

**BIBLE  
TEACHING**

*Concerning*

**SIN AND  
SACRIFICE**

**By W. SMALLWOOD**



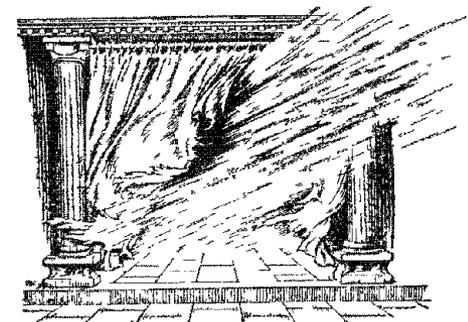
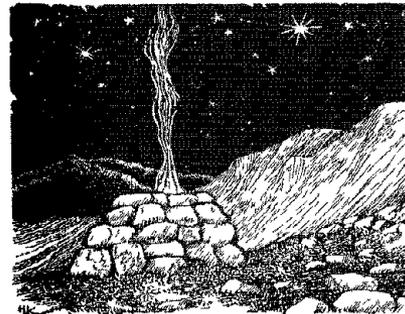
**BIBLE TEACHING**  
**CONCERNING**  
**SIN AND SACRIFICE**

**By W. SMALLWOOD**

**With special reference to  
the published errors of  
A. D. STRICKLER (USA)  
1913**

**“Earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3).**

**“If the foundations be destroyed, what can the  
righteous do?” (Psa. 11:3)**



## FOREWORD

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**T**he name of **Brother William Smallwood** may not be as well-known as many others who were numbered among the early Christadelphian pioneers; but his understanding of the Truth and his soundness of the understanding of its teaching is demonstrated in this particular work.

Born at Smethwich, England, in July 1860, he emigrated to Canada in 1883. He was baptised into Christ in Toronto in March 1884, and thereafter proved himself to be an apt and dedicated student of the Word.

In the early 1900s, Brother A. D. Strickler (Buffalo, New York State), began promulgating views on the subject of sin and sacrifice which were very similar to those earlier propounded by Edward Turney in England. He clearly set forth ideas at variance with the Truth. For example: "The present work of Christ has to do only with sins of actual transgression and the conscience, and not with the body, as is plainly taught in the Scriptures" (*Warfare* magazine, No. 2, p. 18); "...it is clear that the sufferings of Christ ending in death, were for sin, transgression of a personal character, and not for 'constitutional sin'." (*Out of Darkness*, p. 39).

Brother Smallwood was numbered among those who held firmly to biblical teaching upon the subject. He endorsed the expositions of brethren J. Thomas and R. Roberts, both of whom clearly elucidated Bible teaching upon the question.

In 1913, following a series of letters distributed by Bro. Strickler, presenting his erroneous beliefs based upon the theory of "clean flesh," Brother Smallwood published this work, "*Bible Teaching Concerning Sin and Sacrifice*" in order to refute the erroneous views of Bro. Strickler.

It is distressing to many that the teachings of A. D. Strickler, and similar ideas, are still being advanced in some quarters of the Brotherhood throughout the world. The result of such beliefs is a denial of the reality of sin, and the divine means by which it may be overcome. It is therefore appropriate that this work should again be placed before the Brotherhood. We therefore commend this small book to the reader, for a clear, concise and correct exposition concerning the fundamental principles of "Sin, Sacrifice and Salvation."

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Distributed by

**LOGOS PUBLICATIONS**  
Box 220, Findon, South Australia 5024

Printed by

EUREKA PRESS PTY LTD,  
306 Grange Road, Kidman Park 5025

## PREFACE

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**N**ONE can regret more than the writer the necessity for writing this defence of the Truth on the subject of the atonement. Had he allowed personal considerations to influence him it would never have been written; but the Truth—as revived in our age through the providentially directed labors of Dr. John Thomas—is too precious a heritage to be bartered, in whole or in part, for any considerations pertaining to the present evil and fleeting existence.

When the Lord Jesus said to his disciples "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:32), he must have meant the Truth in its full-orbed splendor and purity. Not a part of the Truth, or a mutilated Truth: the Truth concerning himself as well as concerning his kingdom.

The apostle Paul warned the brethren that in the "last days" perilous times should come, and that many would depart from the faith. Whilst this warning had special reference to the apostasy which was incipiently active in the apostles' days, and which attained final development some centuries later, it is also applicable to our own day; as is evident from the doctrinal corruption that has befallen the latter-day revival of the Truth among many of its professors. Speculation, lukewarmness, and disobedience are, among many such, taking the place of faith, zeal, and submission to God. Had not God raised up faithful men in our day to maintain and defend His rediscovered truth, it would already have been so corrupted, through the efforts of well-meaning but shortsighted brethren, as to be of no value to anyone as a means of salvation.

While full recognition is accorded to Bro. Strickler for his past work in the cause of the Truth, the writer is convinced that his present teaching on the subject of the atonement is calculated, in its logical outworkings, to nullify and destroy that doctrine; the central doctrine of the Christian faith.

The true character of teaching must be determined by its logical consequences, and the complications arising from it, and the evil results produced, all of which react upon the Truth with destructive effect.

When a brother lifts his hand against the Truth, and belittles an important part of the work of the man to whom, under God, we are indebted, in this age, for our knowledge of saving truth, he must expect to be handled without reserve in the encounter he provokes in its defence.

The writer's course in opposing such teaching, is dictated wholly and absolutely by a sense of duty to the brethren and the Truth, whether those whom he may displease believe it or not. He is acting in the best interests of all true-hearted believers, and is, therefore, entitled to their sympathy and support.

The reader will find some repetitions in what follows. These are not accidental, but designed; being sometimes necessary for the emphasizing and enforcement of truth. The writer has preferred to appear repetitious and tautological rather than fail to make the error apparent, and the truth of the matter plain.

— *William Smallwood, Canada, 1913.*

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## CHAPTER I INTRODUCTORY

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**I**T is the duty of God's servants to do their utmost to protect His Word from corruption. Faithfulness in dealing with this Word in all its aspects will be the test of their fitness for acceptance in the day of judgment. If unfaithful in their treatment of the "Word of Life," how can they expect to receive the "Life" itself?

In apostolic days there were some who believed that the person known as Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ; but in their reasonings upon him they reasoned away the truth about him, and consequently believed in and preached another Jesus than the Son of God. There were different kinds of heresies, but all of them had a common origin, viz., an attempt to bring the mystery of Godliness within the rules of human reason, instead of accepting the divine testimony with humble and childlike simplicity. In relation to all of them the apostle's declaration reveals the mind of the spirit: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." (2John v. 9).

Another widespread element of corruption was known as Judaising teaching. It is severely condemned in the epistles to the brethren at Rome and Galatia. This teaching did not consist of a direct denial of any of the things concerning Christ, but it inculcated that which nullified some of them. Teaching of this character is usually the most dangerous, because the most subtle; its truth nullifying and destructive tendencies not being easily discerned.

Bible teaching concerning Christ's sacrifice for sin constitutes a vital element of the gospel, and any who teach error on this subject are tampering with the foundation of the faith. In dealing with what has been written on this deeply important doctrine, earnest believers are not usually satisfied with the outside appearance of things; they look below the surface; closely scrutinize the foundation; strive to get at the root meanings of words, phrases and principles.

The writer has before him a paper on The Atonement, written by Brother Allen D. Strickler, of Buffalo, N.Y., and also another paper on the same subject in the form of a letter to a brother in the United States. There are other writings of his accessible on this subject, in the form of letters to brethren, but as copies of the two first mentioned were sent to the writer by Brother Strickler himself, he has decided to confine his attention chiefly to these. Both of them were written several years ago, but the writer of them was asked a few months ago if they expressed his present convictions, and he replied in the affirmative.

Brother Strickler has come to the conclusion that Brethren Dr. John Thomas and Robert Roberts, did not understand the doctrine of the atonement; but that he

himself has studied the Scriptures to better purpose. He brings grave charges against the writings of these brethren on this subject. Lest we should be accused of misrepresentation, we will here cite what he says in full, as follows:

*"The foundation of my views is found in the writings of the above mentioned brethren, and I can prove from those writings just what I believe and teach. I can also prove from the same writings something quite different. It pains me to in any way differ from them. As a whole, I consider the writings of Dr. Thomas and Brother Roberts incomparable and I believe none have a higher appreciation of their work for the Truth than myself. I do not care to justify myself, but I can prove that Bro. Roberts differed from Dr. Thomas on some very important truths. I have been forced to my present views by what I honestly believe to be the meaning of the apostolic writings. The interpretation of those writings in some important passages is not in harmony with the intent of the divine writer. The vitality of man's responsibility to God for his sins is undermined and destroyed by those interpretations. The foundation for the doctrine of atonement for original sin is laid in them, and J. J. Andrew in his views only carried out the logical conclusion. I am happy to say that neither Dr. Thomas nor Brother Roberts went where Andrew did, because the plain and emphatic word of God prevented, regardless of logic. In justice to Dr. Thomas I must say that he did not teach that Christ offered himself to God as an atoning sacrifice for himself as an individual of the race. Principally where I differ with the doctor is in the meaning of certain Scriptures."* (From a letter to a U.S. brother).

How writings that are so contradictory to Bro. Strickler that he thinks he can prove opposites from them, and in which "The vitality of man's responsibility to God for his sins is undermined and destroyed" are "incomparable," is hard to understand. This is one of those unaccountable failures of logic, of which there are many in what Bro. Strickler has written. The object of this examination of his writings on the atonement is to make clear to the reader what his true position is on this central doctrine of the Christian faith. The above citation throws an illuminating sidelight thereon, as does also the following from another letter he has written: *"For years there has been a difficulty in harmonizing the Scriptures with the theory of the atonement held by us as Christadelphians. The result has been that such talented brethren as Edward Turney, J.J. Andrew, and many others, have taught doctrines that are entirely contrary to the Word of God. The scriptural use of the word 'propitiation,' as well as the word 'atonement,' have been misunderstood and explained in such a way as to pervert the original idea that caused the spirit of God to select these words to convey the intended meaning. Now what I have done has been to reject certain 'stock' explanations of the Scriptures, where the Scriptures have not explicitly or in detail explained themselves, and adopted such explanations as will harmonize all the Scriptures which refer to the same thing. What I am teaching is in harmony with what Dr.*

*Thomas has taught, and if he has taught something contrary thereto, which I will not deny that he did, where does the responsibility lie? This is also practically true of the writings of Bro. Roberts. I wish to say that I have great charity for those who do not agree with what I have found in the Bible in reference to the atonement, because I myself was taught when I first came into the Truth, to put aside the current explanations on such Scriptures as treat of the atonement. For example: I was taught that the only way to understand 1Peter 2:24, 'Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,' was, that it was our sinful flesh nature, and the idea of bearing our personal sins, which in so far as we were concerned who were not in existence when Christ was crucified, was absurd. I was taught that what Paul says in Heb. 9:26, 'But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,' was that it was the sin nature that was put away, and that it did not mean to put away personal sin. Now, what do we find in the April The Christadelphian, 1912, by Bro. W.H. Boulton, writing on Heb. 9:26, and what Bro. Walker says in the same number of The Christadelphian, on page 169? Both of these brethren commit themselves to the doctrine that the 'sins' and 'sin' that was put away by the sin offering of Jesus Christ, or Jesus Christ as a sin offering, was sin in the flesh, that is, 'sinful flesh.' To show that Bro. Boulton does not believe that personal sins were put away by the death on the cross, I cite what he says on page 161, viz, 'That in some peculiar way which cannot be defined, the accumulated sins of all mankind were placed upon Jesus by imputation. If it were the case that the association between Christ and sin were precisely similar to that which existed between all previous sacrifices and sin, then shadow and substance would be identical in this most essential point, and that would be absurd.' This is what Bro. Walker says: 'Just so, and in dying he bore our sins, not symbolically, but actually, in his own body on the tree' (1Pet. 2:24).*

*"I sorrowfully realize how such teaching will pass current, and as sound among the Christadelphians because it is found in The Christadelphian magazine."* (From a letter to a Canadian brother).

In the letter from which the foregoing is taken, Brother Strickler misrepresents Bro. Boulton's teaching, as he elsewhere does that of Brethren Thomas and Roberts. It is not wilful misrepresentation, "It is due to his failure to understand the subject." One thing is quite clear in above citation, and that is, that he has renounced Christadelphian belief as to the manner in which sin was borne by Jesus "on the tree," and gone back to the orthodox view. This is the foundation of all the error he has imbibed on the subject of the atonement. Notwithstanding his declaration that the writings of Brethren Thomas and Roberts are so contradictory that he can prove opposites from them, he is inconsistent enough to make use of them in the endeavor to establish his own conclusions when they appear to him to favor his view of the subject.

## CHAPTER TWO A CONTRAST

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THE following citations regarding the work of Dr. Thomas express the writer's mind: "God gave us an exhaustive evolution of the Truth by Dr. Thomas. Some may not see this, but daily familiarity with the Scriptures enables an ordinary understanding to perceive it without at all taking it at trust. All that remains for those who perceive it, is to work on this foundation; to apply the principles of the ascertained truths in the comfort and purification of believers, and the enlightenment of the stranger. What remains for them not to do is to waste time with the restless-minded in the everlasting discussion of what truth is.

"*The Christadelphian* has been devoted to the policy thus indicated from the beginning. If it has had to deviate occasionally, in the laborious demonstration of the evident, in matters of first principle, it is because from time to time men have arisen (well-meaning enough, many of them) who have wished in the shortness of their sharp sight, to improve the true by the plausible, and to substitute the raw conclusions of a limited cogitative power for the far-reaching discernments of capacity and truth." (Bro. Roberts, *The Christadelphian*, Oct. 1895, p. 385).

"It is a waste of time and a waste of effort for anyone to attempt to turn me against the teaching of Dr. Thomas on either the simple or the deep things of the Bible. I am sure that I understand him, and I am equally sure that he lays down no principle of truth that is contrary to the Bible. He had no crochets, but his doctrine, as a whole, was the beautiful and simple and deep and powerful unity of God's Word. Take up any of his works and you feel yourself in the presence of God's holy oracles, so clear is the truth breathed forth from every sentence. You feel that you are in the presence of no ordinary man. It is only necessary to put his exposition of the Truth alongside that of his detractors to see the mighty difference, and then to place both along with the Bible to see which God will accept as the witnessing for His truth.

