* given us an opportunity of pleasing Him. What a great *honour* if we could only realize it! What a great dignity for mortal men to have placed in their hands *the power of giving satisfaction* to the Creator of heaven and earth! He has given us that opportunity in Christ; but in giving us that opportunity He requires that the good things spoken of in the Gospel be postponed.

Nevertheless, we see them. Abraham saw them: he lived a long time ago, but he saw them, and was glad. That is Jesus' testimony:

"Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad."

Abraham is the father of the faithful; that is, he is the leading specimen of the kind of people with whom God is well pleased. We also look forward; we see, and we are glad; but our rejoicing is only in hope, and is mixed with weakness *and with fear*. We are told to:

"Work out our salvation with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2: 12).

Why with fear? The question is answered: (Heb. 4: 1).

"Let us therefore FEAR, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

That is an apostolic reply to the question. With all our joy in looking forward to the rest before us, our rejoicing is moderated by the apprehension that possibly we may fail to enter in. Christ said, when Peter asked him upon the point, that (Luke 13: 24)—

"Many, I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

Why not able? Because they are not in earnest about it; they are not *persevering* in it, they do not give enough energy to it.—

"We ought to give the more *earnest* heed, (says Paul), to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should *let them slip*."

Many fail to attend to the things in this *earnest* way; they lay hold of the kingdom of God, but, at the same time, keep hold of twenty other things. They devote their best faculties and their principal time to the promotion of objects unconnected with Christ entirely, and which are not even necessary for them in the provision of their livelihood.

A man, of course, must labour for his daily bread, and, in fact, that may be made a service of God; for it is one of the teachings of Paul that *whatever* a man doeth, he is to do it *heartily as to the Lord*, and not unto men. He says that to servants; so we have it in our hands to turn *everything* to spiritual account if we are wise.

I am referring, however, to people who are under no obligation to attend to things they have in hand, but who choose them as a matter of special taste, as a matter of honour, or as a matter of respectability. These things engross all their energies, run away with their time, and steal their hearts, so that the things of God have little hold upon them, and, therefore, they fail.

Our rejoicing therefore is mixed with fear, and ought to be so. No one should slacken his hand until his course is run. Never put off the day of wisdom. If we reject wisdom for our own convenience, wisdom will reject us. It is one of the delusions we have to be on our guard against, that—

"While the lamp holds out to burn, The vilest sinner may return."

That is what is said by the false prophets of modern religion. The Spirit of God says—

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: *for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. 6: 7-8).

It will be too late for a man to hurry up and to be spiritually- minded when he finds himself in the grasp of death.

What a refreshing thing it is to see men and women under the power of the fear of God. We need not fear men; we need not fear what brother this or brother that may say, because in a short time, in the order of nature, all men will be in their graves, and there will be no reality in relation to us *then* except God, *His* mind, *His* purpose, and *His* judgment. Therefore we need not vex ourselves, or encumber our spiritual operations with anxieties about the opinions of our fellows; let us be *right with Christ*. To be right with him, requires that we be in earnest, and *all the time* in earnest. Recollect his somewhat abrupt declaration to a young man who came to him, saying,

"Lord, I will follow thee, but suffer me first to go and bury my father."

And to whom Jesus said—

"Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God."

What is the application of that saying, unless it be to suggest that the young man in question by proposing to do something else besides seeking the kingdom of God, was as a man turning his hand from the plough?

Christ's stern declaration is that such a man is *not fit* for the kingdom of God. That implies that there are some who are "fit," and some who are "not fit," and it also shows who are they that are "fit." Those who are fit are those who lay hold with *full purpose of heart* and accept the calling in Christ *in its entirety*. That calling is a thing that is very exacting indeed; it claims absolute ascendancy with those of whom it lays hold.

And how *reasonable* this seems when we allow ourselves to realize all the surrounding facts of the case, and the end of every human being. Walk through a cemetery, for instance, and read the tombstones. There you have a sleeping congregation of people, who have done with life. There are all sorts—from the captain who acquired military or naval honours in various parts of the world, to the unknown pauper who drivelled out his inglorious days in the workhouse. There are merchants who, rose to the top of the social scale, and died in the lap of luxury, beautiful daughters of rich men, strong young men, beautiful children, there they lie a common mass of corruption, "unknowing and unknown," forgotten in the land of the living.

Now, let us imagine that we are included in that congregation, as we certainly shall be if the Lord arrest not the course of nature by his coming, and let us imagine the time for resurrection come. On the one side of the resurrection-line there is the past—the human past, with its dropped burden of human anxieties and human business; and on the other side, *what is there?* GOD'S BUSINESS; God's business on a large scale. Christ is at the head of it. He puts aside the kings first and all their governments, and his great business is to exalt the name of God in the earth, and to bring the nations into subjection and harmony with him.

