



THE DOCTRINE OF
THE ATONEMENT

AN EXPOSITORY LECTURE

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BY

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Preface to the 1987 Edition

From the revival of Scriptural truth by John Thomas in the middle of the nineteenth century, the subject of greatest misunderstanding among brethren has been the doctrine of the Atonement. The work before you, *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, was written in 1882 by the assistant editor of *The Christadelphian* magazine, John James Andrew, and was published by Robert Roberts, the editor, who, twelve years later, in 1894, became the chief opponent of J. J. Andrew on this very subject.

In the preface to *The Blood of the Covenant*, 1894, J. J. Andrew writes that the pamphlet, *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, is the result of the Renunciationist controversy of 1873, in which he took a prominent part. He further writes that “the Scriptural principles embodied therein [*The Doctrine of the Atonement*] constitute the basis of what I have written [*in The Blood of the Covenant*].” Later, in 1895, J. J. Andrew wrote the following: “*The Doctrine of the Atonement* was, I may here mention, sent in manuscript to Robert Roberts, who, after perusal, said that it was the best thing that had been written on the subject, and undertook to publish it. The principles it contains are set forth in *The Blood of the Covenant*, which, in regard to sin and its removal, contains nothing but what is to be found in Dr. Thomas’s writings; and in writing on resurrectional responsibility I have simply carried those principles to their logical conclusion” (THE SANCTUARY-KEEPER, volume I, page 110).

The nature of man, the nature and sacrifice of Christ, and the efficacy of baptism, are all component parts of the subject of the Atonement. Our view of the doctrine and scope of resurrection will necessarily be based upon our perception of these foundation principles. In view of the continuing unrest on these subjects among the Christadelphians today, we republish this pamphlet as a document of apparent agreement among these pioneer brethren. The fact that the names of both J. J. Andrew and Robert Roberts appear hereon should make this work of special interest to all Christadelphians.

May the reader set aside the prejudices that so easily blind us, and judge these vital principles for himself with Bible at hand. Truly, a correct understanding of this subject separates believers from apostate Christianity which denies that “Christ is come in the flesh.”

Richard Pursell
June, 1987

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THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

The atonement of Christ is the most important subject which can engage the attention of the seeker after divine truth. It is in fact the central point of the whole scheme of redemption. For 4,000 years God in various ways was working up to it, and since that time events have been taking place preparing for a future age which will be the result of that which was effected by Christ Jesus 1,800 years ago. The subject has many ramifications. It is connected very closely with quite a number of theological controversies, both ancient and modern, and to attempt in the short space of time at our disposal to enter into anything like an examination of all those controversies would be perfectly useless. Our object will be to deal with those of chief importance, which are more or less familiar to the religious world of the present day.

I. THE MEANING OF "ATONEMENT"

Ogilvie's dictionary defines it as follows:—"To atone; to be or becoming at one or in unity; to make reconciliation; to expiate; to satisfy or make satisfaction; to stand as a substitute or an equivalent for; to answer for." That definition is partly theological and partly philological. The philological part is correct, but the theological is unfortunately wrong. This is accounted for by the fact that it simply reflects the most common idea concerning the doctrine of the atonement. The philological part describes atone to be at "one." Divide the word atone into syllables, and it becomes "at one."

This is a simple definition, which everyone can remember, and if that is borne in mind, it will help towards an understanding of the subject. The Hebrew word used for atonement in the Old Testament Scriptures really means to cover, and it is translated in the writings of Moses and the prophets in the following ways:— To make an atonement; to be merciful; to purge; to reconcile; to put off or expiate; to be pacified; to pardon; to forgive; to disannul. Perhaps the most exact meaning, apart from the two words *at* and *one*, is that of "reconcile," which is derived from Latin words, *re* again, *con* together, and *cilo* to move or excite. To reconcile, then, is to move or excite with a view to bringing together again. That implies that there has been a previous oneness, but that it has been severed.

The word "atonement" is used more frequently in the book of Leviticus than in any other portion of the Bible. To understand therefore its practical application, it would be wise to turn to it. The following is a list of the various things for which an atonement was required to be made under the Mosaic law:—For the holy place (Lev. 16:20,33); for the most holy place (Lev. 16:16); for the tabernacle (Lev. 16:33); for the altar of sacrifice (Exod. 29:36); for the altar of incense (Exod. 30:10); for the high priest before entering the most holy place (Lev. 16:6,11); for consecrating Aaron and his sons as priests (Lev. 8:34); for the Levites when separated from the other tribes (Num. 8:12); for the people of Israel (Lev. 16:24,30); for the numbering of Israel (Exod. 30:15,16); for sins of ignorance, either individual or collective (Lev. 4:20,26,31; 5:6,10,13,18); for a defiled Nazarite (Num. 6:11); for a man cleansed from an issue of blood (Lev. 15:15,30); for a mother after birth of offspring (Lev. 12:7-8); for leprosy in man (Lev. 14:18,20,31); for leprosy in a house (Lev. 14:53); and on one occasion atonement was made by fire and incense to stay a punitive plague (Num. 16:46).

In six of these instances atonement was prescribed on behalf of inanimate objects which could not possibly sin. Why was this?

One answer is, because they were connected very closely with a race which *has* sinned. Moreover, these inanimate things—whether metal, wood, stone, fibre, or skin, etc.—came forth directly or indirectly from the ground which was cursed by God on account of Adam's sin (Gen. 3:17). Of that curse they necessarily partook. Hence when devoted to a religious purpose an atonement had to be made for them as well as for those on whose behalf they were to be used. The order prescribed was, first to cleanse the appliances required for approaching God, and then the persons who were defiled.

The atonements under the Mosaic Law were made in various ways, by means of birds, goats, lambs, bullocks, money, and burning incense. But the covering they effected was only temporary, as proved by the necessity for their repetition (Heb. 10:1,4). And even this temporary covering resulted from the typical character of the ceremony. If nothing further had been done, there could have been no release from the power of sin. But God made known His intention to provide an atonement or sin-covering of a higher kind:—"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness" (Dan. 9:24)—and to understand the nature of that "reconciliation," we must of course go to the New Testament, which contains the historical record of it, together with its doctrinal explanation.

II. THE SCRIPTURAL FACTS ON WHICH THE ATONEMENT IS BASED

These constitute the A B C of the subject, which cannot be apprehended unless they are recognized.