"No, no; to get away from Dr. Thomas is to get away from the Bible, for the Truth is with him always. Every honest, simple, truthful mind, comprehending his teaching, will confess as I have confessed. To such an one the fact is too plain to even think of ignoring it. Your defence of Dr. Thomas and his teaching is a link that draws me very close to you in sympathy and love and reverence of the Truth." (Dr. L.B. Welch, in *The Christadelphian*, Oct. 1895, p. 152).

Brother Strickler says that Bro. Roberts differed from Dr. Thomas on some features of the Truth. This is true as regards some matters of detail, but not in relation to the foundation principles. In regard to the latter, Bro. Roberts always

maintained that the Truth had been fully and finally discovered, and all that remained for those who perceived this was to work on this foundation; to apply the principles of the rediscovered Truth in the comfort and purification of believers, and the enlightenment of those disposed to listen to the gospel's joyful message.

### CHAPTER THREE SACRIFICE IN TYPE AND ANTITYPE

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**I**N considering the subject of the death of Jesus Christ and what was achieved thereby for the benefit of obedient believers of the gospel, we must remember that his death was preceded by the Mosaic institution, under which the ceremonial offering of animals in sacrifice was common. It is from this system, in which the shedding of blood was of constant occurrence, that much of the figurative language used by the inspired writers of the New Testament is derived. The law was a ritual prophecy; its sacrifices and atonement symbols or shadows throughout. While it brought God's authority to bear for obedience, the observance of its appointments could confer no future benefit, because it was powerless to deliver those under it from death. Its atonements were ceremonial, merely, producing no real change of relationship or state, although affecting the offerer's standing in relation to the law. They were a prophecy, or foreshadowing reference to what was to be accomplished through Christ. So we are told by the apostles.

When, therefore, we find in the New Testament figurative descriptions of what was accomplished by the death of the antitypical Lamb of God's providing, it is necessary to go behind the figures of speech and ascertain the literal meaning. Sometimes it is the shedding of his blood; at others the offering of his body, and then again, by means of his death. In a literal sense the things signified by these various expressions would have accomplished nothing for us. It is its relation to something of which the death of Christ is expressive. When, therefore, we read, Christ died for our sins, (1Cor. 15:3), and many similar expressions, we do not understand it to mean that he died as a substitute for us, suffering the consequences of our sins himself that we might go free, because the apostle tells us in the same chapter, "If Christ be not raised your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins, and all who are fallen asleep in Christ have perished."

A study of the entire chapter, in conjunction with other Scriptures, enables us to perceive that it is because of our relationship to what has been accomplished through the death, resurrection, and immortalization of the Lord Jesus Christ, that our past sins are forgiven, and we stand before God accepted in him and are promised ultimate deliverance from death, and a share in the blessings promised to Abraham and his seed, if we continue to walk as "obedient children" until the end of our probation.

So also with the declaration of Peter, "Who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree," (1Peter 2:24); we do not understand it to mean that our actual

transgressions were borne in his body, an impossibility, seeing that he died nearly two thousand years before we were born, and that in any case our sins of omission and commission could not be transferred to the body of another. But because Jesus became subject to all the consequences of sin for his brethren's sake, and suffered the condemnation of sin in his own body on the tree (Rom. 8:3), and then rose again to life forevermore, thereby opening up a way to forgiveness and everlasting life for his people, he is said, in the sacred style, to "Have borne their sins in his body on the tree," after the type of the goat under the law, which was symbolically represented as bearing away the sins of the Israelites that were ceremonially laid upon him, to a land not inhabited (Lev. 16:21). A consideration of all the testimonies concerning the work of God in Christ, enables us to apprehend the literal bearings of such language. Because Jesus was of our nature, styled "the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6), being "made sin" (2Cor. 5:21), and "made a curse" (Gal. 3:13), for his brethren's sake, he is said in the figurative language of the Scriptures to have "borne their sins in his body," "To bear their iniquities," and to "bear the sin of many" (Isa. 53:11); which means that, under God, he himself became subject to suffering and death in order to redeem his friends from sin and death.

Also when we read that Christ "Put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and that in consequence of having put it away, when he comes a second time it will be "Without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:26-28); we perceive that it could not possibly be our sin that he put away 1900 years ago, and must, therefore, mean sin in relation to himself in putting off the "body of sin" with which he was burdened in the days of his flesh.

With these few preliminary observations we will now proceed to the examination of some of the things Bro. Strickler has written. The writer's reason for undertaking this task, which is far from being an agreeable one, may be given in the words of Bro. Strickler himself. He says, "*Salvation is too serious a matter to admit of not rightly dividing the Word of God.*" It is our conviction that he is "dividing" the Word of God in such a way as to imperil his own salvation and that of all who accept his conclusions. His paper on "The Atonement" shows a want of discrimination as to the bearings of different parts of the subject. Although confused and contradictory, there are certain well-defined errors running through it and the other papers he has written in the form of letters to brethren. In antagonizing the "Andrew-Williams" theory, he has gone to the other extreme and persuaded himself that no sin-offering is required by God for sin in any other sense than that of transgression, and that in consequence Jesus Christ did not come under the redemptive scope of his own offering. So firmly is he persuaded of this that he wrests the Scripture to establish it. His error is at least, as serious, as the one he has been opposing. Advocates of the above mentioned theory maintain that Jesus had to offer for himself and his brethren for "Original" or

“Ancestral sin;” Bro. Strickler denies that his sacrifice was for himself, at all, and that as regards his brethren, for their transgressions only. The fact that sacrifice was not instituted until sin entered into the world through Edenic transgression, has evidently led him to this conclusion. In this he greatly errs. So long as man continued obedient he was in a state of innocence and purity; his transgression introduced a state of sin, which is an unclean state in the sight of God, quite irrespective of transgression. He has evidently failed to grasp this foundation principle of divine revelation, hence the confusion of thought on the subject of the atonement which his writings reveal.

## CHAPTER FOUR THE CONSTITUTION OF SIN

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**D**R. Thomas has written ably and scripturally on this subject, and I cannot do better than present, in this connection, the following from his pen: “Mankind being born of the flesh, and of the will of man, are born into the world under the constitution of sin. That is, they are the natural born citizens of Satan’s kingdom. By their fleshly birth they are entitled to all that ‘sin’ can impart to them. ...children are born sinners, or unclean, because they are born of sinful flesh, and ‘that which is born of the flesh is flesh,’ or sin. This is a misfortune, not a crime. They did not will to be born sinners. They have no choice in the case; for it is written, ‘The creature,’ that is, the animal man, ‘was made subject to the evil, not willingly, but by reason of him who subjected it in hope” (Rom. 8:20). This subjection to evil, then, is referable to the arranging, or constitution of things, which makes up the cosmos or world. Hence the apostle says, ‘By Adam’s disobedience the many were *made sinners*’ (Rom. 5:19); that is, they were endowed with a nature like his, which had become unclean as the result of disobedience; and, by the constitution of the economy into which they were introduced by the will of the flesh, they were constituted transgressors, before they were able to discern between right and wrong. Upon this principle, he that is born of sinful flesh is a sinner, as he that is born of English parents is an English child. Such a sinner is an heir of all that is derivable from sin. Hence newborn babes suffer all the evil of the peculiar department of Satan’s, or sin’s kingdom to which they belong. Thus, in the case of the Amalekites when the divine vengeance fell upon them, the decree was, ‘Utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass’ (1Sam. 15:3). The destruction of ‘infants and sucklings’ is especially commanded in divers parts of Scripture, not because they are responsible transgressors; but on the same principle, that men not only destroy all adult serpents that come in their way, but their threadlike progeny also; for in these is the germ of venomous and malignant reptiles.” (*Elpis Israel*, pp. 115-116; \*Later editions: pp. 129-130).

According to the revealed principles of divine wisdom sin defiles both morally and physically, and a sin offering is, therefore, necessary for the purification of those defiled thereby, both in its moral and physical aspects. This fact was continuously and insistently proclaimed in the divine ordinances of the Mosaic ritual, and all who desire to become “wise unto salvation” will do well to give earnest heed thereto. Under that system, everything defiled by contact with sin had to be ceremonially purified by the blood of a sin offering for atonement.

## CHAPTER FIVE THE WORDS "ATONE" AND "ATONEMENT"

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ON sheet No. 1 of his paper on the Atonement, Brother Strickler says: *"The words 'atone' and 'atonement,' as used in the Scriptures, do not mean 'to be made one' with God, although it is true that when a person atones to God for his sins, by means of the sacrifice of Christ, such a person is at one with God. What is the meaning of the word 'atonement' as used in the Scriptures? The Hebrew word that has been translated into the English 'atonement' is 'kaphar,' and means to cover. The meaning is, the putting of sin out of sight by forgiveness, which, in turn, means the removal of the penalty or punishment prescribed by law."*

As a piece of critical writing the foregoing is not satisfactory. We have a right to expect something more from one who undertakes to remove false impressions engendered by the errors, real or supposed, of previous expositors.

There are several Hebrew verbs which mean "to cover," but "kaphar" is always used to describe those ceremonial purgings by blood-shedding practised, according to divine prescription, in the Mosaic ritual. There must be some reason why this particular word was selected by the spirit of God in preference to all others. The reason is not difficult to discern by those instructed in things divine, when they learn that this particular word means "to protect," "to purge," or "purify," as well as "to cover." Like all other words, it is used both literally and figuratively. Seeing that transgressions cannot be covered in the literal sense, as material objects may be; when applied to the covering of sin it is, obviously, used figuratively, the literal meaning being "to forgive, to pardon." Hence we read: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." (Psa. 32:1; Rom. 4:7). One whose sins are forgiven has had his faith counted to him for righteousness (Rom. 4:13-22), and is under divine protection; protected from the consequences of his sin, being in the sin-covering name.

To *kaphar*, or atone, for the altar, tabernacle, etc., was to cleanse them from ceremonial defilement by the sprinkled blood of the sin-offering. When the process was applied to Israelitish women after the birth of offspring, to lepers, etc., it evidently meant to purge away contracted physical uncleanness, uncleanness according to the law, because one of the consequences of the original transgression in Eden.

The Hebrew verb "kaphar" is variously translated in the Old Testament Scriptures as follows: To atone, or make an atonement; to purge; to reconcile; to appease; to pardon; to forgive; to disannul; to be merciful. As a noun (*kaphoreth*)

it is applied to the lid or covering of the ark of the covenant, made of pure gold; and on and before which the high priest was commanded to sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the great day of atonement (or coverings). (Exo. 25:17-22; Lev. 16:2-14).

The word is frequently used in the book of Leviticus, and is translated "atone" or "atonement," according to the way in which it is used, either verbally, or substantively. The following is a list of the various things for which an atonement was commanded to be made in the instructions given by God to Moses: For the holy place (Lev. 16:20); for the most holy place (Lev. 16:16); for the tabernacle (Lev. 16:33); for the altar of incense (Ex. 30:10); for the altar of sacrifice (Ex. 29:36); 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 (Ex. 30:15); for sins of ignorance, either individual or collective (Lev. 4:20; 16:30); 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. 14:18-31); for leprosy in a house (Lev. 14:53).

In several of the above instances atonement was prescribed for inanimate objects. Why was this? One of the reasons given is that they were defiled by contact with a race that had sinned, and whose nature was defiled by sin. "The uncleanness and transgressions of the children of Israel." (Lev. 16:16). Not only were they transgressors, but they had inherited a sin-defiled nature, a nature full of the leprosy of sin, and therefore "sinful flesh," and everything they touched was defiled thereby and had to be ceremonially cleansed by atonement before being used for the service of the tabernacle. Moses was commanded to first cleanse the appliances used in approach to God in worship, and then the persons who were defiled.

The atonements under the law were made in various ways, but the covering they effected was only temporary, even as regarded the requirements of the law, as is proved by the necessity for their repetition (Heb. 10:1-4), while as regards a future life, they had no justifying efficacy whatever. If no further provision had been made for releasing from sin, salvation would have been impossible. But God has mercifully provided an effective sin-covering in the Son of His love, on whom all the typical offerings of the Mosaic ritual converged: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiatory (or mercy seat) through faith in his blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." (Rom. 3:25). It should, therefore, be evident that God has provided a covering, or means of cleansing from both moral and physical defilement. One whose sins have been covered, or forgiven, is in a state of reconciliation with God, and therefore atoned for, or at one with his Maker. One who has also been

purged of his inherited physical uncleanness, and given a “change of raiment,” is at one with his Creator both morally and physically, a partaker of the divine nature and equal to the angels that cannot die any more (Luke 20:36).

## CHAPTER SIX THE HEAVENLY THINGS

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ON the first sheet of this paper on *The Atonement*, Bro. Strickler separates Christ from the “heavenly things” purified with his own “better sacrifice” (Heb. 9:23). This is ominous of what we may expect from him. It is certainly an astonishing feat of exegesis to separate the one who was the centre of the “heavenly things,” apart from whom there could be no “heavenly things,” from the “heavenly things” themselves. When an inspired apostle joins them together, as Paul does in Hebrews 9:19-28, it is certainly surprising to find one of his professed brethren separating them.

What were the “patterns of things in the heavens” to which the apostle has reference? Some of them are enumerated in Leviticus 8:10-24. They include “The tabernacle and all that was therein,” the altar, etc., as well as Aaron and his sons. Bro. Strickler admits that the altar, tabernacle, etc., typified Christ, but in separating them from the heavenly things that were purified by his “better sacrifice” he, in effect, denies it. What he says on sheet No. 16, that as the head he may be considered apart from the body, does not militate against the fact that he bore the sin-defiled, and death stricken nature of his brethren, and that in the position in which he was placed on their account, was as much in need of redemption from curse and death as they were. Bro. Roberts has written well on this subject, and the following extract will be read with interest:

“The type is before us; the antitype is in Christ. He is the altar, the book of the law, and the other things that come after. The sprinkling of the typical blood on both by Moses prefigured the operation of divine love and wisdom in Christ’s own sacrifice. It was a sacrifice operative on himself first of all; for he is the beginning of the new creation, the firstfruits of the new harvest, the foundation of the new temple. He was the nucleus of a new and healthy life developed among men, for the healing of all who should become incorporate with him. As such, it was needful that he should himself be the subject of the process, and the first reaper of the results. Hence the testimony that ‘the God of peace brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that Great Shepherd of the Sheep, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*’ (Heb. 13:20), and that by his own blood, entering into the holy place he obtained (*middle, or subjective state of the verb*) eternal redemption (‘for us’ is interpolated) (9:12). The Father saved him from death for his obedience unto death (Heb. 5:7-9; Phil. 2:8-9; Rom. 5:9).