Now, whom of all that congregation of the dead, whose mortal days and mortal concerns are all gone—whom of them would you select to be companions of Christ in this mighty work upon earth, which has as its object the exaltation of the honour of God's Name for ever and ever, in the countless population with which the earth is yet to be peopled? Would you think it a large price to ask of any of that dead, rotting congregation, for the privilege of immortal partnership in this work, that they should have devoted their mortal affections, their mortal energies, their mortal day, their mortal opportunities, to holding up the name of Christ in the day of his disgrace?

I am sure that no one realizing the matter would falter in the decision. Everyone would say, it was most reasonable that people who lived for themselves should reap what they had sown. The great majority of the dead lived for mortal life; and they cannot complain that they get and perish for what they worked. All they worked for was to have good things to put into their mouths, fine clothes to put on their backs, and the satisfaction of "respectability" in

their day and generation. They got what they worked for; they had their reward; therefore, what would you bring them forward into the kingdom of God for?

The kingdom of God is for those only who seek it first, and work for it in a practical, enthusiastic way, and are considered fools for their pains. Let us then, brethren, never listen for a moment to those who would hinder in the good fight by recommending what is called "temperance" and "moderation" in the things of Christ.

Their exhortations are altogether misplaced, and altogether uncalled for. The tendencies of the sluggish beast of the natural man are sufficiently powerful in that direction to render it quite needless for anyone to exhort us in that line.

We need exhort the other way. We want continually to be pulled up in the direction of the path which the Captain of our Salvation himself has trodden before us, and in which he is, so to speak, leading us on. We know what sort of path that was. We know he was no "mild" and "moderate" man in the things of God. We know he had no schemes in hand but the one scheme of God's purpose. We know that he was never found trimming his sails to worldly breezes, or emulating or inculcating worldly principles; he devoted himself solely to the work which the Father gave him, and his relation to the world was one of continued antagonism.

Our work, and *our* attitude, if we are his brethren, will be the same. The work may be different now in its external form, but it is the same work for all that, based upon the same testimonies and the same principles, and aiming at the same end—the *purifying of a peculiar people* for the inheritance of the kingdom of God.

Let us not fear to give ourselves to it with all our hearts. We shall not regret it when that day comes to us, or when we shall gasp out the vital energy which keeps us going for the time being. We shall look back with satisfaction on our little course if we are able to say,

"Well, I know my efforts were weak, and I know my shortcomings were many, but I have sought to serve Christ to the extent of my mortal possibilities as circumstances allowed, and although it has been a toilsome career, hard work, and unsatisfactory in some respects, I am glad to look back upon it, and would do as I have done if I have to live it over again."

On the other hand, the men or the women who have merely mild notions of Christ, and who have been devoting themselves to personal aims connected with this mortal life, as the object of their exertions, when they get through their comfortable drive and come to die, will be far other than satisfied with the account they will have to look upon; they will be filled with consternation when they come to present it.

It is a glorious day that is coming, but glorious only in a certain line of things. The greatness and the glory of the day of Christ are all on a certain foundation. The glory, and the foundation of the glory, are both visible in the Psalm (99) that has been read. Let us glance at them for a moment—

"The Lord reigneth." (v. 1)

What is the leading feature of the system of government and of human life when the Lord reigneth? –

"The Lord is great in Zion; he is high above all the people. Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy." (vs. 2-3).

"Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy." (v. 9).

The recognition of the greatness of God is the foundation of the glory of those glorious "good times coming." It is testified that all nations shall come and worship before God; and that the knowledge of the glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; God's will shall be done upon earth as it is done in heaven. There will be glory to God in the highest at the time that there is peace on earth.

Now, in contrast to this, just look at the world at present. What does it know or care for the greatness and the glory of God? What conception has it of His holiness? Speak to it of such matters, and your speech is to them the speech of a madman. This helps us to realize how thoroughly evil the world is.

Some people have a difficulty in realizing the truth on this point. They certainly think the world was bad at the time of the Roman emperors, and at the time that Christ appeared; but they have an idea that now we are advancing by slow degrees towards an age of progress and enlightenment, and that in fact the world as a whole is already tolerably righteous.

The prevalence of this idea is only proof of the ignorance that exists as to the nature of true enlightenment and true civilization. The world lieth in wickedness now as much as it did in the days of John. The wickedness has only changed its form a little. Wickedness in our day is refined; it is cultivated; it is methodical; it has got on a beautiful skin outside, but according to the Divine standard, it is, perhaps, more reprobate than the untutored barbarism of early days. It is more proud and more blind to its weakness and dependence.