1st fact, *That the human race is under condemnation of death on account of Adam's sin.* The proof of this is to be found in the following passages:—"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12); "By one man's offence death reigned by one" (v. 17); "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin" (Rom. 3:9); "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin" (Gal. 3:22). All the descendants of Adam come under the operation of this law. Death is the punishment for sin, not only to those who transgress, but to those who simply inherit the effects of Adamic sin, in this life doing neither good nor evil. On no other principle can infantile mortality, and the death of those who are outside the light of revelation, be explained. "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation" (Rom. 5:18), a statement sufficiently absolute to include everyone of woman born, however young or however righteous.

2nd fact, *That sin has produced a breach between man and his Creator.* This is proved by the following passages:—"For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Rom. 5:10). "God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" (II Cor. 5:18). "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (v. 19). "Be ye reconciled to God" (v. 20).

Bearing in mind the definitions already given of the word reconciliation, we learn from these passages that between God and man there was once unity; that that unity was broken; that then God did something towards restoring it; and that certain ones availed themselves of the Divine means resulting in reconciliation to God.

3rd fact, *That the means of healing the breach can be provided by God only.* "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness it sustained him" (Isa. 59:16). "There is no Saviour beside me" (Hos. 13:4). "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16). "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all" (Rom. 11:32). It is clear that the breach was brought about by man, and the one against whom the offence was committed was God. To whom, then, belonged the initiative of a healing process? God unmistakably. This shuts out from our mind any idea whatever of man being his own saviour, of man devising a religion by which his sins can be forgiven, and eternal life obtained. It is for want of understanding this simple axiom of religion—a word meaning to rebind—that there are so many professors of religion who think that they can attain to salvation upon their own terms instead of upon those which God has prescribed.

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III. MISTAKES IN THE RELIGIOUS WORLD CONCERNING THE ATONEMENT

This is the next phase of the subject we have to consider. First mistake, *That its efficacy arises from the moral, not the physical aspect of Christ's death.* To quote from Dr. Beard, a leading minister of the Unitarian body, "its import was not physical, not material, but . . . pure spirituality." The idea is that God, by subjecting his Son, Jesus Christ, to that death which is described in the gospels, intended to produce upon the minds of men such a powerful moral effect as to draw them to Himself. The argument runs somewhat thus:—If God would give His dearly beloved Son, and cause him to suffer such an ignominious death, that is a practical proof of God's love, and it behoves men who have heard this and received the offer of salvation to respond by loving God in return, apart from ordinances or specific doctrines. The Scriptural passages which refute that idea are many. "This is my body which is given for you" (Luke 22:19). "We are sanctified through the blood of Jesus Christ" (Heb. 10:10). "Ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). The use of the word "body," and the phrase "blood of Christ," are surely sufficient proofs that there is a physical aspect to the atonement as well as a moral one. Undoubtedly there is a moral aspect, but if we confine ourselves to that we make an egregious mistake. We must look at both its moral and physical features.

2nd mistake, *That Christ's death took away the sins of all mankind.* The alleged evidence is to be found in such passages as these:—"Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29); "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). Are we to take the expression "world," or "whole world," in its most literal and universal sense? Is it not apparent that the word *world* is often used in a limited sense? In speaking of the various divisions of society, we have the expressions "the social world," "the literary world," "the commercial world," "the political world," etc. The word generally rendered "world" simply means a constitution or arrangement of things. We may therefore apply it either to a large or small arrangement, either to a portion of the human race or to all the descendants of Adam. We must gather from the subject itself or from the context what is the nature of the world referred to. On this principle it is impossible to entertain the idea that every member of the Adamic race will be saved. There are several ways in which to disprove it. Sufficient, however, is it to point out one mode, of which the two following passages are illustrations:—"He that believeth not the Son shall not see life" (John 3:36). "Them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (II Thess. 1:8-9). Without discussing to whom these refer, it is obvious that some men will suffer the full effect of their sins. Therefore the sins of all mankind cannot have been taken away by Christ.

3rd mistake, *That Christ's death took away the sins of all believers.* This is a point which affects a larger number of the religious world than the previous one. The alleged evidence is to be found in such passages as the following:—"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). "He bare the sin of many" (v. 12). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). The two quotations from Isaiah were spoken by a Jew to Jews concerning Jews, and were uttered before the crucifixion took place; therefore it can be said in reference to faithful Jews that their iniquities were laid upon Christ, that is to say, iniquities which had been committed up to the time of the crucifixion, not those subsequently. The way in which this was done will be explained in dealing with the curse of that law in its relation to Christ. Suffice it to say now that it was not effected on the principle of substitution. The quotation from Peter's epistle is doubtless applicable to both Jews and Gentiles. It affirms that Christ bare their sins in his body. Are these the actual transgressions of believers? If so, in what way could actions be transferred into the body of another? And furthermore, how could the evil deeds of present and past generations be transferred to Christ before they were committed? To say that they were, is in effect to represent God as taking away sins before they had an existence. We have heard of such things in the history of priestcraft; we have heard of the Romish Church pretending to grant indulgences, and to forgive sins before being committed, but to engraft such an idea upon the Scriptures is repugnant to everyone who is apostolically instructed in the doctrine of the atonement. It renders nugatory the conditions of salvation, such as those defined in Acts 2:38:—"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;" also Acts 3:19:—"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Repentance, conversion, and baptism are here laid down as essential conditions for the forgiveness of sins. If those sins were actually taken away by Christ on the cross, what need was there to impose any conditions, and what need is there for anyone who desires to be saved through Christ to comply with them? A logical answer can only be given in the negative. But everyone who is acquainted with the elementary principles of the plan of salvation knows that conditions are paramount; therefore that fact excludes the idea that the sins of all who will be saved were taken away at the crucifixion. The above error also bears upon the mediatorship of Christ. In Hebrews 7:25 we read:—"He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." This passage refers to such as have obtained the benefit of the atonement of Christ as far as it is possible in this life. They are still liable to sin, but there is a way of forgiveness open to them. If that way be not adopted, there can be no forgiveness. From this it follows that those sins were not taken away at the crucifixion. To affirm that they were makes void the mediatorial functions of Jesus Christ; for sins once taken away by him require nothing further on the part of those whom he has cleansed. Any religious theory which nullifies such a vital element of revealed truth as this must have a flaw in it.