“The common view which disconnects Christ from the operation of his own sacrifice would have required that Moses should have left the altar and the book of the law unsprinkled. These were parts of what Paul terms ‘the patterns of

things in the heavens,' concerning which he remarks that it was necessary they should be purified with the sacrifices ordained. The application of this to Christ as the antitype he makes instantly; 'but (it was necessary that) *the heavenly things themselves* (should be purified) with better sacrifices than these' (Heb. 9:23). The phrase 'the heavenly things,' is an expression covering all the high, holy, and exalted things of which the Mosaic pattern was but a foreshadowing. They are all comprehended in Christ, who is the nucleus from which all will be developed, the foundation on which all will be built. The statement is therefore a declaration that it was necessary that Christ should first of all be purified with better sacrifices than the Mosaic: 'neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place;' 'not into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us' (Heb. 9:12, 23-24)." (*Law of Moses*, p. 84; \* 4th ed.: pp 91-92; 1971 ed.: pp. 90-91).

## CHAPTER SEVEN "MADE SIN FOR US"

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**B**ROTHER Strickler is equally at variance with Scripture teaching as to the manner in which Jesus Christ was "made sin" for his people's sake. We find the following: "*Paul says in 2Cor. 5:21, 'He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.'* *Here was the man Christ Jesus, who knew no sin, made sin; it must be the same kind of sin in both statements; that is, sin as transgression of law, for John says, 'Sin is the transgression of the law.'* *How was Christ made sin? Just in the way the apostle says he was, viz., 'Being made a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree' (Gal. 3:13). The law could not curse with death unless the law had been transgressed; Christ was brought under this by divine arrangement providentially carried out. Where is the justification to teach that the way in which Christ was made sin, was by being made 'sinful flesh' in view of the above facts? Salvation is too serious a matter to admit of not rightly dividing the word of God; doubtful cases must be judged by the preponderance of evidence.*" (*The Atonement*, sheet No. 3).

Bro. Strickler, therefore, rejects the truth of the matter as believed by Christadelphians, and with which all Scripture testimony can be harmonized without doing violence to any. He prefers the amazing alternative that Jesus was made a transgressor of the Mosaic law by his culminating act of obedience. This is equal to charging God with folly. The wisdom and beauty of the divine arrangement consists in the fact that God's obedient Son was brought under both the Edenic and Mosaic curses without being in any sense a transgressor. As Bro. Roberts has said, "In submitting to the death of the cross he was not a transgressor, but an obedient Son doing what his Father required of him."

The reader will do well to thoroughly probe the teaching contained in the above citation. It is of the utmost importance that he should discern its true character. Let us consider it with a view to this discernment. What is the cause of Bro. Strickler's stumbling? It is his failure to discriminate between the twofold use of the word "sin" in the Scriptures, where it is applied not only to transgression, but also to the effects of transgression, and furthermore to that in human nature which impels or inclines it to transgression. If the word "sin" as used by the inspired penmen, always means "transgression of law," then it was impossible for God by the sacrifice of His Son to "condemn sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3), or for "our old man (the old man of sin) to have been crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6). Nor could Jesus have "borne our sins in his body on the tree" (1Pet. 2:24). When we understand that

there was something inherent in his nature styled "sin," because the inherited effects of transgression, the meaning of the testimonies is plain to those unspoiled by error. Although Jesus was "without sin" in the sense of transgression, he possessed the nature that had sinned, which is a condemned nature because of sin, ancestral sin at the beginning. In this way his crucifixion resulted in the destruction of the "body of sin;" the "putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26); or the destruction of that "which has the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

Bro. Strickler, in effect, affirms that there is nothing in the flesh called "sin," and thereby makes void the foregoing, and also the following testimonies: "Sin... wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; sin working death in me by that which is good, that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful... it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me... with the flesh I serve the law of sin" (Rom. 7:8, 13, 17, 25).

## CHAPTER EIGHT HOW SIN WAS BORNE BY JESUS

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**T**HE following testimonies explain each other: "God sent forth His Son made of a woman" (Gal. 4:4). "Forasmuch also as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, it became him likewise to partake of the same" (Heb. 2:14). "God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for (on account of) sin condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). "He was made sin for us who knew no sin" (2Cor. 5:21). "He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:26, 28).

Christadelphians believe that he was "made sin" in being made of the human, or sin-nature, without which he could not have been a sinbearer to bear the sins of his brethren (in their effects) "on the tree" (1Pet. 2:24).

This construction of the apostle's language enables us to see how Jesus could "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," as he thereby put off the sin nature, and attained to the divine nature in which the principle of sin does not exist. Consequently, when he returns he will be "without sin," or that which has the "power of death" (Heb. 2:14) in his nature. We have only to render the apostle's words in Heb. 9:28, "He shall appear a second time without transgression unto salvation," to see the absurdity of Bro. Strickler's contention. The following from the pen of Dr. Thomas is appropriate here:

"The word *sin* is used in two principal acceptations in the Scripture. It signifies in the first place, *the transgression of law;*" and in the next, it represents that *physical principle of the animal nature which is the cause of all its diseases, death, and resolution into dust.* It is that in the flesh *"which has the power of death;"* and it is called *sin,* because the development, or fixation, of this *evil* in the flesh was the result of transgression. Inasmuch as this *evil principle* pervades every part of the flesh, the animal nature is styled "*sinful flesh,*" that is, *flesh full of sin;* so that *sin,* in the sacred style, came to stand for the substance called *man.* In human nature dwells no good thing (Rom. 7:17-18); and all the evil a man does is the result of this principle dwelling within him. Operating upon the brain, it excites the propensities, and these set the intellect and sentiments to work. The propensities are blind, and so are the intellect and sentiments in a purely natural state; when therefore, the latter operate under the impulse of the propensities, the understanding is darkened through ignorance, because of the blindness of the heart (Eph. 4:18).

"Sin, I say, is a synonym for human nature. Hence, the flesh is invariably regarded as *unclean.* It is therefore written, 'How can he be clean who is born of

a woman?' (Job 25:4). 'Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one' (Job 14:4). 'What is man that he should be clean? And he who is born of a woman that he should be righteous? Behold [God] putteth no trust in His saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in His sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, who drinketh iniquity like water?' (Job 15:14-26). This view of sin in the flesh is enlightening in the things concerning Jesus. The apostle says, 'God *made him sin* for us, who knew no sin' (2Cor. 5:21); and this he explains in another place by saying, that 'He sent His own Son *in the likeness of sinful flesh,*' and for sin, condemned *sin in the flesh*' (Rom. 8:3); 'in the offering of his body once' (Heb. 10:10, 12, 14). Sin could not have been condemned in the body of Jesus, if it had not existed there. His body was as unclean as the bodies of those he died for; for he was born of a woman, and 'not one' can bring a clean body out of a defiled body; for 'that,' says Jesus himself, 'which is born of the flesh is flesh' (Jn. 3:6).

"According to this physical law, the Seed of the woman was born into the world. The nature of Mary was as unclean as that of other women; and therefore could give birth only to '*a body*' like her own, though especially 'prepared' of God. Had Mary's nature been immaculate, as her idolatrous worshippers contend, an immaculate body would have been born of her; which, therefore, would not have answered the purpose of God, which was to condemn sin in the flesh, a thing which could not have been accomplished, if there were no sin there.

"Speaking of the conception and preparation of the Seed, the prophet, as a typical person, says, 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me' (Psa. 51:5). This is nothing more than saying that he was born of sinful flesh, and not of the pure and incorruptible angelic nature.

"Sinful flesh being the hereditary nature of the Lord Jesus, he was a fit and proper sacrifice for sin; especially as he was himself 'innocent of the great transgression,' having been obedient in all things. Appearing in the nature of the seed of Abraham, he was subject of all the emotions by which we are troubled; so that he was enabled to sympathize with our infirmities, being '*made in all things like unto his brethren.*'" (*Elpis Israel*, pp. 113-115; \* later edition: pp. 126-127 or 127-128).

The term "sin" then being applied in the Bible to the transgressing nature, as well as to transgression of divine law, we are enabled to comprehend how "the man, Christ Jesus" could "bear the sin of many" (Isa. 53:12). How otherwise could he have borne our sins on Calvary's cross nineteen hundred years before we were born? It could not have been our past sins, because these were not "put away" or forgiven, until we were baptized. Neither could it have been sins committed subsequent to baptism, because these have to be confessed through the Melchisedec high priest before being forgiven. It could only have been sin in his own nature. Therefore, in being born of a woman he was "made sin," thus sharing the griefs and sorrows, and suffering inseparable from this evil state, the result of

partaking of their iniquitous nature on their account. He bore them at last to the tree, and by resurrection to glorious life put them away forever; and because of his triumph over sin and death his Father has "given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as He has given him" (Jn. 17:2).

Brother Strickler might just as reasonably declare that Jesus was a transgressor of the Eden law, because he was brought under the consequences of Edenic transgression in common with his brethren. It was necessary that he should bear away all curse, and God in His wisdom laid the foundation for this by manifesting Himself in a Son "born of a woman," who is said in the figurative style of the Scriptures to have borne the sins of his brethren, because he was subjected by his Father to all the consequences of sin on their account. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. It required a human sin-bearer who should successfully resist "its incitements from within and enticements from without," and by dying unto sin and rising again to newness of life, should triumph over sin and vanquish death, thus becoming the "firstborn" of that new creation of sinless immortals that will ultimately, fill the earth with God's glory.

By condemning that in the flesh of His Son which is the cause of transgression in others, God condemned sin both in cause and effect, or the devil and his works. The devil (diabolos) could not be condemned without his works being also condemned; therefore sin, *in principle* was condemned when sin's flesh was transfixed to a Roman cross in the person of God's righteous Son Jesus, he being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, was taken by wicked hands and crucified and slain; "whom God hath raised up to be a Prince and a Saviour" to "save his people from their sins."

## CHAPTER NINE FIRST FOR HIMSELF AND THEN FOR THE PEOPLE

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**T**HE testimony of Hebrews 7:27 is directly opposed to Bro. Strickler's teaching, therefore, he tries to explain it away. Following is what he writes about this divine oracle: *"Let us look at Heb. 7:27. What is really taught here? Perhaps the rendering of the 'Diaglott' will help to a correct understanding: 'One who has not daily necessity, like the high priests, first to offer sacrifice for their own sins, and then for those of the people, for this he did once for all, having offered himself.' The argument of the apostle is based upon two things; one, the moral imperfection of the priests under the law, in contrast with the purity and perfection of Christ; and the other the frequency of the offerings made by the Aaronic high priests, for their sins and for the people's. This morally perfected high priest, made one offering for sins of transgression (which is the only kind of sin the apostle is speaking of here), once and for all time. He did not offer every day, as in the case of the morning and evening sacrifice, or every year, when the priest went in to the most holy with the blood of the bullock and the goat."* (*The Atonement*, sheet No. 4).

The reader may compare the translation of Heb. 7:27, given above, with the Authorized and Revised Versions; and also with the literal word for word translation given under the Greek text in the Diaglott itself. Although the Diaglott translation obscures the meaning, a comparison of translations will convince the impartial reader that the rendering in the Authorized Version gives the correct rendering of the apostle's language and shows the Spirit's meaning, which is, that Christ, as the antitypical high priest, offered himself, "first for his own sins, and then for the people's." The translator of the Latin Vulgate renders it in the same way, as does also Oswald in his French translation. Therefore in affirming that the apostle has reference to sins of transgression only, Bro. Strickler again makes Christ a transgressor; for certainly if he offered for himself for transgression he must have been such. But such a construction of the inspired testimony sets Scripture against itself, and contradicts the many testimonies that Jesus never transgressed, and was, therefore, "separate from sinners." Bro. Strickler, of course, knows this, and does not mean to deny it; but he has become so enslaved by an unscriptural theory that he stultifies himself continually. Once recognize that the effects of Edenic transgression inherent in our nature, of which the Lord Jesus partook, are termed "sin" and "sins" by the Spirit of God in the apostles, sometimes "our sins," but in the text we are considering, "His own sins," and all difficulty vanishes.

The blood of Jesus "cleanseth from all sin," is designed to remove the cause as well as the effects, otherwise salvation would be impossible.

The rendering of Heb. 7:27, by the Emphatic Diaglott, does not divert the application of the type from Christ, the antitypical high priest. Apart from specific transgressions, the Aaronic priests had to offer for themselves in their official capacity, as well as for the people. When exercising their priestly functions, and offering "first for themselves and then for the people," they were types of the great high priest after the order of Melchisedec, the man Christ Jesus. There must therefore, be a counterpart, in his case, to their official offering for themselves. This is to be found in the defiled and death-stricken nature of which the Lord partook for his people's sake; as much necessitating his redemption therefrom as that of his brethren for whom he died.

But it must never be overlooked that there is as much difference between the cases of the Aaronic and Melchisedec priests as between shadow and substance. Christ's "own sins" were not transgressions but the effects of others' transgressions from which he had first to be delivered. This necessitated his offering "first for himself." He was the first to be delivered, and is, consequently, now, "the firstfruits of them that sleep." He obtained eternal redemption in and for himself, as the original of Heb. 9:12 clearly implies. He was "brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb 13:20), language which plainly indicates that his blood was shed for his own redemption, as well as for that of his people. But when he offered for himself he also offered for his people. The two aspects of the antitypical offering were combined in one act, but, though combined, the two relations of the one act are plainly separate. Christ himself was first saved from death (Heb. 5:9), afterward they that are Christ's at his coming (1Cor. 15:23). There is nothing in this incompatible with the frequent declaration that "Christ died for us." As Bro. Roberts has said: "All that Christ did was for us!" It was 'for us' he was born; 'for us' he bore sin; 'for us' he came under the curse of the law; 'for us' he died; and the fact that personally he was without sin where all were transgressors, gave all the more point to the declaration. It was 'for us' that he came to be in the position of having first to offer for himself: the 'for us' does not deny that what he submitted to 'for us' was our own position. 'He was made sin for us who knew no sin;' and does not sin require an offering?" (*The Christadelphian*, 1875, p. 139).