The barbarians had some notion of a God, and entertained some idea that they must give some service to that God; but this miserable world of modern civilization is like to burst with exaggerated notions of its own importance. It is ripe for destruction. It is respectable enough according to current notions of respectability; but, in the eyes of God, it is sunk in corruption as much as it was before the flood, when mankind had corrupted His way upon the earth.

Mankind have now utterly corrupted *His Way*, and are walking after a thousand imaginations of their evil hearts, fearing not the Possessor of heaven and earth, regarding not His law, nor caring to know the state of the poor. Christ is, with them, a byword.

We are close to the time when it is revealed that the angel—the symbolic angel with the sickle (Rev. 14: 18)—will gather the harvest of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God, that it may be trodden by him to whom alone is allotted this great mission, even the Man of Sorrows who, in his day, bore testimony to the wickedness of the world; who upheld the faith and the honour of God, and who is to have the great honour of executing the work of judgment when the time arrives.

To that work and that great honour we are called if we are of his spirit, if we are his brethren, if we have a family likeness to him. The family likeness in this case, is a thing of principle and not of flesh and blood, and the principle shines through the gorgeous picture of the kingdom presented in this Psalm. It is the *greatness of God and holiness unto Him*. "Be ye holy," Christ said to his disciples, and, therefore, to us. We may imagine him standing here this morning and saying, "*Be ye holy*"; and his apostles say the same—

"Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." (1 Peter 1: 15).

This is a practical exhortation. There are things which we ought to dismiss as inconvenient and unbecoming in sons of God, and Paul mentions among them '*covetousness, jesting, and foolish talking*'. (Eph. 5: 3-4). These are things which waste and burn up the mind. There are indulgences in common follies which dry up the spiritual sap and engender aversion to spiritual things. Let us avoid them. Remember, we are going on to the state symbolized by the four heraldic Living Creatures of the Israelitish Commonwealth, full of eyes, and which rest not day and night, saying, (Rev. 4: 6-11)—

"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come ... Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

We are to be incorporated in those four living ones if we are acceptable to Christ at his coming; and that acceptability will only exist *then* if we are *now* constituents of the peculiar people. Christ is working now; purifying the people unto himself, and he has been working at this work ever since he went away.

It is hard work in our generation. The world is in such a wretched plight with regard to the truth, that we cannot begin where the apostles began. The apostles began straight off, whereas we have to convince men of the elementary principles. We have to begin at the very foundation, and show that man is mortal; that Christ is coming, and that the kingdom of God is to be established on earth.

Consequently, there is the tremendous danger that people getting to know these elementary things may think they are all right, whereas the fact of the matter is that the foundation is only laid for the work of fashioning them into the likeness of the people prepared for the Lord. Well, if the difficulties are great, no doubt Christ's sympathies are great; if our situation is peculiarly discouraging, no doubt our welcome before him, if we overcome, will be correspondingly cordial. He may say—

"Many believed on me who saw the signs and wonders of the apostolic age, but ye saw them not, and yet believed: blessed are ye; enter now into the glory revealed."

In prospect of that, and with the desire for such a reception, let us continue patient in this well-doing; breaking bread from Sunday to Sunday, daily reading the word and persevering under all circumstances, however discouraging, in the patient observance of all the things that Christ has commanded.

—APRIL, 1876

Thou Also Shalt Be Cut Off

“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit He taketh away ... it is cast forth ... withered ... cast into the fire and burned”—Jn.15:2-6

SALVATION CONDITIONAL ON WORKS OF OBEDIENCE TO THE END OF LIFE

IT is a common conception of the religious world—specifically and dogmatically asserted by some, and taken thoughtlessly for granted by practically all—that once one has adopted and professed some religious affiliation, eternal salvation is assured. Even among those bearing the name Christadelphian, the attitude and way of life of the majority would indicate they labour under the same delusion.

The purpose of this consideration is to demonstrate that—

1. “Faith alone” is NOT sufficient for salvation.
2. Salvation is NOT unalterably determined at “conversion.”
3. Final acceptance by God depends on a sincere, intelligent, practical, consistent obedience to His specific commands to the end of life.

There is much loose, hazy thinking on this subject. The Bible is a large book, and very few are prepared to take the time and trouble to study it thoroughly. Therefore it is widely misunderstood and misinterpreted.

The Catholic Church has developed the doctrine of salvation by works to the absurd extent of instituting a ‘Treasury of the Church,’ built up by those who do more good works than are necessary for their own salvation. The saving benefit of these surplus works can be bought by others whose own performance falls short.