4th mistake, *That only those who are ultimately saved come within scope of redemptive power.* This is one of the great battle grounds between Arminianism and Calvinism. Arminianism says "all sins have been taken away, and it is only necessary for the sinner just to acknowledge that, believe that Christ died for him, and he can be saved." The Calvinists say, "no, only a certain portion of the sins of mankind were laid upon Christ at his crucifixion, and those were the sins of that section who will realize salvation." This implies that those who come within the pale of the church in the present life, and yet are not ultimately saved, really do not get any forgiveness of their sins. Much evidence might be adduced to refute this error, which is known by the name of "Particular Redemption," but it will be sufficient to point to those unmistakable passages which refer to certain disciples of Christ having fallen away, of which the following are illustrations:—"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened . . . if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame" (Heb. 6:4,6). "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (II Pet. 2:1). See also Hebrews 10:26,29; I Corinthians 8:9,11; 9:27; Revelation 3:5; I Timothy 1:19. These testimonies clearly teach that certain believers had their sins forgiven up to a certain point, and that they failed to realize the consummation, not through any fault on the part of God or Christ, not through any defect in the atonement provided by the Deity, but through listening to false doctrines, their own love of ease, or their own disinclination to abide in the narrow way on which they first entered.

5th mistake, *That Christ died as a substitute.* The alleged proofs of this are to be found in such passages as:—"Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. 5:6); "If one died for all, then were all dead" (II Cor. 5:14); "Christ who died for us" (I Thess. 5:10); "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the sins of the unjust" (I Pet. 3:18). The word "for" is here considered to be used in the sense of substitution, that Jesus Christ died instead of us, the just instead of the unjust. But there is another meaning to the word *for*, and we must apply that meaning which is in harmony with the rest of revelation. A person may do a thing for or on behalf of another without necessarily doing it instead of him. To illustrate this let us look at a few passages wherein this representative use of the word "for" is to be found. Luke 1:69—"God hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David," i.e., on behalf of "us," not instead of "us"; Romans 8:34—"Christ who also maketh intercession for us," obviously not instead of "us"; Romans 4:25—"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," not instead of "our offences" nor instead of "our justification," but in order to put away the "offences" and produce the "justification"; Hebrews 9:24—"Christ is entered into heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us," that is, on behalf of his brethren. A substitutionary death involves two insurmountable difficulties. The first is, the eternal death of the sacrifice, and the second is, the entire freedom from death of those atoned for.

This must be wrong, because it would exclude Christ from resurrection, and would necessarily preserve his disciples from ever entering the grave. Viewing Christ's death representatively, there are no such difficulties. He died not to prevent others from dying, but to release them from death; to give them resurrection, not to preserve them from going into the grave. Thus in Hosea 13:14 we read, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will *redeem* them from death;" Ephesians 1:7—"We have redemption through his blood;" Titus 2:14—"Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might *redeem* us from all iniquity."

IV. THE POSITION OF THE ATONING SACRIFICE IN RELATION TO GOD AND MAN

1st, *His Relationship to God.* The most important relationship is that of Son of God, by divine begetting, as set forth in Luke 1:35. There have been other sons of God, but none brought into existence as he was, and none since the Fall, so closely related to the Deity. There was an object in departing from the usual mode of begetting. The most righteous of those begotten by man had defects of conduct. In the Saviour of the world one was required who should be perfect. The first step towards this was to give him a mental capacity of the highest order for appreciating divine truth. This was effected by the miraculous begetting in accordance with the prediction in Isaiah 11:2-3, "The spirit of the Lord . . . shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." The next was to impart to him "the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge" (Isa. 11:2). In the result he fulfilled the apostolic description, "The word made flesh" (John 1:14), or "God manifest in the flesh" (I Tim. 3:16). This manifestation has reference to the moral characteristics, and not to the physical nature of Jesus Christ. He manifested in our human nature all that it was possible to manifest pertaining to God, namely, wisdom, righteousness, love, forbearance, patience, mercy, justice, &c. His character was without a flaw. This was essential to his becoming the "Lamb of God" (John 1:29). The lambs offered up under the Mosaic law were required to be physically perfect; and as they were types, a corresponding feature was needed in the antitypical lamb. Some have thought that the perfection in both cases must be physical. Not so, however. That would place the type and the antitype on the same level, by reducing the latter to a mere copy of the former; whereas it is necessary to recognize and acknowledge in it a superiority as essentially greater as is that of the substance over the shadow. The physical perfection of the type foreshadowed the moral perfection of the antitype. On no other principle can "the form of knowledge and of the truth" be shown to be "in the law" of Moses (Rom. 2:20).

2nd, *His relationship to human nature.* On this point much misconception exists. In addition to being Son of God, Jesus Christ is Son of Man; though like the Deity in character, he was identical with the Adamic race in nature. In Hebrews 2:17 it is recorded that, "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren," and in verse 14, that "as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,

he also himself likewise took part of the same." This is most important. In apostolic days there arose certain false teachers, who affirmed that Jesus Christ had not come in the flesh. They are condemned by the apostle John in the following language:—"Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world" (I John 4:3). See also II John 5:7. Those false teachers have had their successors in subsequent generations, even to the present day. Some have contended that Jesus Christ was not flesh at all, and others that he was not the same flesh as the rest of mankind. The former notion is too absurd to be worthy of notice, and the supporters of the latter are referred to the plain testimony just quoted from the second chapter of Hebrews. "The same," does not admit of something different, and in "all things like," there is no room for a fundamental exception. Jesus Christ was "made of a woman" (Gal. 4:4), in contrast to Adam, who was made direct from the ground.

How, then, could his flesh be otherwise than identical with that of his mother Mary? Whatever her nature was he partook of it. The Popish dogma of the Immaculate Conception is a very lame attempt to avoid this conclusion.

When Adam was first created, he was described as "very good" (Gen. 1:31). But he did not so continue; he defiled himself with sin, and that defilement descended to his posterity. In some cases, as in that of Abel, it has been kept in subjection, but in others, as in Cain's, it has burst the bound of restraint. Whether manifested or not, it is there. The apostle Paul felt it very keenly. He styles it "sin that dwelleth within me," and a "law in my members warring against the law of my mind" (Rom. 7:20,23). Describing his physical condition, he says, "I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (v. 18),—that is, apart from the instruction that comes from God.

That which was true of Paul, divested of divine wisdom, is true of all the rest of the human race; there is no good thing in fallen human nature. It is true of Mary. Jesus obtained his nature from Mary, therefore it is true of his nature, looking at that nature apart from the wisdom engraved on it by Yahweh.