## CHAPTER TEN THE MELCHISEDEC HIGH PRIEST

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**B**ROTHER Strickler also says in the same connection: *“Now when this high priest, after the order of Melchisedec, made this one offering of himself, he did not do so when he was a priest, but it was ‘as a lamb without blemish and without spot’ (1Peter 1:19). At the time when Paul was speaking of our Lord (Heb. 7:14), he was a perfected high priest for the age after the order of Melchisedec; but it was PREVIOUS to this time, this now HIGH PRIEST made once for all time the offering for himself; not as a priest, but as a lamb; therefore, it was not for Christ’s own sins, either in or out of the flesh, that he offered himself. ‘For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law’ (Heb. 8:4). The Mosaic law continued in force up to the time that Christ expired on the cross, and therefore he could not possibly have offered for himself as a priest. Examine this most critically, and it cannot be discerned that the sins that Paul speaks of here are other than sins of wicked works and thoughts.” (The Atonement, sheet No. 4).*

This statement that Jesus Christ was not a priest while in the flesh, or before his death, and therefore could not possibly have offered for himself as such, is also at variance with the teaching of the Word.

In order to see this it is necessary for us to go to the Old Testament Scriptures, and consider some of the appointments of the Mosaic law in reference to the Aaronic priesthood. The tabernacle or temple was divided into two parts by means of the veil; the first compartment was called the holy place, and the second the most holy. To enter the most holy it was necessary to pass through the sanctuary or holy. Before the Aaronic priests were permitted to officiate in the tabernacle or temple they had to prepare themselves in accordance with the instructions given by God to Moses, which were as follows: “And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water. And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office. And thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst anoint their father, that they may minister unto Me in the priest’s office; for their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout their generations” (Ex. 40:12-15).

For any of the priests to have ministered in the tabernacle without being washed and anointed, and properly clothed would have been presumptuous sin, for which the punishment was death. None but the high priest was permitted to enter the most holy, and he only once a year. The ceremonies required to fit him for the performance of his exalted functions are given with great minuteness in

Lev. 16:2-4, “And the Lord said unto Moses, speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy place, within the veil, before the mercy seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not; for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy seat. Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place, with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and he shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments, therefore shall he wash his flesh in water and so put them on.”

The high priest was forbidden to enter the most holy without first preparing himself according to the divine directions on pain of death. He was not to enter at all times “that he die not;” he was permitted to enter only “once a year” (Lev. 16:34; Heb. 9:7). That the high priest was required to wash his flesh in water before being clothed with the holy garments shows that his flesh was considered unclean, and therefore unfit to come into contact with garments that were clean, or holy. What made his flesh unclean? The effects of the Edenic curse inherent in his nature. In addition to this physical defilement he was also impure morally, being a transgressor. Hence the necessity for his being arrayed in garments of holiness to fit him to officiate as a high priest in the presence of Yahweh. He was symbolically purged of his physical defilement by the washing in water, and the holy garments symbolically covered his moral impurity.

All these things were “patterns of things in the heavens” (Heb. 9:23). That is, they were ritual representations, or divine foreshadowings, of things to be realized in Jesus Christ. He was the individual antitype of the temple (Jn. 2:21); of the altar (Heb. 13:10); of the sacrifice (Jn. 1:29); of the high priest (Heb. 4:14). He was the antitype of the temple through the indwelling presence of the Father by His Spirit with which he was filled “without measure” during his mortal days. Being the antitypical temple, it is reasonable to conclude that he was also the antitypical priest, as under the typical institution of the Mosaic law none but priests were permitted to enter into the temple. The inspired declaration that “the veil” of the temple typified “his flesh” (Heb. 10:20), is a proof that the flesh of Jesus was the antitypical veil of the antitypical temple. So long as he was in the flesh he could not enter the most holy; before he could enter there he must be “born of the spirit.” As the veil was his flesh, and he was not in the antitypical most holy place, and yet was the antitypical temple, he must have been in the antitypical sanctuary. He could not be there without being a priest; hence he was a priest before his death, and could, therefore, offer himself as a sacrifice for himself and for others. By this offering was “the Jesus-Altar purified; the Jesus-Mercy seat sprinkled with sacrificial blood, and the Jesus-Holy of Holies lustrated.”

His sacrifice was for the taking away of sin, in order to open up a way of access to eternal life. He “put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb. 9:26).

“This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Ibid. 10:12). To maintain that he was not a priest during his ministry on earth in the flesh, as Bro. Strickler does, is in effect to teach that he did not offer himself as a sacrifice for anyone, that sin was not put away by him, and as a consequence, that the way of salvation was not opened up through his death. Teaching which, logically construed, leads to such disastrous conclusions, must be wrong.

It is true that not belonging to the tribe of Levi, he could not be a priest of the Levitical order of priesthood, but he could be, and was, the antitype of that order. The Melchisedec order of priesthood as embodied in him was the antitype of the Levitical order, and it was fitting that his priesthood after that order, should begin, before the Levitical order was abolished.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN REDEMPTION IN TWO STAGES

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**W** RITING of the death of Christ, Bro. Strickler says: *“It was the ‘just for the unjust,’ ‘for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God,’ (Rom. 3:25). ‘For this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins’ (Matt. 26:28). ‘Having forgiven you all trespasses’ (Col. 2:13). The revelator says ‘Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood.’ It is sin, sins, trespasses and wicked works; nowhere, not the first intimation that Christ died to cleanse us from, or forgive us for sin’s flesh, or sin in the flesh. If this was true then does man deserve punishment for sin’s flesh. What is the barrier that separates us from God? Let the apostle answer, ‘Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart’ (Eph. 4:18). Christ sent Paul to the Gentiles ‘to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified through faith that is in me.’ John says, ‘For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world.’ All sin falls under these three heads, and these unlawful desires whether contemplated or executed, constitute the barrier that separates man from God. When this barrier existing between God and man is removed by forgiveness, or remission of the penalty due to the law of God, then, the one who was alienated, is said by the apostle to be ‘washed,’ ‘sanctified,’ and ‘justified.’ ‘In every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him.’ This righteousness and justification results from the ‘obedience of faith,’ which places a person in Christ Jesus; and of this position the apostle says, ‘But of Him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus; who was made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.’ These result from atonement, covering for sin, iniquity, and transgression, all moral and not physical conditions. Had atonement been necessary for us because of the physical nature of man, ‘this body of death,’ as the apostle calls it in Rom. 7:24, then surely there would have been some revelation of the mind of God to that effect, especially so in the New Testament, where God’s wisdom, which had been hidden for ages, was manifested. The first stage of redemption takes place at baptism, and the second at the resurrection and immortalization of the saints.” (The Atonement, sheets Nos. 6 and 7).*

In the above Bro. Strickler uses one part of the Truth to nullify another part, as he does in all that he has written in his endeavor to establish his truth-

destroying theory of sacrifice and atonement necessary for moral defilement only. All unscriptural conceptions come from taking a part instead of the whole. He needs to enlarge his spiritual vision so as to take in all the elements of the subject he is trying to expound. We altogether demur to his allegation\* that "Christ suffered the punishment due to sin" either vicariously or representatively. The lambs and other animals offered up in sacrifice under the law, were not "punished" for the sins of the Israelites, neither was Christ. His death was necessary, not that he might be punished for others, but that God's righteousness might be declared "for the remission of sins that are past through His forbearance" (Rom. 3:25). As Bro. Roberts has said: "Angel or beast, or un-Adamic man, could not 'die for us,' because the dying was not to be a punishment of the innocent in the room of the guilty, but an establishing of the divine supremacy in righteousness as the basis of favor in forgiveness in the case of all such as see, and believe, and submit. The idea may be subtle, but not invisible to spiritual discernment. If only few understand it, it is because the majority judge of it as a transaction between man and man, instead of the high etiquette of Heaven in receiving sinners unto life eternal." (*Law of Moses*, p. 206 \*4th ed.: p.225; 1971 ed.: p.224).

The writer of the paper we are considering evidently lacks this "spiritual discernment." He needs to "anoint his eyes with eye salve that he may see" (Rev. 3:18). He has failed to grasp the lesson of sacrifice, "which is not so much man's punishment as God's vindication." There is much that savors of substitution in what he has written. It is true, as he says, that Jesus did not die in order "that we might obtain forgiveness for sin's flesh, or sin in the flesh." But why does he make such a statement, and harp upon the idea so much? The brethren whose conclusions he is opposing, have never taught anything so absurd. Sin's flesh, or sin in the flesh, is the devil, and Christ died to destroy the devil, not to save him. Brethren Thomas and Roberts have always taught that the possession of sinful flesh by Adam's descendants is a "misfortune, not a crime," and that God imputes no guilt to them because of this misfortune. Why then does he persist in misrepresenting them by insinuating that they taught such nonsense? Sin in the flesh cannot be atoned for, or reconciled to God, but its possessors may be. The work of God in Christ is to destroy this principle of evil, or diabolos, in their nature. When this has been done for them, as it was done for the Lord Jesus himself over 1800 years ago, they will be free from the devil and from the dominion of death, and consequently saved with a great and glorious salvation.

As regards Bro. Strickler's denial "that Christ died to cleanse us from sin's

flesh, or sin in the flesh," that is a different matter. His joining of the two things together indicates a lack of discrimination between things that differ. Until we are cleansed from sin in the flesh we are not saved, and if our cleansing therefrom is not a result of the sacrifice of Christ, then he is not "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9). This brother's style of writing of the "great salvation" is too much after the style of orthodox revivalists; believe in Jesus, and be baptised for the remission of sins and the rest follows. At the same time he knows better, and understands that "Salvation is a process that commences with the belief of the Truth, but is by no means completed thereby; it requires a lifetime for its scope, and untiring diligence for its accomplishment." Multitudes who have believed the gospel and received remission of past sins through baptism, will perish. "Many are called but few chosen." It is not the death or the resurrection of Christ that enlightens the dark understanding and dispels the ignorance and hardness of heart that alienates from the "life of God." It is the Word, operative in the mind, to the enlightening of the understanding and purification of the heart, which will, ultimately, give the faithful "an inheritance among all them who are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). The work of God in Christ has opened the way and laid a foundation upon which faith may build unto life eternal, "through the forbearance of God." In the closing sentence of the foregoing citation the writer thereof states a truth which, properly understood nullifies much of his false reasoning. He says, "the first stage of redemption takes place at baptism, the second at the resurrection and immortalization of the saints." This is true, as regards the second stage. The first stage, however, is only commenced at baptism; it occupies the entire period of the believer's probation during which the process of being "made perfect through suffering" under the purifying power of the Truth, is operative. After the heart has been made "clean through the Word," the next thing needful is the purification of the nature. Christ at his appearing "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). Cleansed in mind and body, they are redeemed, saved; the perfected sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty.

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\* On sheet No. 6, he says, "*we must conclude that Christ suffered the punishment due to sin.*" This was unintentionally omitted from the above quotation. — *W. Smallwood*

## CHAPTER TWELVE

# THE TWO CONSTITUTIONS

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**W**E learn from Romans 5:19, that as “through one man’s disobedience many were made (constituted) sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made (constituted) righteous.” (The reader may easily satisfy himself that the Greek word translated “made” in the above, means, “constituted”).

All of us know by sorrowful experience, what it is to be “constituted sinners.” We have inherited a nature, or constitution, from the first sinner, which makes us all sinners by nature; we cannot help being sinners, however good our intentions, as the law given to Israel through Moses was designed to prove, and did prove, demonstratively. It is from this state of helplessness and misfortune that God has interposed to save all of Abrahamic disposition. He does it through the perfect obedience of the “one man” of His own providing: a “body prepared” for the purpose. This man was the Father manifest among men by the Spirit for their salvation. This “one man” Jesus, said, that of himself, he could do nothing; that the Father of whom he was the manifestation was the doer and the speaker; and that by the Spirit proceeding from the Father, this great marvel was achieved through the Son. Jesus Christ was the Eternal One in manifestation, accomplishing the great work of salvation by His Spirit operating through the seed of David according to the flesh. Yet it is through this man’s obedience that the many who believe are, ultimately to be “constituted righteous.” That is, they will attain to a nature in which it will be as impossible for them to be sinners, as it is now impossible for them to be righteous while burdened with this “body of sin.”

In order to the accomplishment of this great work of the Father through the Son, it was necessary that the latter should become as one of “us” in constitution, and yet be free from transgression. He was, therefore of the same physical nature with ourselves, as the Scriptures abundantly testify. Consequently, what is affirmed of the physical nature of his brethren was affirmable also of him in the days of his flesh; body dead because of sin (Rom. 8:10); sentence of death in ourselves (2Cor. 1:9); waiting for the adoption of the body (Phil. 3:21); a weak, corruptible, dishonorable, natural body (1Cor. 15:42-44). That feature of his case which distinguished him from us was, that God was at work in him. The object of this was that the work might be God’s—that the glory might be to Him. The

result of the work was a man without sin morally, though suffering the consequences of sin physically; in whose death and resurrection the law of sin and death was annulled in relation to himself. “To him God asks all men to look to be saved.” Their sins are forgiven for his sake, if they become obedient believers of the gospel, and walk as “obedient children” during the time of their probation. By so doing they recognize and approve the vindication of God’s law in him. They acknowledge that God is righteous in punishing rebellion against His authority with death; and that it is only through His forbearance that they can be saved (Rom. 3:25-26). Transgression against God, is, in effect, a denial of His supremacy, a repudiation of His authority, and in the sacrificial death of His Son His despised authority was vindicated, His supremacy upheld, His righteousness, in decreeing that the “wages of sin” shall be death, declared; and the way opened for Him to be gracious without compromise to all identifying themselves with Christ by baptism into the name of this crucified and risen representative. He is the “second Adam” through whose obedience life may be gained, because he has abolished the death that has resulted from the disobedience of the first Adam. As the faithful get death from Adam, so do they get life from Christ, but not from the weak and dying Christ of 1800 years ago, but from the Christ exalted to heaven in his state of victory over death—in that state in which, having died unto sin once, “death hath no more dominion over him” (Rom. 6:9-10), in the state in which he is now; in which, being “their life, when he appears they shall appear with him in glory” (Col. 3:4).

Is it not evident, then, from the foregoing considerations, that through the obedience of this man of God’s providing the faithful are cleansed in “body, soul, and spirit;” from both moral and physical defilement, or, in other words, saved from this evil, sinful, and perishing state.