A reaction to this extreme corruption and perversion of the beautiful truth that works are necessary came at the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, resulting in the opposite extreme as typified by Martin Luther who challenged the genuineness of the epistle of James because James insists on the absolute necessity of works, and exposes the meaninglessness of ‘faith’ without works.

Should we be discouraged at finding such conflicting ideas, each claiming the support of the Word of God? We do not think so. We believe that the patient, personal, prayerful investigation of sincerity and humility will reveal beautiful harmony—on this subject as on all Bible subjects—wholly convincing and wholly satisfying.

And when the mind has acquired this, the picture of confusion presented by the churches of the world, while very saddening, will in no wise disturb our faith, but rather prophetically confirm it.

Errors of scriptural interpretation have two common causes—

1. Attempting to find support for preconceived ideas.
2. Basing conclusions on part of the testimony only.

Both are very natural tendencies. No one is entirely free from their influence. We must constantly examine ourselves in this respect. God has caused much scripture to be recorded. He could have made it much briefer if He had wished, and more categorically simple, but for good reasons divine wisdom has chosen this way. And the inspired Paul says (2 Tm. 3:16-17) it is *ALL*—

“Profitable for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

Only intimate, loving familiarity with it all as a whole will protect us against the countless errors of incomplete perception **There are no short cuts.** We are cruelly deceiving ourselves if we are hoping for life while neglecting the daily, continual study of the Word.

* * *

We shall consider the subject under these four headings—

1. The necessity of works: obedience, righteousness, dedication, labour.
2. Salvation itself (not just degree of reward) conditional on works.
3. The true, scriptural meaning of “justification by faith.”
4. The necessary good works are actually of God, not of man himself: man himself alone cannot do them.

1. THE NECESSITY OF WORKS

The beliefs of those who put exclusive emphasis on faith without works are drawn principally from the writings of the apostle Paul. Therefore anything Paul has to say regarding the necessity of works will be particularly significant. It is in his epistle to the Romans where Paul appears to make the strongest argument for faith alone against works. He says (Rm.4:2-6)—

“If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory: but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.”

And perhaps even more strongly in Rm.11:6—

“If by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.”

Taking these passages alone and going no farther, as many unfortunately do, surely we would seem fully justified in concluding, as Luther did, that faith is everything—that works are not only unnecessary but actually contrary to faith.

But—would we be getting the whole truth of the matter? Or would we be just running off with only a twisted half-picture? In chap. 2 of this same epistle, vs.6-7, we find this—

“God will render to every man according TO HIS DEEDS (RV: works). To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality (God will render) eternal life.”

We must make this also fit into our picture. Again, Rm. 8:13—

“If ye (speaking to baptized, ‘saved’ believers) live after the flesh, ye shall die. But if ye through the Spirit do MORTIFY THE DEEDS OF THE BODY, ye shall live.”

Here again we have the clear issues of life and death depending on our works and conduct. And we note the once ‘saved’ can be lost. Much of the responsibility for the sad state of the religious world today rests with the pernicious doctrine that “Christ has done everything necessary,” and that man is such a miserable, hopeless creature that all he can do is close his eyes and throw himself in his corruption on the mercy of God.

All God’s beautiful, and wise, and detailed instructions whereby man CAN, and must—through the power of God—gradually transform himself to holiness, are quite generally ignored by the churches of the world, because men have been taught that faith alone will save, and once saved they can never be lost.

The stern Word of God, if they would but study it with reverent fear, would rudely awaken them from these baseless dreams of wholesale and effortless salvation. Does not Paul himself say—

“WORK out your salvation with fear and trembling” (Ph. 2:12).

Jesus declared plainly—

“The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father ... then shall he reward every man ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS” (Matt. 16:27).

Three times in the Revelation (last book of the Bible), Jesus says—

“Every man shall be judged according as his WORKS shall be” (Rv.2;20;22).

Peter adds a solemn word of warning right on this point (I:1:17)—

“If ye call on the Father, Who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s WORK, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.”

And James says—

“Faith without works is DEAD” (2:26).

Surely it is very clear from many scriptures that there must be works, fruits, results—to obtain the glorious salvation of God.

2. SALVATION ITSELF (not just degree of reward) DEPENDS ON WORKS

Popular religion says: ‘Once saved, always saved.’ That is, once an individual has ‘believed’ and been ‘saved,’ then nothing they do thereafter can lose them that salvation.