The next aspect is that Jesus Christ was in identically the same position as man generally in regard to the Adamic condemnation. We have already seen some evidence of that condemnation. In Acts 2:30, the Apostle describes Jesus Christ as being "the fruit of David's loins;" and in Hebrews 2:9, we read that he "was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death." David was descended from Adam; therefore Jesus was. David was under the constitution of sin and death; consequently Jesus was. To affirm the contrary is to deny that he was the "fruit of David's loins." That law does not impute any moral guilt to those under it. It does no more than decree that the posterity of Adam and Eve shall suffer death on account of the sin which the first human pair brought into the world.

Passing from the nature to the character of Jesus we have presented to us, not a parallel but a contrast between him and other sons of Adam. It is to this feature that the following passages refer:—"He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15); "Such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26); "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Pet. 2:22); "In him is no sin" (I John 3:5). Where everyone else failed he succeeded. It does not come within the province of the subject to enquire how this isolated perfection of character was attained. Sufficient is it to point out this vital truth, that it may be fully recognized.

3rd, *His individual position in relation to the Mosaic Law.* Writing to the Galatians Paul says, "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son made of a woman, made under the law" (ch. 4:4). There are two incidents which illustrate this, and show the connection which Christ had with the cleansing ceremonials of that law. First, his circumcision recorded in Luke 2:21. Second, the purification of his mother, Mary, after his birth, recorded in verse 22 of the same chapter. This latter fact is based upon what is prescribed in Leviticus 12. It is there ordained that the birth of a male child defiled the mother for seven days, and that the birth of a female child defiled her for fourteen days. The distinction in the time shows that there was something in the child which was of a defiling character, the longer defilement produced by a female child being doubtless due to the fact that woman was first in Edenic transgression. No Jewish mother was exempt from the prescribed cleansing process after the birth of a son or daughter—not even in the case of a firstborn, who was sanctified or holy (Exod. 13:3). As Mary's firstborn and God's Son, Jesus was "holy" (Luke 1:35), and yet it did not prevent his mother being defiled by his birth. The explanation of what appears to some a difficulty, is that the defiling element pertained to the nature of the babe, and the holiness to its position and mission.

The other ceremony, circumcision, was first instituted in the days of Abraham, but was subsequently embodied in the Sinaitic law. Its typical character is taught in Colossians 2:11, where the Apostle describes the atonement of Christ as "the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." The parallel between type and antitype is quite clear. A portion of Adamic flesh was cut off in one case, and a member of the Adamic race was cut off by death in the other. The Jewish babe, eight days old, had no moral guilt, but it inherited a nature defiled by another's sin. Hence it had to undergo a ceremony which typified the taking away of sin. So important was it that the omission to perform it excluded the Jewish male child from covenant with God. Jesus Christ's subjection to it is a proof that he was involved in the consequences of that sin for which he had to be cut off by crucifixion. This conclusion is considered by some to be out of harmony with Daniel's statement that "Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself" (ch. 9:26). The want of harmony is apparent, not real. "Not for himself" is perfectly correct when viewed in reference to character, which, as already shown, was without a stain.

To apply it to his nature is to introduce antagonism between one part of God's Word and another. Moreover, the numerous attempts made to amend the rendering of this clause show that it cannot be taken in such an absolute sense. The margin suggests, "And shall have nothing." Tregelles renders it, "And there shall be nothing for him;" Dr. Pye Smith, "No one will be for him;" Boothroyd, "Though he had no fault;" Barnes, "Nothing to him;" and Dr. John Thomas, "Though nothing (will be) in him." It may be mentioned in passing that some of these and other writers on the passage, although believing that Jesus Christ was excluded from the consequences of Edenic sin, deny that it has any reference to that matter.

The next event which shows his connection with the Mosaic Law is the curse which came upon him at the end of his life. Galatians 3:13 reads, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." This is based on Deuteronomy 21:23, "He that is hanged is accursed of God."

Objections have been raised to such an application of this element of the Mosaic Law to Jesus Christ. It has been said, for instance, that it refers to those only who have been hanged for misconduct. In answer it is sufficient to point out that there is no such limitation to be found in the Pentateuch. It is a simple statement apart from any condition whatever: "He that is hanged is accursed of God." Furthermore, we find Paul applying it to Christ. The apostle was not only a Jew thoroughly conversant with the typical and antitypical teaching of the Mosaic Law, but he wrote by inspiration. There is therefore no scope for dispute or denial on the part of uninspired Gentiles. The difficulty of understanding how the Saviour of the world could be "cursed" is quite a different question. It was God's will and God arranged the circumstances by which he was brought under that curse. The object was that His son might be placed in relation to the Mosaic Law in the same position as all faithful Jews. No Jew was able to keep the law perfectly, and therefore they all came under its curse in some way. That curse was death (II Cor. 3:7). Jesus Christ had to bear the curse of that law in order that he might redeem the worthy ones from its effects. But how could he, at the same time, bear that curse and take it away from others? He could not be brought under the curse of that law in a way which involved any actual transgression, otherwise that would have debarred him from being saved himself, or being the Saviour of others. Therefore the solution of the matter is this:—he was brought under the curse of the law in a way which involved no personal transgression upon his part, but which, in fact, was the result of his being obedient to the will of his Heavenly Father. Thereby he could justly be subjected to death, but inasmuch as he was obedient in all things, even unto a sacrificial death, he fulfilled all that was requisite to entitle him to resurrection from the dead.

4th, *His antitypical relationship to the Mosaic Law.* A type is a shadow; the antitype

is the substance. The Mosaic ceremonies were types; in Christ we see the substance. Hebrews 10:1 and Colossians 2:17 are two passages which define this. On that fact an argument is based in reference to the atonement, a very forcible argument and one which is generally overlooked. It is to be found in Hebrews 9:23, "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these." That is, with what is mentioned in verse 19, "The blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop," but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. The substance of the statement is this: The Mosaic types must be cleansed with blood, water, and hyssop, but the antitypes styled here the things in the heavens, or the heavenly things, must be purified by better sacrifices. What is the "better sacrifice?" None other than Christ. Hence all the things which pertain to Christ by his atonement. Of what do they consist? Of Christ and all his disciples. Was he not the antitype of many things under the Mosaic Law? The enumeration of three will suffice here, viz., the temple, the altar, and the high priest. It has already been shown that each of these required an atonement offered up for the purpose of being cleansed. The writer of the Hebrews says that they must be cleansed with the blood of animals, but those things of which they were types of something superior. As the antitype of the temple, the altar, and the high priest, Christ must be cleansed by a better sacrifice than any of those which are offered under the Mosaic Law. The only "better sacrifice" is that which he himself offered up, therefore he was cleansed by it. Cleansing is only required where defilement exists; consequently before his death he was the subject of a defilement which only a perfect sacrifice could take away.