The following from Dr. Thomas, writing of the parable of the “Ten Virgins,” is interesting in this connection, and not inappropriate: “The intelligent virgins are the wise of Dan. 12:10, of whom it is said, ‘they shall understand,’ and elsewhere, ‘the wise shall inherit glory.’ Daniel instructs us there shall be some among the living in the ‘time of the end,’ when the words of his prophecy are to be understood. The words are ‘closed up and sealed *till the time of the end*’ — but ‘the wise shall understand.’ These intelligent believers among the living, constitute, in the aggregate, the company with whom Christ entered into covenant, having espoused or betrothed it to himself; in which betrothal he sanctifies it, having cleansed it in the laver of water with doctrine. In Ephesians 5:23, the apostle terms this sanctified company of intelligent virgins an ecclesia, because they have been called out by the gospel invitation from among the fools,

to become the future rulers of the world for good He styles them also in ch 1 23, the body of Christ, and in the former reference regards it as related to Christ, as Eve was to the first Adam He contemplates it in two states—the present, in which it is the body *to be saved*, and the future, in which it is the body *saved* When saved it will be a glorious ecclesia, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, holy and without blemish, members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones, Christ and his ecclesia then being ‘one flesh,’ which at present they are not” (*The Christadelphian*, 1874, p 545)

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN THE SIN BEARER OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

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**B**ROTHER Strickler’s teaching embodies the orthodox idea in modified form as to the manner in which sin was borne away by Christ He says, “*The only kind of sin that is spoken of in connection with the ‘offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all’ in Heb. 9th and 10th chapters, is sin that has earned the wages of death; that is, sin of wicked thoughts and works; and the only purging and cleansing is that of the conscience, in that it rests in peace, from the fact that sins have been remitted.*” (*The Atonement*, sheet No 13)

Again “*by what rule in grammar or logic has anyone the right to interpret the words of Paul in Heb. 9:26, to mean that the sin put away was sin’s flesh, or sin in the flesh? The following are the words of the apostle, ‘But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself’.*” (*The Atonement*, sheet No 12)

Clearly, then, Bro Strickler maintains that actual transgressions were laid upon Christ, in some way, and he bore them away by his death, bore them in, or on, his body, when he was nailed to the tree Such teaching does him discredit in the face of so much positive evidence to the contrary Jesus did not, by his death, “put away” the transgressions\* of those who lived before him, and he certainly could not put away the sins of those who have lived since, and as he had no transgressions of his own to “put away,” he could not have put away sin by or through his death in any other sense than that of sin, or diabolos, which was in his nature, and which has “the power of death” By doing this, he has provided a way for the removal of actual sins by forgiveness, and the effects ultimately removed by a change of nature In other words, he has destroyed the effects of sin inheriting in his nature, which effects are called sin or diabolos Hence the Scripture says that “He bare our sins in his own body to the tree” (1Pet 2 24 mg ) He could not have actual transgressions in his body, but he could have the consequences there By taking on himself the nature of the “Seed of Abraham” (Heb 2 14-18) He had a body in which existed, as a principle or law of its members the consequences of sin He was “made sin” (2Cor 5 21) and he destroyed sin through his death on account of sin, and obtained resurrection

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\* *The faithful who died prior to Christ’s day died forgiven men their faith being counted to them for righteousness The resurrection of the Sin bearer ratified that forgiveness and made it everlastingly effective to the end that ‘the promise (of an eternal inheritance) might be sure to all the seed’ (Rom 4 16) If the covering for sin provided in the crucified and risen Christ had never been effected, they could not rise from the dead to eternal life*

because of righteousness. *He could not have been a sin bearer and a sin offering had he not been made of the sin nature, for there was no other way in which he could bear sin in his body to the tree.*

In referring to the death of Jesus the apostle teaches that God thereby “condemned (or gave judgment against) sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3), a declaration without meaning if there was no sin there to be condemned. The condemnation in this instance is, evidently, not moral but physical; the cause of sin in others is condemned and destroyed by God in the nature of His righteous Son Jesus. It was not necessary for Jesus to appear and to die to enable God to condemn sin in the moral sense: He had done that many times since the introduction of sin into the world. But He had not condemned it in the physical sense prior to the crucifixion of His Son. He had “given judgment against” and inflicted death on members of the race, but as they were transgressors their condemnation resulted in their destruction. In the wisdom of God it was needful that sin should be condemned in the flesh of a righteous bearer of the condemned nature, in order that after suffering the condemnation he might be raised from the dead. In the person of Jesus Christ only, “through the eternal spirit” has this requirement been fulfilled. Only of him can it be said that sin, or that which has the power of death, has been “put away” or destroyed. By its removal the portals of the tomb have been unlocked, that his brethren may escape from the prison house of death. “For if we have been united with him by the likeness of his death, we shall be also by the likeness of his resurrection; knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed” (Rom. 6:5-6). The “old man” that was crucified with Christ is none other than sin’s flesh; which is synonymous with the “body of sin.” The one is said to have been “crucified,” the other “destroyed,” different ways of describing the same thing, namely, the condemnation and destruction of sin in the flesh. If Jesus had not been made of “our old man” nature, or had not possessed the “body of sin,” it would have been impossible for the one to have been “destroyed” or the other “crucified;” and without this there would have been no hope of resurrection through him. “Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead” (1Cor. 15:21).

The “putting away of sin” from the nature of Jesus resulted in the removal of its consequences—death: whereby “Jesus Christ hath vanquished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2Tim. 1:10). He brought it to light in a practical way by becoming himself an embodiment of it, thus illustrating in his own person what immortality is, and how it may be attained. It should, therefore, be evident to all that the putting away of sin and the abolition of death was real in relation to himself, but prospective only as regards his brethren. So far, for them, sin, or diabolos, has not yet been destroyed, nor death abolished, for they are still under its power. But God’s promise standeth

sure that “they shall come forth to a resurrection of life.” The Lord’s body after resurrection, was transformed into a spirit body; his friends whose past transgressions have been all covered as a result of their connection with him, have the promise that their bodies shall be likewise transformed, so that through his one great offering they may be redeemed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit.

“Jesus was flesh of sin, divinely manipulated for the great work of putting away sin in its condemnation therein, and bringing resurrection by the personal righteousness of the sin bearer. ‘Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world’.” This divine declaration by the mouth of John the Baptist directs attention to the precious truth that the Lord Jesus Christ through his death would destroy that great enemy sin—the destroyer of his brethren and deliver them who through fear of death were subject to bondage. Through him men and women of “honest and good heart,” may, by the obedience of faith receive the “adoption of sons,” and rejoice in being fellow citizens of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets and saints; of that splendid polity that will one day fill the earth with light and life, and love and joy, and glory to God. But it is required of such that they believe and practise the Truth in its purity, for this has been appointed of God to “make them free.” The entire arrangement of God in Christ is of the Father’s love (Jn. 3:16). It is His arrangement for His own glory, and the salvation of all who honor Him, for He has said “they that honor Me I will honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.” “The love that has devised it is a love passing knowledge. The goodness that will come of it eludes the highest effort of imagination.” Those who are favored to come within the the arrangement of His mercy and continue therein by walking before Him as obedient children, are begotten “to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled.” “The highest state to which man can attain in this life is disfigured by the moth and rust that doth corrupt, and exposed to various kinds of thieves, including death, the most formidable of them—that break through and steal. The fine houses take much keeping in order, the fine ways of life bring much labor, this vile body wants much tending in bathroom and laundry to keep it even tolerable. All tends to decay and dissolution; ‘but the inheritance is incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away.’ These characteristics apply to all its elements. Bodics spiritual, delivered from the tendency to decomposition inherent in all animal organizations, faculties exalted; emancipated from the heaviness and cloud that haze over the most brilliant of mortal powers, life immortalized by the transmutation of our substance from the frail fibre of animal being to the indestructible tissues of spirit-body; society obtained such as poets never sung—the society of sinless immortals, radiant with life, light, and praise; dominion secured in all the earth, honor, wealth, joy and renown their portion in the high places on earth, when the voice of the scorner has ceased, the earth a smiling paradise; its valleys jubilant with righteous mirth: ‘glory to God in the

highest; goodwill toward men; health, blessing, and plenty crowning all lands with joy; time not dimming the glory or weakening the zest, the advent of an enemy or an end to salvation impossible; an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Reader, foolish, thrice foolish art thou, if thou permittest the voice of the deceiver to imperil for thee the attainment of this 'life eternal—happiness supernal'." (R. Roberts, *Seasons of Comfort*).

CHAPTER FOURTEEN  
"THE LORD HATH MADE  
TO MEET UPON HIM  
THE INIQUITY OF US ALL"

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IT should be obvious to all instructed in the Word that the "Son of Man" cannot be separated from his brethren in the plan of redemption instituted and carried out by his Father through him. He was God manifest in flesh of sin to redeem all of the faith of Abraham from sin and its consequences; the consequences, not of their own sins merely, but also of Adam's sin at the beginning. To accomplish this in harmony with the principles of divine wisdom, he became personally subject to all the consequences on their account. He was manifested to destroy sin in cause and effect; otherwise spoken of as the devil and his works. (Heb. 2:14; 1Jn. 3:8), in order that his friends might be freed from its power. Such intangible things as actual sins of omission and commission could not be destroyed by Jesus in his death; and God, unlike man, does not ask us to assent to or believe the absurd and impossible. In what sense then, was sin destroyed by Christ through his death? In the light of Scripture teaching and the demonstrated facts of the case, there can be but one answer that will bear critical examination, and that is, sin in relation to himself. But this involves a difficulty to some. Jesus never transgressed, therefore, they ask, how could he put away sin in relation to himself? The difficulty disappears when we understand the twofold use of the word "sin" in the Bible. While its primary meaning is "transgression," it is also applied in a secondary sense to the effects of transgression. As inheritors of the effects of the disobedience of our first parents, we are the possessors of a sinful, death-stricken nature. This nature is the cause of sin in us, and in all Adam's descendants; so that it is both an effect and a cause; an effect of the original transgression, and the impelling cause of our transgressions. After the manner of horticulturists, in naming trees according to the fruit they bear, this sin producing body is styled "sin" by the Spirit of God in the apostles. In defining fallen human nature to be sin, the apostle also applies the term to Jesus Christ: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God (did by) sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned (gave judgment against) sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3). He was "made sin" (or human nature) for this purpose (2Cor. 5:21). The reader will observe that "sin in the flesh" was condemned by God, not by Christ. The latter had successfully resisted its evil promptings throughout his life, thus becoming a fitting sacrifice for the taking away of sin; its condemnation was an act of the Father through the sacrificial death of His obedient Son. God condemned sin in the flesh of Jesus,

when that flesh, or “body of sin” was nailed to the tree. When he rose again from the dead, and became endued with the “power of an endless life,” sin, in relation to himself had been destroyed.

As a result of what has been accomplished in him, he has been authorized and empowered by his Father to do the same for his brethren. The contrast between what he has done and what he will do when he returns, as well as of his former and present state, by nature, is clearly stated in the ninth chapter of Hebrews — “Once in the end of the world (age) hath he appeared to *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself* — and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without *sin* unto salvation” (verses 26-28).

These testimonies explain each other. When he first appeared he was the bearer of the sin nature: having put it away and attained to the incorruptible angelic nature, in which the principle of sin does not exist, he will “appear the second time without sin” to do the same for his friends by “bringing them again from the dead,” and clothing them with immortality (1Cor. 15:51).

But Bro. Strickler demurs to all this; and declares that it was the actual transgressions of believers that were laid upon Christ in some mysterious way, and that the “sin” of Heb. 9:26 means the actual sins of his brethren, and that the term “sin” in verse 28 should read “sin offering.” It is impossible to successfully defend such a position, and in the attempt to do so he wrests the Scriptures. As for the term “sin” in Heb. 9:28, there is no reason, apart from the necessities of a wrong theory, why this word, in this particular place, should be translated “sin offering.” Although the original word (*hamartias*) occurs in the New Testament about one hundred and sixty times, (160), it is nowhere translated sin offering, either in the Authorized or Revised Versions. The Greek word translated “offering” (*prosphero*), is an entirely different word.

Jesus “died unto sin” (Rom. 6:10), not “unto a sin offering.” Through his death he destroyed or “put away” this sin, consequently, when he returns he will be “without sin,” being no longer burdened with “this infirmity,” sin’s flesh, but “the Lord, the Spirit,” and therefore able to “save unto the uttermost them that come unto God by him.”

Bro. Strickler refers confidently to the teaching of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah in support of his contention, and writes as though he thought that all who accept the conclusions of brethren Thomas and Roberts should delete this chapter from their Bibles. Let us, then, examine the striking and pathetic language of the prophet in order to see if it affords any support to his teaching. We read as follows:

*“Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;  
He was wounded for our transgressions,  
He was bruised for our iniquities;  
The chastisement of our peace was upon him,  
And with his stripes we are healed.*

*All we like sheep have gone astray;  
We have turned everyone to his own way;  
And the Lord hath laid on him  
The iniquity of us all.*

*Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him;  
He hath put him to grief;  
When thou shalt make his soul  
An offering for sin;  
He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days,  
And the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.*

*He shall see of the travail of his soul  
And shall be satisfied;  
Through his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many;  
For he shall bear their iniquities.*

*Because he hath poured out his soul unto death;  
And he was numbered with the transgressors;  
And he bare the sin of many,  
And made intercession for the transgressors.”*

(Isa. 53:4-6, 10-12).

Was it as a substitute that he became subject to the griefs and sorrows of this evil state so graphically described by the Spirit in Isaiah? No, not as a substitute, but as a representative sufferer on behalf of those who are to “inherit salvation” (Heb. 1:14).

Let the reader carefully compare the following from Isaiah’s testimony:

“He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows” (v. 4).

“He shall bear their iniquities” (v. 11).

“He bare the sin of many” (v. 12).