They say the passages we have quoted merely apply to degree of reward, beyond salvation. They will refer to passages in which salvation is spoken of as a thing already accomplished, as—

“He HATH saved us” ... “Ye ARE saved” ... “We which ARE saved.”

As 2 Tm. 1:9—

“God HATH saved us, and called us with an heavenly calling, NOT according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace.”

Here Paul says God *hath* saved us (as something already complete), and also he says it is *NOT according to works*, but His Own purpose and grace. We find a similar expression in Tit. 3:5—

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.”

Note the past tense: a completed action: ‘He saved us.’ Does this mean God arbitrarily calls certain ones and unchangeably bestows salvation on them, regardless of their subsequent actions?

We might assume this, if we confined ourselves to these verses, but we know that this is not so, for we have many testimonies like this from Peter—

“God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, AND WORKETH righteousness, is accepted with Him” (Acts 10:34-35).

And other parallel passages leave no doubt that when Paul said, ‘Ye *are* saved,’ *conditions* were implied, and were well understood by both writer and reader. For instance, quoting again from Paul—

“Ye ARE saved ...” (Shall we stop there? Would our picture be complete?)—*“Ye are saved IF ye keep in memory (RV: hold fast) what I preached unto you” (1 Cor. 15:2).*

Note that salvation itself is conditional on following a certain line of conduct. Similarly in Hebrews 3—

“We ARE Christ’s house IF we hold firm unto the end” (v.3).

“We ARE MADE partakers of Christ IF we are steadfast to the end” (v.14).

And Col.1: 21-23—

“Christ HATH reconciled you to present you holy and unblamable ... IF ye continue in the Faith and be not moved away from the Hope.”

In all these cases, salvation is first spoken of as a past event and a present possession—immediately followed by a big IF. We are saved, we are partakers of Christ, we are Christ’s house, we are reconciled—IF we continue to comply with certain conditions steadfast to the end. If these words have any meaning at all, then clearly we are not saved—we shall not continue saved—if we do not continue to comply with the required conditions. As Paul said of himself—

“I bring my body into subjection (that’s works) lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor.9:27).

It was possible for Paul—after all his preaching, visions, labours, his special position—to be at last a castaway, if he did not control his own body. It is plain that Paul had no illusions about ‘Once saved, always saved.’

And when Jesus, at the end of his ministry, stood before the Temple and told his disciples what was to befall the world, he said—

“The love of many (RV: the many, the majority) shall wax cold, but he that endureth TO THE END, the same SHALL be saved” (Mt. 24:12-13).

Could any words be plainer? Many—the majority—who had loved the Truth, who had been ‘saved,’ would grow cold and fall away, but only those who ‘endured to the end’ should be saved. It will be argued that the cold majority had never really been saved in the first place, but this is begging the question and making it meaningless. The claim today is that all ‘saved’ people know they are saved now—before they endure to the end, and that growing cold or anything else cannot alter that irrevocable salvation.

As to whether men once ‘saved’ can ever again be ‘lost,’ we are given this solemn warning (Heb. 6:4-6)—

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance.”

So believers of the first century, who had actually been partakers of the Holy Spirit, not only could fall away from salvation, but could reach a position from which they could never be restored. We find a similar clear statement in Heb. 10:23-26—

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering ... For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversary.”

Note the ‘us’ and the ‘we.’ Paul includes himself, and if anyone ever could have claimed to be ‘saved,’ surely it was he.

Rm.11:29 is often quoted—

“The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

True indeed the gifts of God are without repentance: *“God is not a man that He should lie.”* But when He attaches conditions to a promise, we must fulfil the conditions to receive the promise. Though God freely receives us as sons on the basis of our acceptance of Christ without works, He makes it very clear that our continuing in that favoured condition depends on our fulfilling His requirements. Paul makes this quite clear in this very same chapter. He says (vs. 21-22)—

“For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God. On them which fell, severity; but toward thee goodness, IF thou continue in His goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be CUT OFF.”

Note that he is speaking to baptized, ‘saved’ believers who were at that time ‘in God’s goodness.’ He is plainly warning them that they had no irrevocable guarantee of never being ‘cut off.’

3. THE TRUE MEANING AND PLACE OF THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

We have seen that Paul, as well as Jesus and other apostles, makes much of (1) the necessity of works, (2) the dependence of salvation on continuing in well-doing *to the end of life*, and (3) final judgment according to deeds. What then of those passages where he says—

“If by grace, then it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

There are three scriptural principles which together clarify this apparent contradiction—

1. Man can never earn a right to life on his own merit, no matter what or how many ‘works’ he does. In THIS sense, salvation is not of works.