5th, *His relationship to the baptism of John.* This religious ceremony was instituted a short time before Christ's mission commenced, and it lasted until the close. It was ordained for the remission of sins. Many Jews "were baptized of John the Baptist in Jordan, confessing their sins" (Matt. 3:6). To the surprise of John, Jesus also requested immersion. At first it was refused; this resulted from the thinking of the natural man: human nature cannot at first sight see any need for a perfectly righteous Saviour undergoing a sin-cleansing ceremony. Christ, however, was sufficiently instructed in his relationship to the human race on the one hand, and to the plan of redemption on the other, to see otherwise. Accordingly, he heeded not John's dissuasion, but said, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). It was thus a part of the righteousness of Christ. Apostolic baptism is a symbol of his death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-5)—and therefore the same definition is applicable to John's baptism, the only difference being that the one preceded and the other followed it. Both were for the remission of sins, and both represented that which was ordained for taking away sin. Hence all who have passed through them have by that act recognized the need for an atonement, Jesus Christ being no exception. But, it will be said, he had no personal transgressions for which an atonement was needed. True, but his inherited sin-nature required it. On this account he underwent a symbolic cleansing by John, which prefigured the actual cleansing

by himself. If the latter had not been necessary, neither would the former. His submission to the symbol of atonement is evidence that he came within the redemptive scope of the reality.

6th, *His relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant.* This covenant was virtually a promise of eternal life through possession of the land of Canaan (Gen. 13:14-15). The inheritance was promised to Abraham and his seed. That "seed" is, first, Christ (Gal. 3:16) and second, all who are in him (Gal. 3:29). When believing Jews and Gentiles enter the name of Christ—and this can only be done in the way commanded—they are said to have "made a covenant with God by sacrifice" (Psa. 50:5). That act constitutes them heirs of the land promised to Abraham—a territorial inheritance subsequently extended to the whole earth (Psa. 2:8; Matt. 5:5). The "sacrifice" through which they enter the "covenant" is Christ. He is also described as its "mediator" (Heb. 9:15), and is said to have "confirmed" it (Rom. 15:8). It was first confirmed in Abraham's lifetime (Gen. 15:7, 18), but only by animal sacrifices, Abraham having been born under Adamic condemnation and being himself a sinner, these could no more take away sin and its effects than could the Mosaic sacrifices. Abraham required a more perfect atonement, equally with the apostle Paul. That atonement was made when Christ died. The impediment to resurrection unto eternal life was then removed, and the covenant with Abraham anti-typically confirmed. In the results flowing from this act, Jesus Christ participates as well as Abraham. In the days of his flesh he was heir to the blessings of the covenant: "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. 12; Gal. 3:16). But having, like Abraham, been born under Adamic condemnation, he could not enjoy the covenant blessings without a perfect atonement, to which reference is made in Hebrews 13:20:—"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect. . . ." The "everlasting covenant" is, correctly speaking, the age-lasting covenant, or covenant of the future age. Though made with Abraham, it does not come into force until his resurrection—yet future—and Christ's return from heaven. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews states that Christ was raised from the dead through the blood of that covenant. Whose blood was that? His own. Therefore he was raised from the dead through his own blood. Why was his blood shed? To take away sin. Therefore he was raised from the dead by the means ordained for the abolition of sin. If altogether outside the condemnation for sin he would not have required, neither would he personally have benefited from a sin-cleansing act. But, the inspired writer says that he did derive a benefit from the shedding of blood: he was raised from the dead. This is, in effect saying that he could not enter into everlasting life without it. Consequently the offering up of the sacrifice, pertaining to the Abrahamic covenant was essential for his own participation in its blessings as well as for that of Abraham and others.

Christ's sacrificial relationship to the Abrahamic covenant has a future as well

as a past aspect. When as the "seed" of Abraham, he inherits the land of Canaan he will "build the temple of the Lord" and "be a priest upon his throne" (Zech. 6:13). Ezekiel, who fully describes this temple, predicts that "the Prince"—the highest person in connection with it (Ezek. 44:2-3), even the Messiah—shall "prepare for himself and all the people a bullock for a sin offering" (chap. 45:22). In this we have a top stone to the events in Christ's career, demonstrating his connection with the law of sin and death. Before Adamic sin, animal sacrifices were neither imposed nor required. They came into existence with the law of sin and death, and until the death on the cross, they served as types of the Slain Lamb. Since then the shedding of Christ's blood has been commemorated by bread and wine, and so it will be "till he come" (I Cor. 11:26). After his coming, animal sacrifices will be re-instituted (Ezek. 45 & 46), to take the place of the bread and wine. The objection raised by some that this is contrary to apostolic teaching concerning the imperfection and temporary character of animal sacrifices, is based upon misconception. The shedding of animal blood in the future does not supersede the shedding of Christ's blood any more than it did in the past. The one was a type pointing forward, and the other will be a memorial pointing backwards, to the same event. It has been shown that Christ's personal relation to it was prefigured by his circumcision and baptism, and it is in harmony therewith that he should memorialize it in the future, as predicted by Ezekiel.

V. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE ATONEMENT HAS ALREADY OPERATED

This may be described in various ways, though all amount to the same thing in the end. The Scriptures make use of different terms, and therefore we are compelled to do so.

1st. *The taking away of sin. What sin?* We have seen that it is not the sins of all mankind. It must therefore be sin in a limited sense. We have seen that it is not the sins of believers in this dispensation, because they have to be immersed in order that they may be cleansed from their sins, as sons of Adam. It is not their sins after baptism, because they have to confess their sins to God, and obtain the benefit of Christ's mediatorial office. What sin, then, has been actually put away by Christ? The answer is, sin, in relation to himself. But that involves a difficulty to many. He committed no transgression: how then could he put away sin in regard to himself? When the two-fold use of the word *sin* in the Scriptures is understood, the difficulty disappears. It is true that it is most frequently used in a moral sense for acts of disobedience. But it is used also in what may be called a physical sense, in reference to human nature since the fall. The evidence of this has already been adduced in considering the relation of Jesus to human nature. Proceeding a step further, we find that the Apostle who defines fallen flesh to be sin, applying this truth to Jesus Christ, "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). It was not Christ who