In what way did he “bear our griefs and carry our sorrows?” Was it not by being made “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?” In other words, by bearing our weak, death-stricken nature, and thereby becoming subject to all the evils of this afflicted state? There can be but one answer to this question, and that must be an affirmative one. This being beyond question, must it not have been in the same way that “He bare the sin of many” and “bore their iniquities?” How otherwise could he bear their “sins and their iniquities” excepting in their effects by becoming subject *on their account*, to all the consequences of sin, sorrow, weakness, pain, curse, and death? Some may be assisted to the perception of this fact by a more literal rendering of Isaiah 53:6 — “The Lord hath made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all” (see marginal note). Here is something the mind can grasp; he bore the iniquitous nature common to his people of all generations; that nature which is the cause of all their tribulations and transgressions, ending in death. He bore this nature by his Father’s contrivance in order to provide a way

whereby He might save the faithful from death while maintaining His own supremacy and holiness— “that He might be just, and at the same time the justifier of all who believe in Jesus.”

This (scriptural) way of looking at the matter enables us to understand why it was “for himself” before it could be “for us.” As the captain of his people’s salvation he had to prepare the way by working out his own salvation from the curse and death to which his Father subjected him on our account. This he was enabled to do through the greater moral power imparted to him in conception, thereby making what was accomplished in him a work of God and not of man, of the Spirit and not of the flesh; “God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.” His work, under God, was to destroy the devil (Heb. 2:14), or power of death in himself first, and afterwards in his brethren. To do this it was necessary that he should “die unto sin,” and rise again on account of righteousness to life forevermore, thus bringing “life and immortality to light” as a result of the great work of redemption wrought in him.

Had he not risen again, there could have been no salvation through him, because, instead of his destroying the devil (or sin), the devil would have destroyed him.

But Bro. Strickler denies that the sin which was destroyed by the death and resurrection of Jesus was sin in the flesh; but maintains that it was actual transgressions. But this is contrary to Scripture. From Hebrews 2:14 we learn that it was the devil (*diabolos*) that was to be destroyed through his death. The works of the devil, as manifested in the political, social, and ecclesiastical institutions of this evil world will be destroyed by him when he returns “without sin” unto the salvation of his friends, and the destruction or subjection of his enemies.

When we perceive that the devil of the New Testament is sin incarnate in the flesh and blood nature of the children of Abraham, which Jesus bore to death, that sin (*diabolos*) might be condemned and destroyed in him, we can comprehend the apostle’s language. On the other hand how could actual sins whether past, present or future, be destroyed in him? Sin (*diabolos*) had to have a physical embodiment in him before it could be destroyed in the manner testified by the apostle. Therefore it is written “God hath made him sin for us who knew no sin,” (2Cor. 5:21), and that the meaning of this declaration may be placed beyond doubt, in writing to the Romans (6:6), the apostle says “our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed;” and in Romans 8:3, “God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh.” How could sin be condemned and destroyed in the nature of Jesus if sin, in some sense, was not there? It is absurd to talk of transgressions being put into him or laid on him, excepting in the language of figure, when, by metonymy, the effect may be put for the cause.

The many testimonies to the effect that he died on account of our sins do not

conflict with this teaching. He did not die to destroy our sins, an impossibility; but to provide a basis of justification for us; first moral, in the forgiveness of our sins; secondly, physical by a change of nature. In other words, the death of Christ was to lay a foundation for the nullification of sin in relation to his brethren unto life eternal. It was to “declare the righteousness of God” as the ground of the exercise of His forbearance. “That is to say, God maintains His own righteousness, and His own supremacy while forgiving us; and exacts our recognition of them and submission to them as the condition of the exercise of His forbearance in the remission of our sins.”

Jesus bore the *diabolos* nature common to man; as a result of his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, he was delivered from that nature; therefore through his death he destroyed it. Before its destruction was accomplished he was under the power of death, but now “death hath no more dominion over him.” Thus was death abolished and immortality developed in his own person. He “died unto sin” and rose to “life and immortality;” thus “abolishing death” in relation to himself, and giving a practical illustration of what is meant by bringing immortality to light (2Tim. 1:10). He thereby became a centre of glorious and endless life, and that life is vested in him for bestowal upon “us” “should he at his coming account us worthy.”

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN THE ALTAR BODY ON THE TREE

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**T**HE following is from Bro. Strickler's letter to a U.S. brother, who had asked him a number of questions relative to the teaching of Bro. Roberts. "*Paul says 'for the death that he died, he died unto sin once' (Rom. 6:10). This statement is synonymous with the one in the fourth chapter and, explained in plain language is, that Christ died a sacrificial victim unto sin. That is, Christ sacrificed by death due to sinners, himself a righteous person, suffering death, the penalty due for the sins that he bore the suffering for in his body. Having satisfied the penalty he was delivered from the death he died; this was the cleansing that he was the subject of, and the sin from which he was justified, 'for he that is dead is justified from sin' (Rom. 6:7). His resurrection, or being 'raised again' from the dead was his vindication; a proof that he, although numbered with transgressors was not a transgressor, but a righteous man not deserving the death that he died. The fact that Christ was delivered from sinful flesh when he put on immortality, is no proof that the cleansing that he was the subject of as an altar was from sin in the flesh. Whatever he as an altar was made unclean with, was that from which he was cleansed. Christ as an altar was not made unclean by being made of a woman. He did, or accomplished, what no other flesh ever did; he kept himself undefiled in the way. 'For 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 as an offering for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit' (Rom. 8:3-4). Christ as an offering for sin was an exhibition of the punishment due to sin, and sin, actual transgression, was condemned in the 'body prepared,' which was flesh that was made of a woman. 'In the body of his flesh through death' (Col. 1:22). 'Through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all' (Heb. 10:10). And as we have seen from Romans 4:25, it was for our trespasses. A more effectual way for the condemnation of 'wicked works,' sin committed by the volition of man, could not be devised. 'Being made a curse,' and 'the condemnation of sin,' by an offering for sin, are precisely the same in effect.'*"

The foregoing is a good example of confused reasoning. Let us examine it and note its deficiencies. The writer says "*Christ sacrificed by death due to sinners, himself a righteous person, suffering death, the penalty due for the sins that he bore the suffering for in his body. Having satisfied the penalty, he was delivered from the death that he died.*"

This is not teaching as the Scriptures teach. If Christ "*suffered the death due to sinners,*" "*the penalty due for the sins of his brethren,*" he ought not to have

risen; and if his death was of the character alleged, the redeeming power lay in the death itself and not in the resurrection that followed; whereas it is written, "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1Cor. 15:17). Furthermore, if Christ suffered the penalty due to sinners, our sins are not forgiven, for it would be absurd to talk of forgiveness for sins the penalty of which has been borne by another. Such reasoning, carried to its logical results, blots out the very first feature of the gospel—the forgiveness of our sins "through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:25). Such teaching is not the Gospel of the Grace of God, but the Romish dogma of substitution, of which there is much in what Bro. Strickler has written. He does not mean to so teach; it is done ignorantly, in unbelief of the true doctrine of the atonement.

There is a strong contrast between such teaching and the scriptural exhibition of the matter. "The Truth," as revived in our age by the instrumentality of Dr. Thomas, harmonizes all difficulties and apparently divergent testimonies. The confusion apparent in Bro. Strickler's teaching is chiefly due to his well-meant attempt to exclude Jesus Christ from the redeeming power of his own sacrifice. Once his true relation to his own offering is discerned, it gives us a simple central idea in which all the various expressions concerning his death converge. But, unfortunately, this "simple central idea" our erring brother seems unable to grasp.

Again, he says in above, "*Having satisfied the penalty he (Christ) was delivered from the death he died.*" What is the penalty for sin, transgression of divine law? Is it not "everlasting destruction:" a condemnation that destroys and causes to perish? If Christ had suffered this penalty he could not have risen, he must have perished. But he did not suffer the penalty due to any man's sin. He did not suffer the penalty of the Edenic law or of any other law. Had he done so death would have claimed him for its own; he must have remained in the grave forever. As the sin bearer of the Abrahamic covenant his death was the expression of God's righteous judgment against sin (Rom. 8:3), by the destruction of the offending nature in the person of a sinless bearer of that nature, so that after suffering on behalf of *repentant and obedient sinners*, he might rise again to endless life, thus opening the gates of the grave for the final escape of all who please God by their unstaggering faith in His promises and childlike obedience to His commandments. Christ's death did not "satisfy the penalty," as Bro. Strickler alleges, but provided a basis upon which God can forgive those who honor Him by their faith, and approach Him through the crucified and risen Christ as humble supplicants for His favor, while recognizing that, as sinners, they are offenders against His law, that law which decrees that "the wages of sin is death." God is able to forgive such without waiving any of His sovereign prerogatives or creative rights. His work in Christ was to open a way for the exercise of mercy conformably with wisdom and justice. Bro. Strickler will not deny this in so many words; but at the same time his teaching is equal to a denial, although he

may not mean it so. His unskilful handling of the subject obscures the wisdom and beauty of God's arrangement of favor in Christ.

Let us further consider the teaching in above extract. The writer says: "**Having satisfied the penalty he was delivered from the death he died; this was the cleansing that he was the subject of, and the sin from which he was justified... The fact that Christ was delivered from sinful flesh when he put on immortality, is no proof that the cleansing that he was the subject of as an altar was from sin in the flesh. Whatever he as an altar was made unclean with, was that from which he was cleansed. Christ as an altar was not made unclean by being made of a woman.**"

Another citation from the same letter will enable us the better to grasp the idea he desires to convey. In this he says: "**How was Christ the antitypical altar, tabernacle, holy and most holy places defiled by the uncleanness and transgressions of the Jews in all their sin? By transference from the sinner, from the unjust to the just, from the unclean to the clean.**"

His meaning is plain. The man Jesus was not defiled by his nature, but by the transgressions of others that were transferred to him in some way. In such case the defilement must have been moral, seeing it was the moral impurity of others that was laid upon him, and if morally defiled he must have been a sinner, and this is what Bro. Strickler makes him by his interpretation of 2Corinthians 5:21, as we have before had occasion to notice. This is sufficient to condemn his teaching in the eyes of all "taught of God." It cuts at the very principle that made it impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin. Such teaching is also in direct opposition to the typical foreshadowings of the offerings under the Mosaic law. The animals offered in sacrifice *were not defiled by the sins that were (ceremonially) laid upon them. On the contrary it is testified that the sin offerings were "Most Holy"* (cp. Lev. 6:25-30), a type of the holy character of the antitypical sacrifice, who was not morally defiled by the "Sin of many" that he bore in his body on the tree.

The following from *Eureka* is appropriate here: "The Eternal Spirit-Word was the high priestly offerer of his own flesh, whose *character* was without spot — holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners 'who knew no sin;' yet whose *nature* was in all points like ours — 'sin's flesh in which dwells no good thing' (Heb. 9:14; 7:26; 2Cor. 5:21; Rom. 8:3; 7:18; Heb. 2:14-17). The flesh made by the Spirit out of Mary's substance and rightly claimed, therefore, in Psa 16:10 and Acts 2:31, as his flesh, is the Spirit's anointed altar, cleansed by the blood of that flesh when poured out unto death 'on the tree.' This flesh was the victim offered — the sacrifice. Suspended on the tree by the voluntary offering of the Spirit-Word (Jn. 10:18) 'sin was condemned in the flesh,' when the soul-blood thereof was poured out unto death. The *Spirit-Word* made his soul thus an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10); and by it sanctified the Altar-Body on the tree. It was now an

Altar Most Holy; and all that touch it are holy and without touching it none are holy." (*Eureka*, vol. 2, p. 224; \**Logos* ed. vol. 2, pp. 236-237).

How could sin be condemned in the flesh of the "Spirit-Word" unless sin, in some sense, was there? How could "evil thoughts and wicked works" be put there? In another place Bro. Strickler says it was "**His character, his life, that was sentenced to death.**" Was Christ's character defiled by the sins of his brethren? From his way of presenting the matter it would not be unreasonable to conclude that he believes so. He maintains that he was not physically defiled, and yet that defilement in some sense was there, for he says "**This was the cleansing that he was the subject of, and the sin from which he was justified,**" clearly indicating that in his view Christ was morally defiled and justified from such defilement by the shedding of his blood. Such confusion is the inevitable result of the introduction of error into God's beautiful and harmonious system of saving truth.

The foreshadowing reference to the type, as noticed above, agrees with the apostolic testimony. The lambs offered under the law were required to be physically perfect; and as they were types, a corresponding perfection was necessary in the antitypical Lamb of God's providing. The perfection in both cases could not be physical, as that would place the type and the antitype on the same level; whereas it is essential that the one should exceed the other as much as the substance exceeds the shadow. The physical perfection of the type pointed to the moral perfection of the antitype. Jesus could not have been morally defiled by the sins laid upon him (in their effects); and as for physical defilement, there was no uncleanness in the body crucified on Calvary that was not there before he was carried to the tree. Sin, both in cause and effect, was condemned and destroyed in him; for he had that in his nature which is the impelling cause of sin in his brethren, and the inherited effects of the original sin in Eden.

The purpose of Yahweh was to nullify sin and death in him, that the faithful of all ages might obtain redemption through him from that which destroys them. This required the two things which were combined in him; that he possess our corrupt nature while being perfectly holy in character. Both were necessary for the accomplishment of the Father's purpose in sending him into the world. Our nature was required that sin (or *diabolos*) might be condemned and destroyed through his death; his righteousness was equally essential for his resurrection to newness of life. Such a combination could only be produced by God manifest in flesh of sin in the manner testified in the New Testament.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN HOW SIN WAS BORNE IN HIS BODY ON THE TREE

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**B**UT does Bro. Strickler really believe that actual transgressions were in some incomprehensible way transferred to the body of Jesus and borne by him to “the tree?” The fact that he repeatedly says so, while rejecting the only alternative, would force one to this conclusion if he said nothing to the contrary. The following citation, however, adds further confusion to what has already been noticed. He says:

*“What does the law teach? The transference of sin to the animal victim, and also to the human sin bearer. How was it done? Symbolically. And also in the antitype, it was done symbolically, and as actual as in the type, when the victim’s life blood was poured out.”* (From a letter to a U.S. brother).