2. In the plan God has provided for man’s redemption, immediate justification IS offered as a free gift as soon as a man obediently believes.

3. The required ‘works’—FOLLOWING justification—to ‘make the calling sure’ are not man’s works, but are done by God Himself through and in man: *“It is GOD that worketh in you ...”*

On the first point, Paul’s whole argument regarding faith and works is directed against the conception that man can earn eternal life—particularly by the Law of Moses, as the Jews thought. To earn life man would have to give perfect obedience throughout his whole life, which is impossible.

Paul shows that the Law of Moses, far from being a way to life, was given for the very purpose of demonstrating to man that the inherent principle of sin within him makes it impossible for him to render perfect obedience; and that, therefore, though life was offered through a perfectly reasonable and just law, man—because of inherent sin—cannot of himself achieve it. It was to humble man and teach him wisdom, not to glorify his ignorant and foolish self-assurance. Paul says, explaining this (Rm.3:23)—

“ALL have sinned, and COME SHORT of the glory of God.”

All have come short of earning or meriting that glory. He explains—

“By the deeds (RV: works) of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin” (v. 20).

By the Law, God demonstrated to man his sinfulness and helplessness to save himself by his own works. Then, with that made clear and inescapable, God provided and strengthened Jesus Christ, who condemned sin by a life of perfect obedience even unto death. And on the holy, God-honouring foundation of Christ’s perfect obedience, God freely offers eternal life to all who through faith, renounce themselves completely and join themselves to Christ, and become part of him and covered by him. It is a beautiful contrivance of divine love and wisdom: God is honoured; His love and mercy is manifested; and man is both blessed and humbled.

In this way, men confess their own HELPLESSNESS, and repudiate their own inherent SINFULNESS, and renounce their ALLEGIANCE to the old, death-bringing Adam, and covenant their allegiance to the new, life-bringing Adam, Christ. Now, here is the big and vital point missed by the “Christ has done it all for us miserable sinners” school: This covenant includes a dedication for the rest of their lives to WORKS of righteousness, not by their own power but through the power of God offered to guide and strengthen them. On the basis of this covenant, God provisionally accepts and ‘saves’ them. And if they faithfully fulfil their part of the covenant ‘unto the end,’ He will eternally accept them.

This is ‘justification by faith,’ as contrasted with justification by works, which man finds impossible because of the sin-principle in his flesh. This is the substance of all Paul’s teaching regarding faith and works. But, as we believe we have amply shown, Paul never fails to make it crystal clear that—though no man can earn eternal life by works—still everyone will be accepted or rejected on the basis of his works. These ideas are not contradictory, but complementary. It is man who has represented them as contradictory.

* * *

The second point ties together the first and third. That is, the justification is a *free gift* at the beginning of the race, and not the earned result of works, at the end of the race. Rather, it is the basis and cause of the required works. Justification is union with God through loving faith, and the works are the fruit of this union with God. The works follow and confirm and manifest the faith.

* * *

This introduces the third point that explains the apparent contradiction between faith and works: that the required works are of and by God, not of man himself. Man of himself can do no good.

This is a divine mystery: the deepest and most intense experience possible for natural man. Paul says—

“WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION” (Ph. 2:12).

But elsewhere he says—

“It is not of works, lest any man should boast.”

We have the explanation in the very next verse (Eph. 2:10)—

“For we are His (God’s) workmanship, created unto GOOD WORKS which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

It is in Ph.2:2 where Paul says *“Work out your own salvation.”* In the verse immediately following he says—

“For it is GOD which WORKETH IN YOU, both to WILL and to DO of His good pleasure” (v. 13).

It is evident that Paul is careful that these two thoughts should always be coupled together, that man may take a humble and thankful view of what is accomplished in him. The same thought occurs in 1 Cor. 15:10—

“I laboured (worked) more than they all: yet NOT I, but the GRACE OF GOD which was with me.”

Paul performed the work. He struggled and laboured. It would not have happened without his volition. But actually God was doing it through Paul. Paul fully realized this, and he realized that no man has any power of himself for good. That is why, while constantly insisting on the necessity of works, holiness, righteousness, lifelong labour, Paul is equally insistent on the fact that it is the power of God that actually performs them. In truth, we have no power in ourselves of any kind: our every breath is a gift of God’s power.

This is a crude illustration, but it may help us see the picture: We drive an automobile, and we determine what course it will take: the direction, the speed, whether it will stand still, move forward, or backward, or to the right or left. We are responsible for all that. But we do not supply the *power*. If anything cuts off the power, we sit helpless and immobile at the steering wheel.