condemned sin in the flesh; it was God. It was not condemned in Christ by simple preaching, for that had been done by the prophets before him. It was condemned in his death as a sacrifice. God condemned sin in the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ on Calvary. An endeavour is sometimes made to escape from this conclusion on the ground that the word "likeness" means a certain similarity but not an identity of nature. But this argument will not bear analysis. The brethren of Christ are promised that they shall be made "like him" (I John 3:2); their bodies are to be fashioned like unto his glorious body (Phil. 3:21). He is of spirit-nature, which is incorruptible; therefore they will be. Their "likeness" to him will be perfect identity as regards nature, not a mere similarity in form. Christ was made like or "the same" as them, and they are to be made "like" what he now is. To deny the former is to open the way for the latter to be disputed. This meaning of the word "like"—in Greek and English—is applicable in both cases or in neither. The contrast between Christ's former and present condition is clearly set forth in two verses in Hebrews 9: "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (vs. 26); "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (vs. 28). These verses mutually explain each other. His first appearing was attended with sin; but having put it away in regard to himself, he will appear the second time without sin" to do the same for his faithful followers by giving them "salvation." In other words, at his death and resurrection, his human sin-nature was changed to spirit-nature, and at his return from heaven his approved brethren, living and dead, will be "changed" likewise (I Cor. 15:51). The statement of Peter, already quoted, that Christ "bare our sins in his own body on the tree," is considered to teach the putting away of sin in a wider sense. But when an explanation is asked as to how the sins of others were borne in Christ's body, silence or confusion is the reply. It is quite clear that sinful actions or uncommitted sins were not put into him. But as a son of Adam, Christ necessarily bore in his own nature the effects of Edenic sin. These effects are the "sins" to which Peter refers.

2nd, *The Crucifixion of the Old Man*. The "old man" is another term for "sinful flesh." "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds," says the Apostle to the Colossian believers (ch. 3:9); and to the Galatian believers he writes, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (ch. 5:24). That which is done morally by Christ's disciples was performed both morally and physically by their Head. He was wholly free from the "deeds" of the "old man," but he was nevertheless burdened with him from birth to death. If it had not been so the following statement could not have been made:—"Our old man was crucified [Revised Version] with him that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6). The "body of sin" was "destroyed" in the crucifixion of Christ, an event which could not have taken place if he had not had a "sin-body." It is spoken of as "our old man," because of the identity between his nature and that of his brethren. In being "baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3) they partake of his crucifixion, "that henceforth they should not serve sin" (v. 6), and that ulti-

mately the "body of sin" in them may be as effectually destroyed as it has been in Christ.

3rd, *The destruction of the devil*. To understand how the devil was destroyed, it is necessary first to know what is meant by "the devil." The following verse supplies the evidence:—"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). The devil, according to this inspired definition, is that which has the power of death. To have "the power of death" is the same as causing death. What is the cause of death? Sin:—"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23); "The sting of death is sin" (I Cor. 15:56); "The corruption that is in the world through lust" (II Pet. 1:4); "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (Jas. 1:15). Thus to destroy the devil is to destroy sin. [The word *devil* is not a proper name; it is a common noun meaning *slanderer*, or *false accuser*. The practical effect of a sinful action is to slander or falsely accuse God by affirming something concerning His revealed will that is not true. This was the offence of Adam and Eve. In partaking of the forbidden fruit, they in effect said that God had not threatened them with death for so doing. This was a false accusation for which they merit the term *slanderer*, or *devil*. Sin is spoken of as "the devil" on the principle of personifying principles, of which Mammon and Wisdom are illustrations of another kind (Luke 16:13; Prov. 9:1). It is applied to Sin, both in its moral and physical aspects, that is, to an act or transgression and to the Sin-nature. Jesus Christ appeared to destroy it in both aspects, but the destruction of diabolos in a physical sense is that which first requires attention.]

The testimony already quoted may be presented in the following syllogistic form: "The children of Abraham are partakers of flesh and blood; that nature, through descent from Adam, is termed sin or diabolos; sin or diabolos is the cause of death; all partakers of that nature are therefore under the power of death; to release from that power the faithful children of Abraham, diabolos must be destroyed; diabolos having a physical embodiment must undergo a physical destruction; that destruction must be by death; the destroyer is Jesus Christ; on this account he must partake of "the same" nature as the children of Abraham; he did so; that was diabolos-nature; since his resurrection he has been free from that nature; therefore through his death he destroyed the diabolos-nature inherited from Adam. Before that was accomplished he was under the power of death, but now "death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9). It is in this sense that the Apostle's statement to Timothy is to be understood: "Jesus Christ hath abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10). The meaning of the first clause, "abolished death," is to be explained by the meaning of the second, "brought immortality to light." Endless life was not "brought to light" by Christ in the sense of preaching it; that had been done previously by Moses and the prophets: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which

testify of me" (John 5:39). Truly, Christ preached the doctrine of eternal life: but he did not stop there; he did more than any other of God's messengers could do. He gave a practical illustration of it in his own person. After his resurrection he passed from flesh and blood to spirit; from human to angelic nature. By opening the gates of the grave he "brought to light" as a matter of fact that which was previously but a matter of promise—life and incorruptibility. A necessary preliminary to this was the abolition of death, not universally, but in relation to himself. This he accomplished by his resurrection. He will abolish death in relation to his faithful followers, and in them give further illustrations of "life and immortality," when they "come forth unto the resurrection of life." He is "the firstborn from the dead" (Col. 1:18); they are afterborns; he abolishes death first in himself, and then in them. He is the first to be made "alive for evermore," and he afterwards raises them to the same position.

4th, *The bruising of the seed of the serpent.* Addressing the serpent after the Fall, the Lord God said, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15). This prediction contains the germ of the plan of redemption. The serpent, "the most subtle beast of the field," had just succeeded, by its deceitful words, in producing disobedience. By that act the thinking of the serpent was transferred to Adam and Eve, and all who follow in their footsteps, become in a figurative sense, seed of the serpent. Between this class and the seed of the woman enmity was predicted, from which it is apparent that persons of an opposite class are intended. Sin and righteousness are therefore the respective principles which animate them. The head of the righteous ones is Christ, who, as the son of a virgin by divine begetting, is the individual seed of the woman. In this aspect, the verse when put into literal language predicts that between Christ and sin there should be antagonism. It further sets forth that sin should bruise Christ, and that he should bruise sin. The former bruise was to be in the heel and the latter in the head—the more vulnerable part of the two. These features find their partial fulfillment in the first appearing of the Redeemer. He antagonized sin in various forms, and described some of the chief sinners around him as "serpents" and a "generation of vipers" (Matt. 23:33). By this class he was ultimately put to death; he was "slain" by "wicked hands" (Acts 2:23), and "bruised" for the "iniquities" of the faithful (Isa. 53:5). But this "bruise" in "the heel" was of short duration: his Father "healed" him (Psa. 30:2) of the wound at the end of "three days." By this event a blow was struck at the Seed of the Serpent; the seed of the woman bruised sin in the head. The blow was effective to the full extent to which it was intended to operate. But that extent was limited; it was confined to its power over Jesus Christ. That which was once the cause of his "captivity," he "led captive" (Eph. 4:8). This partial victory is to be succeeded in due time by one universal in extent. Other members of the "woman's seed which keep the commandments of God" (Rev. 12:17) are now under the power of the seed of the Serpent; they have been bitten by its deadly "sting" (I Cor. 15:56). When Christ, "the Lord both of the dead and living" (Rom. 14:9) returns from heaven,