Again, *“When Christ is considered, and looked at as part of ‘the heavenly things themselves,’ purified by ‘the sacrifice of himself’— ‘better sacrifice,’ we still find that the purification of himself was FROM THE SAME KIND OF SINS AS HIS MYSTICAL BODY WAS PURIFIED FROM, WHICH WAS SIN IN REALITY. (emphasis mine). How could this be in view of the fact that he ‘offered himself without spot to God,’ and was without sin? The record is that ‘He bore our sins in his own body on the tree’ — ‘that the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all’ (Isa. 53:6). Now as the un sinning victim under the law was made sin, and considered sin by the laying on of hands, and the confession of sin by sinners—legally and typically so, and this victim’s blood touched the altar and part of the victim was burnt upon the altar, making the altar unclean, and from this uncleanness stood in need of cleansing by atonement; JUST SO, CHRIST THE ANTITYPICAL LAMB, HAVING THE SINS AND INIQUITIES OF US ALL SYMBOLICALLY LAID UPON HIM (emphasis mine), and ‘by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,’ placed upon the tree, he was legally made sin and cursed by the law.”* (*The Atonement*, sheet No. 16).

So, according to Bro. Strickler, sin was laid upon the “Lamb slain” “symbolically” only. Symbolical is not real, and if not real it has no effect, unless something is done to which the symbolical performance has reference. What is the difference between typical and antitypical atonement? From this brother’s mode of treating it there is none, seeing that sin is borne “symbolically” in both cases. If he is right then sin has not been taken away, our “faith is vain,” we are “yet in our sins.” Such is the disastrous result, logically worked out, of his truth-destroying invention.

But, thank God, sin has been taken away, but only in the Lord Jesus himself. so far. God is in the process of removing it from his brethren also, in harmony

with the moral principles involved; and will at last abolish it altogether from the earth. Jesus bore the effects of sin that his Father might remove them in him by his death and resurrection, on behalf of all who should take his name and be approved by him. The true friends of Christ stand before God accepted in him as forgiven sinners, and not as sinners for whom the penalty has been paid by Christ. They attain to this position of privilege and honor by willingly and humbly conforming to the conditions which God in His kindness and wisdom has prescribed.

Bro. Stricklers’ idea evidently is, that the sins of the faithful that were laid upon the “sacrificial man, Jesus,” were entirely outside of himself. That as the sins of the Israelites were (ceremonially) transferred to the living scapegoat, so the sins of his brethren of all ages were symbolically laid upon Jesus, who made an atonement for them by his death on the cross. But the ceremonial transferring of sins to the goat was only a type or shadow, a ritual prophecy, pointing forward to the one on whom sin should be really laid, a (sin)-“body prepared” by God for the purpose, in order that sin might be destroyed in him in accordance with the moral principles involved. Where is the substance of the Mosaic shadow? According to Bro. Strickler’s mode of dealing with the subject there is none; and the dreadful agony of the cross must have been endured for nought.

Another thing in the type that is out of harmony with this brother’s teaching is that the sins symbolically transferred to the scapegoat were “sins that are past.” The sins committed by the Israelites were symbolically borne away every year after they had been committed. According to Bro. Strickler’s way the first scapegoat might have sufficed for all generations of Israelites. But it was not done in this way in the type, neither is it in the antitype. As already indicated, by the death, resurrection, and transformation of Christ, sin in cause and effect has been condemned, destroyed, and he has become a sin covering for all who get connected with him in God’s appointed way. He is God’s way of righteousness. All in him by faith are declared justified or righteous; all who may ultimately become incorporate with him by a change of nature will be constituted righteous as in the present state they are “constituted sinners” (Rom. 5:19).

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN SELF-DESTRUCTIVE REASONING

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**I**N this connection I wish to direct attention to another statement by the same writer, as follows — *“If it was necessary for Christ to offer himself for a purification sacrifice for his unclean nature, and that also of his brethren; then did God hold both Christ and his brethren responsible for possessing a mortal nature.”* (*The Atonement*, sheet No. 9).

Was Christ “held responsible” for the sins of his brethren because he was required to offer himself as a sacrifice on account of them? By a similar process of reasoning we might arrive at such a conclusion. We might construct the following syllogism:

It was not necessary for Jesus to offer himself as a sacrifice for that for which he was not “held responsible;”

It was necessary for him to offer for the sins of his brethren;

Consequently, he must have been “held responsible” by God for their sins.

There is much of this illogical and self-destructive reasoning in Bro. Strickler’s papers on the Atonement, but it is not always so transparent as in the above example. If he would give more earnest attention to the “form of knowledge and of the truth in the law” (Rom. 2:20), it might guide him to more Scriptural conclusions.

There was no personal responsibility attaching to Israelitish women for the defilement incident to childbirth, yet a sin offering and a burnt offering were “necessary” for their purification according to the law (Lev. 12:6). This is the type; what is the antitype? Does it not teach us that, according to God’s appointment, sacrifice is necessary as a basis for purification from physical as well as from moral defilement? Surely. Was not the Lord Jesus, “that great Shepherd of the sheep, brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant?” (Heb. 13:20). And did he not by the shedding of his own blood, through the Eternal Spirit, obtain for himself eternal redemption? (Heb. 9:12). This being undeniable; was he not thereby purged of the loathsome disease of sin in his nature? To deny it is to deny the Truth and make God a liar.

And then as regards Christ’s brethren: What would it avail them to have their past sins forgiven, if nothing further were done for them: if they were not delivered from that in their nature which destroys them. The work of God in Christ is to save them from all the inherited effects of Edenic transgression, as well as to avert the consequences of their own personal transgressions. “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in

him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16).

The sum total of the afflictions from which Christ will save his people, is *death*. Now it is obvious that there can be no salvation from the “second death;” that blots out the subjects of it from God’s creation, and closes their account forever. Consequently, the only death from which “*the faithful in Christ Jesus*” require salvation, is that death which is the common heritage of all mankind, not excepting the Lord Jesus himself. Like “the great Shepherd of the sheep” they are “brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant” and made “equal to angels that cannot die any more.” This being the plain teaching of the Inspired Word, it is vain for Bro. Strickler to maintain that the sacrifice of Christ was for personal sins only. It was as much for the redemption of the faithful from the inherited death defilement inherent in their nature, as from the threatened consequences of personal offences. True, Jesus did not die to atone on behalf of sin’s flesh, as sin cannot be atoned for. Sin in the flesh is the devil (diabolos), and the Son of God was not manifested for the salvation of the devil, but for his destruction (Heb. 2:14).\* But his brethren whose conclusions he is opposing do not teach this, and it is misrepresenting them, for him to try to make it appear that they do.

Forgiveness of personal sins is placed in the forefront of the apostolic proclamation because that is the place it occupies in the process of a believer’s salvation. Until “sins that are past” have been forgiven he is outside the pale of salvation no matter how well he may understand the gospel, or how heartily he may believe it. Once in Christ, and the way is clear for such to “work out his salvation with fear and trembling.” This salvation is a process which begins when the believer of the gospel renders the obedience of faith in baptism, but is not completed until “this mortal shall have put on immortality, this corruptible shall have put on incorruption” (1Cor. 15:54). The “one great offering of Christ for sin” must be operative throughout the entire process; first in the pardon of “sins that are past” at baptism; secondly, in the forgiveness of post-baptismal offences when confessed through him as mediator; and finally in the change to spirit nature after approval by him at the judgment seat. Then, and not till then can the process of atonement be said to be complete; justified, or rectified, morally and physically, the believer’s salvation is attained. To deny this, would be to deny, in effect, that through his death “Jesus Christ has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light” (2Tim. 1:10) for bestowal on all whom he and his Father may approve.

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\* See last paragraph on page 71 as an explanation of what is meant in this statement. — *Publishers*.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN THE CASE OF THE LEPER

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**I**N this connection let us consider the case of lepers under the Mosaic law. As noticed elsewhere, Bro. Strickler declares that there never was an atoning sacrifice, or sin-offering, made under the law for anything but actual transgression (or symbolical, whatever that may be). Was it a transgression for a person to have leprosy? A sin offering was required for such, but nothing is said about forgiveness. The priest was to make an atonement for him and he should be cleansed, not forgiven (Lev. 14:20) as in cases of transgression. Not a sin offering merely, but also a trespass offering and a burnt offering were commanded to be made for the leper, before he was pronounced cleansed according to the law and these offerings were not to be made *until after he had been cured of his leprosy*. For the leper who remained a leper no atonement was provided. Now the leper was not “held guilty” because of his misfortune; it was not a sin; he needed no forgiveness; but he did need cleansing, according to the law, and the blood of the animals slain in sacrifice was the only thing that could purge him of his uncleanness.

Leprosy is a type of sin. All Adam’s children are antitypical lepers even before they become transgressors. They must be purged of this leprosy, both morally and physically, before they can be “at one” with God in the full sense of the word. This purgation is not possible apart from the blood of the sin offering, etc.

So with the Lord Jesus himself. Although his character was untainted with the virus of this loathsome disease, “sin,” it was in his nature, as in that of his brethren, from which he could only be cleansed through the blood of his own offering. This is the teaching of the Scriptures in type and antitype.

The leper had to be cured of his leprosy before an atonement could be made for him. Men have to be forgiven “sins that are past” before the means of atonement provided in Christ becomes effective for them morally; in other words, *their moral nature must be changed before they can be “atoned” for through the shed blood of the “Lamb slain,” and their “vile body” must be transformed, justified, or rectified, by Spirit power, before they are in the atonement physically.*

## CHAPTER NINETEEN SIN AND DEATH

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**L**ET us now consider another statement of Bro. Strickler’s as follows—  
*“Christ’s nature, being mortal, he was under the dominion of death: but for the possession of that nature he was not a criminal, and did not, therefore, offer an atoning sacrifice for himself for it. There never was a divine atoning sacrifice offered up to God where there was not crime, either actual or symbolical. Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for sin, is not presented in the New Testament as an individual offering up sacrifice for himself as an individual, but as an official. He was the messenger of the covenant, and was sent into the world to redeem sinners, not the righteous. ‘For scarcely for a righteous man will one die.’ Natural death cannot hold a righteous man, but death inflicted as a punishment will hold forever.”* (From a letter to a U.S. brother).

Bro. Strickler thinks it necessary to tell us that Jesus “was not a criminal for the possession of a mortal nature.” No one has said that he was, and none but “the drunk or insane” could possibly entertain such an absurd idea for a moment. But he was under the dominion of death, and subject to curse, and in God’s revealed plan of salvation there is no redemption from curse and death apart from a sin offering. Consequently he was “brought again from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant” (Heb. 13:20), thus being cleansed from the death defilement through his own offering. Israelitish women under the law, who had given birth to children, the leper, etc., were not criminals, but they had to be purged of their uncleanness according to the law, and the purifying agent was the blood of animals slain in sacrifice (Heb. 9:22). In other words, sacrifice was necessary for the (ceremonial, or typical) purging of physical as well as of moral defilement. This is the type, and the lesson it conveys should be obvious to spiritual discernment. The nature that Jesus possessed was a death-defiled nature, which defilement had come as a consequence of sin, and it was therefore, unclean in the sight of God.

Our brother appears unable to see that in condemning “sin in the flesh” of His Son, God “condemned sin” both in cause and effect. He could not “condemn sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3) or the devil, without also condemning the works of sin’s flesh, or the works of the devil (Heb. 2:14). According to Bro. Strickler’s way of thinking, as it appears to the writer, God condemned the works of the devil, transgressions, but let the devil himself, who “sinneth from the beginning” (1Jn. 3:8) escape. How much better is God’s way than man’s way. In God’s way “everything is planned; everything adapted with the utmost exactness of wisdom to the accomplishment of a predetermined end. He is wise — He makes no

mistakes; He is economical — He wastes no effort. He accomplishes as much as possible with as little as possible. The result always transcends the means; the good always overtops and outnumbers the evil.”

The following, from the pen of Bro. Robert Roberts, bears forcibly on much that is contained in the papers we are examining, and no apology is necessary for quoting it at such length:

“It is remarkable that death, merely as death, should be marked off for special reprobation as a cause of defilement, and a special purification provided. To touch a corpse was to be unclean seven days (Num. 19:11). And if a man died in a tent, everything in the tent and every person entering the tent was contaminated for a like period. Every man touching even the bone of a man, or a grave, was to be unclean seven days; and if he neglected to perform the required purification, he continued unclean indefinitely, and rendered himself liable to be cut off from his people, in having ‘defiled the sanctuary of the Lord’ (verses 13, 20).

“The cleansing consisted of being sprinkled by a clean person with a specially-prepared ‘water of separation’ on the third day, after which, on the seventh day, the unclean person was to wash his clothes and bathe himself in water. If he omitted the sprinkling on the third day, the washing on the seventh day would be of no avail. For a tent and all the articles in it defiled by the occurrence of death, the law was that a clean person was to take hyssop and dip it in the water of separation, and sprinkle it upon the tent and all its contents.

“And what was the water of separation? It was composed of the ashes of a slain heifer, concerning which, significant particulars are supplied. The Israelites were to bring to the high priest ‘a red heifer without spot, wherein was no blemish, and upon which never came yoke’ (verse 2). The high priest was to lead the animal out of the camp, and an assistant was to slay it before his face. The priest was then to take of the blood with his finger and sprinkle it towards the tabernacle of the congregation seven times. The assistant was then to burn the body of the heifer—the priest casting cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet into the midst of the burning fire. Afterwards a clean person—not the priest or his assistant—was to gather up the ashes of the heifer and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, to be kept for use as ‘a purification for sin’ (verse 17).

“The whole process was for cleansing, and **yet it defiled those who took part in it**. The priest was to be ‘unclean until the even,’ (verse 7), and was to ‘wash his clothes and bathe his flesh in water.’ His assistant was affected in the same way (verse 8). And so was the ‘clean’ man who should gather up the ashes and store them up in a clean place as a purification for sin (verse 9).

“There is a significance in all these details that ought to be fatal to the loose ideas entertained in some Gentile quarters as to the death of Christ, to the effect that it was not necessary and not required, except as the mere act of martyrdom or crowning act of a life of obedience. For we must never forget that all these

ceremonies of the law were allegorical of the work of Christ. But before considering the details, let us ponder the general fact that the ashes of a **slain heifer** are provided as an indispensable purification from the taint acquired by contact with **death** in any shape or form, or in however indirect or distant a manner; the neglect of which ensured that ‘cutting off from the people’ which the law so stringently provided in so many cases. Why should death, merely as death, be apparently treated with such abhorrence and be made the subject of such stringent measures of purification?

“This touches a subject high, deep, and wide. It calls attention to the origin of death in relation to man, and to the nature of life in relation to God. Both these subjects are liable to be skimmed over in this merely naturalistic age. Men find death a universal law of the animal world, so far as they have experience of that world upon earth; and they are apt to regard it as the inseparable corollary of life—the necessary and other half of the phenomenon of vitality.