So we may choose which way we shall direct our life, and that is our responsibility, and we shall be held responsible. But the *power* to transform ourselves and work works of righteousness to His glory is not of ourselves, but of God through Christ. Paul says (2 Cor.4:6-7)—

“God hath shined in our hearts ... but we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”

Jesus himself said—

“I can of mine own self DO NOTHING” (John 5:30).

All his power was derived from God. Likewise to his disciples he said—

“Without me ye can do nothing ... a branch cannot bear fruit of itself” (John 15:4-5).

The fruit is the work *of* the TREE *through* the BRANCH. But this does not excuse the branch, if it brings forth no fruit, for he says—

“Every branch that beareth not fruit GOD TAKETH AWAY” (v2).

This figure of tree and branch well illustrates the scriptural principle concerning works: their necessity, their dependence on God, their exclusion of man’s glory. *Faith* is that which unites the branch to the tree—that makes the life- and power-giving contact. *Works*, the fruits, are evidence that faith is alive and active; evidence that the branch is healthy and productive and is truly and vitally united to the tree—and not just dead lumber, artificially and mechanically attached to the tree, just *looking* like part of the tree.

Here is also clearly shown that the union of believer to Christ is *conditional*, and not unalterable, for Jesus further says (v.6)—

“If a man ABIDE NOT in me, he is CAST FORTH ... and withered, and cast into the fire, and BURNED.”

We remember, as quoted earlier, that Paul also (Rm.11) uses the same figure of tree and branch, to prove that salvation is conditional upon bringing forth the proper fruits. He warned the Gentile believers that they, though grafted in and ‘saved,’ could just as easily be ‘cut off’ and lost, if they were unworthy.

This divine mystery of the transforming work of God in those that are His had a prominent place in the mind and writings of Paul. Beside those already mentioned, we find such as the following—

To the Ephesians: *“That God would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that ye may be filled with all the fullness of God.”*

To the Colossians: *“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power”* (1:11).

To the Hebrews: *“May the God of peace make you perfect in EVERY GOOD WORK, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight”* (13:20-21).

What a sad perversion of the glorious Gospel of God that minimizes or denies the vital necessity of good works, consistently performed ‘to the end’ by the guidance, help and power of God. Surely we can understand why James was moved to exclaim (2:14-19)—

“What doth it profit, brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and HAVE NOT WORKS? Can faith save him?”

“Faith, if it hath not works, IS DEAD.”

“Thou believest (hath faith: same word in original) that there is one God: thou doest well ... The devils also believe!”

This whole chapter is a direct answer to and confutation of those that say ‘Only believe.’ James continues (vs.21-24)—

“Was not Abraham JUSTIFIED BY WORKS when he had offered his son on the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and BY WORKS WAS FAITH MADE PERFECT.”

“Ye see then how that BY WORKS a man is justified, and NOT by faith ONLY.”

That is conclusive. Let us keep *all* scripture on this subject harmonized. The harmony lies in the three divine principles considered above. To sum up, they are—

1. Having demonstrated to man by the Law of Moses that man is helpless to earn life by his own efforts, God freely offers justification from sin and full heirship as His sons to eternal life, to all who confess their own helplessness, and accept the God-provided righteousness of Christ as their covering for sin.

THIS is ‘justification by faith’ without works.

2. This free adoption as God’s sons is a tremendous responsibility, and God requires all such, whom He has freed from the deadly bondage of sin, to henceforth walk in righteous obedience to His commands.

He does not expect perfection, but He does expect and demand a constant effort toward perfection, and a sincere, determined putting away of all fleshly things that stand in the way of perfection.

THIS is ‘works making faith perfect,’ without which faith is dead.

3. God promises both will and power of spiritual self-transformation to all who sincerely desire it, and properly seek for it.

THIS is ‘God making us perfect in every good work to do His will, and working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight.’

This third point is the key point, for it rules out any excuse on the basis of weakness, because God tells us (Heb.11:34) that many, *through faith*, were (by Him) ‘out of weakness made strong.’

And Christ assured Paul with these words (2 Cor.12: 9)—

“MY STRENGTH IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS.”

So that Paul could say—

“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Ph. 4:13).

Let us take deeply to heart the one great lesson of this whole consideration of faith and works: the fruitless branch, though once joined safely to Christ, is rejected; cut off; cast into the fire; burned.

Do we have fruit for that great day of account? What have we to show? The fruit required is the overcoming of the natural mind and thoughts and desires of the flesh, and the dedication of the whole heart and mind and life to God’s service. Anything less is tragic self-deception:

“Many are called, but few are chosen: narrow is the way, and few there be that find it.”—G.V.G.