he will use "the keys of *hades* and of death" (Rev. 1:18) to release the "prisoners" (Zech. 9:11) from the "bondage of corruption" (Rom. 8:21), and give them the same "victory" over the seed of the serpent which he now enjoys. When the ransomed "Body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12) is complete, it will proceed to curb the power of the seed of the serpent. As the multitudinous "angel," or messenger of Revelation 20:1-2, the victorious seed of the woman will "lay hold of the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bind him a thousand years." In other words, Sin, as embodied in the ruling powers of mankind, will be overthrown by the "King of Kings" and his "faithful" followers (Rev. 17:14). In the language of the Psalmist, "the saints in glory" will "execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people," and "BIND their Kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron" (Psa. 149:5,8). Without this chaining process it would be impossible for "the Saints of the Most High" to receive as promised, "the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven" (Dan. 7:27). They are to "live and reign with Christ" for the same period of time that the Serpent is bound—a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). At the end of that reign, the seed of the Serpent under the name of "Satan," or adversary, will be "loosed out of his prison" (Rev. 20:7); the restraint of the millennial age will be withdrawn, and the "nations" will revolt and attempt to overthrow the "camp of the saints," but fire out of heaven will devour them (Rev. 20:8-9). "All enemies" will then be under the feet of Christ, the "last enemy," death, being "destroyed" (I Cor. 15:25-26). Henceforth the "seed of the serpent" in any form, will find no place on the earth, and thus its predicted "bruise" will have received its full accomplishment.

5th, *The basis of redemption.* Having been raised from the dead to an endless life, Jesus Christ was in a fit condition to pass from the holy place of the Temple to the Most holy, in their antitypical aspects. Under the Mosaic Law, this ceremony was performed in type once a year:—"Into the second [i. e., the Most holy place] went the high priest once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7). It will be seen from this that the shedding of animal blood was a necessary preliminary to the Aaronic high priest entering the Most holy place. The evidence already adduced is sufficient to show that this finds its counterpart in Jesus Christ. To leave no room for doubt on the subject, it is expressly stated in Hebrews 9:12, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." It would have been instant death for the Aaronic high priest to attempt to enter the Most holy in any but the prescribed mode (Lev. 16:2), without, for instance, the preliminary sacrifice. In like manner it would have been impossible for Christ to have entered its antitype without having first effected an atonement. The high priest under the law offered the blood "for himself and for the errors of the people." Christ did likewise, but with this important difference: the Aaronic priest was a transgressor, and therefore his offering for himself had reference to both personal and inherited sin; but Christ being quite free from transgression, his

offering on behalf of himself had reference only to defilement for which he was morally guiltless. It is in this light that the statement in Hebrews 7:27 must be read:—"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the people's: for this he did once when he offered up himself."

Anyone for whom an offering is made is in need of redemption, and one who requires redemption is necessarily under the law of sin and death, for where this law is inoperative, there is nothing to redeem. Applying this principle to Christ, how does the matter stand? In Hebrews 9:12 we read in the ordinary version, "Having obtained eternal redemption for us." This is generally thought sufficient to exclude Christ from the need and act of redemption. But this impression is derived from the words "for us," which are in italics to show that they are not in the Greek. They are not required, and should be omitted, as in the Revised Version. But the verb "having obtained" is in the middle voice, a mood which is not found in the English Grammar. Its purport is to perform an action to or for oneself. If therefore rendered correctly without the gloss of a false theology, the passage would read, "having obtained for himself eternal redemption," and thus it would be brought into perfect harmony with the other verses on the subject in the same epistle, already expounded (ch. 9:23; 13:20). The basis on which Christ's redemption was effected is thus expressed in Hebrews 1:9: "Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." The love described here was practical and is synonymous with the "obedience" of chapter 5:8, an obedience which comprised, and was consummated by, the death of the cross.

Although Jesus Christ is often called the Redeemer, on the basis of such passages as Galatians 3:13 and Revelation 5:9, yet, strictly speaking, the term in its highest application, denotes the action of God (Isa. 63:16; Psa. 103:4). Yahweh is the redeemer of mankind, and His Son, Jesus Christ, the medium through whom the redemption is effected. He first redeemed from the effects of sin His "only begotten Son," and then gave to him the power of redeeming the adopted sons (Gal. 4:4-5; Eph. 1:5,7). This constitutes him their "redemption" (I Cor. 1:30). That redemption is a process in which there are two distinct stages, one mental, the other physical. The mental stage is represented by belief and immersion, when past sins are blotted out. The physical stage is identified with "the redemption of" the "body" (Rom. 8:23)—and bestowal of eternal life after the judgment seat. To speak, therefore, as some do, of redemption as an act completed at the crucifixion, is a serious mistake. Where there is a clear conception of the taking away of sin it finds no place.

VI. HOW TO BECOME RELATED TO THE ATONEMENT IN THIS LIFE

On this point the Scriptures are very explicit; they speak with no uncertain sound. As becomes the character of a wise and loving Creator, man is not left to

guess what is required of him. The conditions are set forth with a plainness which leaves nothing to be desired. First, Belief. "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:38-39). As to the subject matter of the belief, that does not form a part of the present exposition. It is dealt with elsewhere in a more copious manner than can be attempted here. In brief, it consists of that which the Apostles preached. Their injunction and example are sufficient to exclude the idea that there can be any atoning benefit without it. In other words, ignorant sincerity, blind love, and untutored zeal, are not acceptable substitutes for knowledge and belief. "Without faith"—that is the true faith—"it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6). Second, baptism. After faith comes obedience. "He that believeth and is baptized" is the recorded utterance of Christ (Mark 16:16), and no man has the power to subtract anything therefrom. The Apostles did not; on the contrary, their preaching and practice were in harmony therewith. The Apostle to the Gentiles says, "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death" (Rom. 6:3). Baptism is thus a symbol of Christ's death. Apart from its necessity, what could be more appropriate as a practical recognition of the Atonement? A symbolic death, aqueous burial, and resurrection is God's method of accepting an affirmative response to His offer of reconciliation. He provides the sacrifice, proclaims the truths concerning it, and communicates the conditions of approach; these items constitute the divine part in the healing of the breach; with them man has nothing to do but listen; but, having heard, the responsibility of believing and obeying rests with him. If he heeds, he becomes at one with his Maker; if he heeds not, he remains at enmity (Rom. 5:9-10).