"I SHALL BE SATISFIED WITH THY LIKENESS"—Psalm 17:15.

Psalm 17 Is a prayer for the nearness of God. Contemplating the men of the world—their success, their substance, their numerous posterity—the Psalmist says, v. 15,

**"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness"
"The Lord is my portion."**

Many of the holy garments portrayed in the Psalms are far too large to fit David, but David—more than any other—burned with a realization of the infinite desirability of the full stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness." David could see no satisfaction in anything else.

I am for Christianising men through the congregations of God. If we can succeed in bringing them to walk in the fear of the Lord and the admonition of the Holy Spirit," they will be multiplied as a matter of course; but if not, they are nothing but stumbling-blocks in the way of Truth. —J. T.

Questions These are not as hard as they look. Many can be figured out by simple reason and the known relationship of events. The earlier dates (and some later ones) are approximate only. NOTE: It will be easier to work out if the NAMES are written by the dates, not just numbers. More space than usual has been left for this. This way, those already answered will be a guide to filling in the rest. *Italic=BC.*

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| 1. <i>Asa</i> | 19. <i>Ahasuerus & Esther</i> | 37. <i>Nineveh falls: end Assyria</i> |
| 2. <i>Ezra</i> | 20. <i>Cyrus' proclamation</i> | 38. <i>Maccabees cleanse Temple</i> |
| 3. <i>Nero</i> | 21. 4th Seal: Pale Horse | 39. 1 st Trumpet: Alaric/Goths |
| 4. <i>David</i> | 22. 2nd Seal: Red Horse | 40. <i>Babylon destroys Jerusalem</i> |
| 5. <i>Adam</i> | 23. Arabs take Jerusalem | 41. <i>Samaria falls: Israel captive</i> |
| 6. <i>Flood</i> | 24. 1st Seal: White Horse | 42. Arab Empire: 5th Trumpet |
| 7. <i>Exodus</i> | 25. Napoleon: 1st 5 Vials | 43. Begin 6th Vial: Dry Turkey |
| 8. <i>Malachi</i> | 26. 3rd Seal: Black Horse | 44. Justinian: Rome bishop 1st |
| 9. <i>Solomon</i> | 27. Allenby frees Jerusalem | 45. Phocas: Pope supreme head |
| 10. <i>Abraham</i> | 28. <i>Alexander crush Persia</i> | 46. First Zionist Congress (Basle) |
| 11. <i>Nehemiah</i> | 29. <i>Rome annexes Palestine</i> | 47. 4th Trumpet: Goths/fall Rome |
| 12. Crucifixion | 30. 3rd Trumpet: Atilla/Huns | 48. 6th Trump: Turks pass Euphrates |
| 13. <i>Jehoshaphat</i> | 31. Proclaim Jewish State | 49. 5th Seal: Diocletian persecution |
| 14. <i>Tiglath-pileser</i> | 32. <i>Herod Great made king</i> | 50. 2nd Trumpet: Genseric/Vandals |
| 15. <i>Enoch translated</i> | 33. Titus destroys Jerusalem | 51. Fall Constantinople: End ERE |
| 16. Hadrian edict | 34. <i>Antiochus defiles Temple</i> | 52. St Bart massacre: War on Witnesses |
| 17. <i>Judah to Babylon</i> | 35. Constantine sole emperor | 53. French Rev: Resurrect Witnesses. |
| 18. <i>Septuagint Version</i> | 36. End Pope temporal power | 54. Revoke Edict Nantes: death Witnesses |
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BC	538	55	637
4000	480	70	630)
			930)
3000	460	96	1062
2400	445	130	1453
2000	400	180	1572
1500	330	210	1685
1050	275	235	1789
1000	170	303	1793)
			1815)
900	165	324	1821
850	60	395	1870
750	40	429	
721		450	
612		476	1897
600	AD	533	1917
586	30	608	1948

THE DIVINE STANDARD THE ONLY WAY OF LIFE

WE can only hope for an entrance into Christ's Kingdom in the day of his glory if we are of the same mind and work as he. It is written—

"There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie" (Rev. 21:27).

Men—aye, even such as are called brethren—may forget or be indifferent to this meanwhile, but they will discover at last that the Word of the Lord standeth sure, and that *the gate of eternal glory will be barred against everyone who conforms not to the divine standard revealed in the Word*. The fact may appear a stern one, but its effect as regards the House of God will only be good and glorious. It will secure a perfect fellowship, composed of such as know God and delight in His praise, and in the delightful love one to another that glows in every heart that truly seeks His face.

— Bro. Roberts, Dec, 1876.