VII. PRESENT BENEFITS

1st, *Forgiveness of Sins.* The cause of the breach between man and God is sin. As long, therefore, as sin remains in its naked or uncovered condition, there can be no reunion. The object of an atoning sacrifice is to cover sin. This was done literally in the case of Adam and Eve when they were "clothed" with animal "skins" (Gen. 3:21). It was done figuratively when animal sacrifices were offered up under the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations. It is also done, figuratively, in the Christian dispensation. It is called "the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). But how is it realized? The conditions set forth under Section VI. constitute the only correct answer to the question—Belief and Baptism. The exhortation of the apostle Peter (Acts 2:38), the practice of the Apostles and early Christians, and the example of the apostle Paul are proofs which cannot be disputed. When the latter reached Damascus, he was enjoined to "arise and be baptized and wash away his sins" (Acts 22:16). He obeyed, and thereby was cleansed from his sins, through the atonement of Christ. Previously he had no connection with that atonement. Consequently his sins were not put away by Christ on the cross. If they had been, baptism would not have been required to cleanse him.

It is of great importance to recognize that this forgiveness is a favour, as set forth in Romans 3:25, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, *through the forbearance of God.*" A propitiation or mercy-seat has been provided, a way from death to life has been opened up, but there is nothing in this fact, apart from God's declared purpose, requiring Him to do anything more. His subsequent revelation concerning it, and His offer to forgive sins on certain conditions, are attributable entirely to His "forbearance." Consequently, the justification which takes place when the conditions are fulfilled is the result of His pure "grace" or favour, and no one can claim it as a right. From this it follows that in the death of Christ, God did not receive an equivalent for sin, and His Son did not occupy the position of a substitute. No one can claim forgiveness, or ask it as a right.

2nd, *The Mediatorship*. The forgiveness of sins at immersion is an indescribable display of divine mercy, but one which does not end there. If there were no provision for any further forgiveness, not one of Christ's brethren could be saved: "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). God has mercifully appointed Jesus Christ to be a High Priest: "If any man [i. e., in Christ's name] sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1). But there are conditions: one is, to "walk in the light" (I John 1:7); and the other to "confess" the sins to God (v. 9) through Christ, who "maketh intercession" for such (Rom. 8:34).

The confusion which this important truth introduces into the theory of substitution is an illustration of the inconsistencies of popular theology. Those who are most zealous in upholding Christ's position as a Mediator, fail to see that it necessarily excludes the idea of sins being taken away before committal.

There is an aspect of Christ's priestly character which is all-important in its bearing on the subject under consideration. He is described as a high priest who can be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" because he "was in all points tempted like as we are" (Heb. 4:15). How comes it that this sympathetic bond exists between Christ and his brethren? The answer is given in another part of the same epistle:—"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:17-18). The substance of this apostolic statement is that Christ is able to act as a merciful high priest because he once occupied the same position as those for whom he intercedes. To affirm that his position was not identical with theirs necessarily detracts from this feature in his priestly character. They were born under the law of sin and death; therefore he was. They inherited sinful flesh; therefore he did. The idea of some that it is derogatory to

his exalted position as Son of God and Saviour of the world to represent him as subject to these results of sin arises from a corrupt theology. It is not for man to theorize as to what the Saviour should be, but to ascertain the precise position in which God placed him. He honours God most who recognizes what He has done. It does not add to the glory of Christ to attribute to him what God did not give, or to take away what God laid upon him. In either case, his character as one who overcomes sin in himself is deprecated. The great contrast between Adam and Christ is, that whereas the former failed under apparently favourable conditions, the latter succeeded amid adverse circumstances. Adam started free from any law of sin and death, and without sinful flesh; he was not required to do anything, simply to abstain. Christ came on the scene after the evil effects of Edenic disobedience had been long in existence. Had he been in the position of Adam before temptation, he would not have been able to "succour them that are tempted," nor be "touched with the feeling of their infirmities."

3rd, *Commemoration of Christ's death*. This ceremony can only be attended to by such as are in the covenant; for it is obvious that those outside can have no interest in the covenant-sacrifice. It is required of all who partake of the bread and wine that they "discern" in them the emblems of the "Lord's body" (I Cor. 11:29). This involves an understanding of the nature of the body, the object of its sacrifice and the result obtained by it. The intelligent commemoration of Christ's atonement has no sin-cleansing efficacy. It is simply intended to keep in memory the provision God has made for taking away sins. As such it is a most useful help towards realizing the ultimate results of the Atonement. To attend to it is alike a privilege and a duty.

4th, *Heirship to the Kingdom of God and eternal life*. The covenant promises an inheritance; but its possession is based upon an approved probation. The probationers are heirs of that which they may or may not inherit, according to their adherence to the terms of the covenant. They are "heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love him" (Jas. 2:5), and "heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Tit. 3:7).

VIII. FUTURE BENEFITS

The benefits in the present life are only moral, no change taking place in the nature or abode of the heirs. But the future benefits will be both moral and physical. They consist of redemption from "this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4), redemption from this corruptible nature (I Cor. 15:53), and exaltation to the divine nature of Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:21), in which it is impossible to sin. The object of this moral and physical transformation is thus expressed in Revelation 1:5-6:—"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." Elsewhere these immortal kings and priests are described as living and reigning with Christ "a thousand years, on the earth" (Rev. 20:4-5, 10). There is a reason why

a specific number of years is mentioned. It extends over the period during which sin exists though bound. The sin-nature, although not allowed to reign, is not abolished from the earth before the end of the thousand years. Until then a priesthood is necessary. Collectively, it consists of the "firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4), whose occupation for the millennial age consists of bringing back to God, on the basis of Christ's atonement, the teeming populations of the earth, with a view to a large accession to the ranks of the redeemed at the end of that age. *(old/1201)*

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