“Though all life is by constitution transient in its form upon earth, at present, it does not follow that human mortality is exactly in the same channel. It might seem to follow if we had nothing, but the constitution of nature to consider; if we had no attested revelation, we might be shut up to such a dispiriting thought, though even then, we could not but be impressed with the thought that man, the lord of creation, occupies a peculiar if inexplicable position among all the forms of life upon the earth. But in the presence of an attested revelation, we are bound to adjust revealed truth to natural fact. Moses and Christ cover the whole ground. We cannot in their presence shut our eyes to the revelation that so far as man is concerned, death is **the result of sin**, and not the necessary quality of the nature with which he was endowed in the first instance. This truth enables us to understand the peculiar detestation of death by the ordinances we are considering. The presence of death—the touch of death—means the presence of sin, and sin is the awful thing that fools make a mock at; the crime of insubordination against the wish, will, or law of the Eternal Author and Proprietor of Creation.

“If the ceremonial repudiation of death in the law of Moses has this pungent meaning, it naturally brings the question of life into view, and opens celestial realms... God, being, in essence, the life of the universe, and incorporating that life in divers forms for His own pleasure, we may understand how death, as the negation of His own work and the penalty of treason against Himself, should come under the peculiar reprobation manifest in the Mosaic ordinance, that contact with death made a man defiled with a defilement calling for instant cleansing.

“From this ceremonial shadow, we easily go to the substance. The ashes of a slain heifer applied to a man defiled by death, was a **curing of death by death**. This is precisely what has happened in the antitype. Christ, ‘**through death**, destroyed that having the power of death, that is, the devil,’ (Heb. 2:14). How

could he do this if he had not in himself the power of death to destroy by dying? He **has** destroyed death. But in whom? In himself alone as yet. Believers will obtain the benefit by incorporation with him at the resurrection; but at the present time the victory is his alone. The fact is plain to everyone. Some who admire Christ are horror-struck at the idea of his having been a partaker of the Adamic condemned nature — a nature defiled by death because of sin. Their horror is due **wholly** to too great a confinement of view. They fix their attention on the idea of 'defilement,' without remembering that the defilement was undertaken expressly with a view to removal.

"We must have God's revealed object in view. The power of death was there that it might be destroyed. If it was not there, it could not be destroyed. This is the mischief of what may be truly called the Papal view. By denying that Jesus came in the very dying flesh of Adam, it changes the character of the death of Christ into a martyrdom, or a punishing of the innocent for the guilty; instead of being what it is revealed to have been — a declaration of the righteousness of God that He might be just while the justifier of those who have faith in it for the forgiveness of their sins (Rom. 3:24-26).

"The mischief of this lies in its mental effects. Reconciliation with God with a view to worship and everlasting communion, is based on a right discernment of His ways. A wrong idea of God's objects would unfit a man to be an acceptable worshipper, for God finds pleasure in our worship in proportion as we recognize our mutual relations. This is, in fact, the difference between one class of mankind and another, as revealed in all that has been written. A man who comes to Him with the idea that he has a right to be heard and to be saved, because his sins have been compounded for substitutionally in the death of Christ, as one man may satisfy the death of another, is not in the frame of mind that is acceptable to Him. We must recognize that 'grace reigns **through righteousness**' (Rom. 5:21), and that we are forgiven, not because another has been punished for our sins, but because we recognize this righteousness in the operation that put the Lord to death for the declaration of that righteousness, and in the condemnation of sin in the flesh (Rom. 3:25; 8:3).

"The subject may be difficult to understand, but this is only because it concerns the ways of God, which are as much higher than man's as the heavens are higher than the earth (Isa. 55:8-9). God is ready to pardon, but not to put aside the ways of His righteousness. He aims at His own exaltation as well as our benefit, in the conferring of salvation; and therefore He adopts a method that humbles us in the dust while affording scope for His favor towards us without departure from justice and wisdom. It is a method that while inviting us to take of the water of life freely, puts us under everlasting obligations to Christ, through whom alone we can have access to Him, or entrance into everlasting life. They are no empty words that the saints employ when they sing, 'Thou wast slain and

hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood... Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and wisdom, and riches and honor, and glory and blessing.'

"It is because these principles are involved that John laid such stress on the necessity for believing that Jesus Christ had 'come in the flesh.' He directed the brethren to refuse association with any man who denied this (2Jn. vv. 7-10; 1Jn. 4:3). True it is that the interdict related in the apostolic age to a class who maintained that the life and suffering of Christ were apparent only, not real; but the objection that lies against that doctrine lies equally against the doctrine that it was a life and death in immaculate flesh; for in relation to the nature of man, that would have been as much only a seeming life and death as the other, and as effectually hides the real aims of the life and death of Christ in the flesh. It is **God's objects in the case** that constitute the essence of the matter, and these are as much hidden by the death of an immaculate Christ as the seeming death of a seeming Christ; for if he were what the immaculationists maintain there could be no condemnation of sin in the flesh, and no declaration of the righteousness of God, in his death." (*Law of Moses*, pp. 240-244. \*4th edit.: pp. 264-267; 1971 ed.: pp. 260-266).

Is it not evident from the foregoing sound words, and the considerations presented, that the blood of the "Lamb slain" was as necessary as a foundation for the purging of this inherited death defilement as for the forgiveness of personal sins, because the former is the result of transgression in Eden; and although God is not so unkind as to impute Adam's guilt to his descendants, He requires from them a recognition of their unclean state by nature, and a humble compliance with all His appointments for their cleansing before He will receive them into favor.

## CHAPTER TWENTY SYMBOLICAL CRIME (?)

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**L**ET us now consider the next sentence in the above citation from Bro. Strickler's letter: "*There never was a divine atoning sacrifice offered up to God where there was not crime either actual or symbolical.*" What has been already considered will apply equally well to this rash assertion. In order to nullify the lessons conveyed by the atoning sacrifices offered up under the law, Bro. Strickler has invented a new crime, one not mentioned in the criminal codes of God or men. What straits must he be in to bolster up an unscriptural theory when he perpetrates such folly. So the altar, and the tabernacle, and the other inanimate things for which an atonement was necessary according to the law, were guilty of "symbolical crime." Israelitish women in giving birth to children committed a "symbolical crime." So did the poor unfortunates who contracted the loathsome disease of leprosy. Our brother has surely approached the climax of absurdity.

And then he says: "*Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for sin, is not presented in the New Testament as an individual offering up sacrifice for himself as an individual, but as an official.*" That is to say, Jesus did offer for himself as an official, but not as an individual. In such a connection how was it possible for him to do anything for himself as an official without also doing it for himself as an individual? he could not wash in an official capacity without washing himself as an individual. Neither could he cleanse himself from the defilement of this "body of sin" without doing it for himself individually. Furthermore, he has told us in another place that Christ could not possibly have been a priest while in the flesh, and if not a priest there was no other capacity in which he could offer for himself "as an official," therefore according to Bro. Strickler's own premises, he must have offered for himself as an individual. Discard all human inventions and accept the testimony of God's infallible Word, and all difficulties can be harmonized. In the seventh chapter of Hebrews the apostle teaches that as the antitypical high priest of Israel, the Melchisedec high priest offered "first for his own sins and then for the people's." As he was "without sin" in the moral sense, "his own sins" could only be the effects of the sins of others which he bore on their account, and by which he was physically defiled, necessitating a purification sacrifice "for himself" to cleanse himself from the inherited defilement. "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption" ("For us" is not in the original — Heb. 9:12). "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise 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).

In the typical offerings under the law all uncleanness required purgation by the blood of the sacrifice; but not so in the antitype, according to Bro. Strickler. Christ's sacrifice is effective for the purging of moral defilement, but not of physical. The antitype is thus made to appear inferior to the type; the shadow to exceed the substance.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE CHRIST'S TRIAL AND VICTORY

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**A**S the captain of his people's salvation, the Lord Jesus had to become victorious over sin and death before any could obtain forgiveness of sins and eternal life through him. "Like his brethren he had to contend with that enemy of God styled diabolos (Heb. 2:14) which is a personification of sin in the flesh. This enemy within human nature is the mind of the flesh, 'which is enmity against God, it is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be' (Rom. 8:7). The commandment of God which is 'holy, just, and good' being so restrictive of the propensities, which in purely animal men display themselves in uncontrolled violence, makes them appear in their true colors. These turbulent propensities the apostle styles 'sin in the flesh' of which it is full; hence he also terms it 'sinful flesh.' This is human nature; and the evil or sin in it is the accuser, adversary, and calumniator of God. It is the devil and Satan within human nature; so that 'when a man is tempted, he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.' If a man examine himself he will perceive within him something at work craving after things which the law of God forbids. The best of men are conscious of this enemy within them. It troubled the apostle Paul so much that he exclaimed 'O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death or mortal body?' He thanked God that the Lord Jesus would do it as he had himself been delivered from it (Rom. 7:12, 17-18, 24-25).

"Probation before exaltation is upon the principle of faith in *the promises of God, made precious by trial well sustained*. Even Christ himself was subjected to it. 'By the grace of God he tasted death for every man. For it was fitting for God, that... in bringing many sons to glory, he should make the captain of their salvation *perfect through sufferings*. For in that he hath suffered *being put to the proof*, he is able to succour them who are tried.' And 'though he were a Son, yet learned *he obedience by the things that he suffered*; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation *unto all them that obey him*' (Heb. 2:9-10; 5:8-9). He was first morally perfected through suffering; and then corporeally, by being 'made into a spirit' by the spirit of holiness in his resurrection from the dead. I say 'morally perfected;' for although he was without transgression, his perfection of character is predicated upon his 'obedience unto death'.

"The probation of the Lord Jesus is an interesting and important study, especially that part of it styled, the Temptation of Satan. Paul, speaking of him as the high priest under the new constitution says, 'He was put to the proof in all things according to our likeness, without transgression' (Heb. 4:15); that is, 'having taken hold of the seed of Abraham' 'being found in fashion as a man,' the

infirmities of human nature were thus laid upon him. He could sympathize with them experimentally, being, by the feelings excited within him when enticed, well acquainted with all its weak points." (see *Elpis Israel*, pp. 67-68; \*14th ed.: p. 76).

Again we read from Dr. Thomas— "The prophet sees Joshua, the high priest of the restoration angelized, and clothed in filthy garments. That is, he represents the Christ, in the capacity of Yahweh's Messenger, 'the Angel of the Covenant' clothed with 'the flesh of sin,' in which Paul tells us 'dwells no good thing.' While Joshua was in these filthy garments, Zechariah sees the adversary at his right hand; that is, in power, standing to resist him. This represents the resistance of power that would be brought to bear against the Christ in the days of his flesh. But that the adversary should not finally prevail is indicated by the words of Yahweh to the adversary, saying 'Yahweh shall restrain thee, O Satan; even Yahweh that hath chosen Jerusalem shall restrain thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?' That is, that although the adversary that possessed Jerusalem might resist the High Priest of the Order of Melchisedec, and wound him in the heel, he shall nevertheless wrest Jerusalem from his grasp, and restrain, or bind him, as is apocalyptically represented in chapter 20:1-3.

"While Zechariah was beholding, he saw the garments of Joshua, the high priest, changed; and was instructed that the action represented the putting away of iniquity which the priest is supposed to bear. In this we see, by the light of the New Testament, *the change of nature*, or body, in relation to the Christ, 'whom,' says Paul, 'we know henceforth no more after the flesh.' He was crucified in 'flesh of sin;' and then sin was 'condemned in the flesh.' But when he rose again, he became *spirit body*, called by Paul '*pneuma hagiosunes*,' spirit of holiness (Rom. 1:4). He is now the Angel High Priest of Yahweh, no longer oppressed with our filthy nature, but 'clothed in a garment white as snow' (Dan. 7:9), reaching to the foot." (Apoc. 1:13; *Eureka*, vol. 1, p. 58).

CHAPTER 22  
FOR "HIMSELF" THAT IT  
MIGHT BE "FOR US."

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**B**ROTHER Strickler lays great stress on the many testimonies which declare that Christ "died for our sins," died "for us;" but it is a misapplication of these Scriptures to make them exclude others equally important which testify that what he did was for himself also. Although the appearance of Jesus in the flesh, and all that he went through, was "for us," it should be evident to all that he was individually comprehended as the head of the family, the elder brother in the ecclesia. His birth was for us, but was it not for himself also? He was obedient for his brethren's sake, as is evident from the declaration of the apostle "through one man's obedience many shall be made righteous;" but was he not obedient for his own sake also? \*

So when he died "for us," did he not die for himself also? How otherwise could he have been made free from the sin which God laid upon him in sending him forth in the likeness of sinful flesh? The Scripture testifies that "He died unto sin once," but "being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9-10). Is it not evident from this that Jesus must needs offer for himself to deliver himself from the sin power of death inherent in his nature?

Then consider the scriptural definition of the priesthood which Christ received from the Father: "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity, and by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also *for himself*, to offer for sins," (Heb. 5:2-3). And then consider the teaching in Heb. 7:27, concerning this priest after the order of Melchisedec, "who needeth not daily, as those (Aaronic) high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's, for this he did once, when he offered up himself;" showing clearly that he was individually comprehended in the scope of his own sin offering.

As Christ was the antitype of the high priest who "went alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered *for himself*, and for the errors of the people" (Heb. 9:7), it was required that his sacrifice should comprehend himself as well

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\* By which Bro. Smallwood evidently means that, although the Lord Jesus came on behalf of sinners, he had himself to first be saved; thus his birth and life of obedience were necessary elements for his own salvation, "for himself," that thereby he might be made appropriate for the salvation of those he came to save.  
— Publishers.

as his people in the effect of its operation. The perception of this truth enables us to understand why "Messiah the Prince," in the future age, shall "prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering" (Ezek. 45:22) These sacrifices must be memorial of the "one great offering of Christ for sin," and show that when as a mortal man he "offered himself without spot to God" his offering was for himself as well as for others.

Considering that Jesus came under both the Edenic and Mosaic curses in their effects, was not a sin offering necessary to purify him from the defilement caused thereby, and therefore in offering for others did he not also offer for himself? The Scriptures testify that he rose again for the justification of all who believe in him, but was it not for his own justification also, seeing that apart from it he could not have been "justified in the spirit" (1Tim. 3:16).

He ascended to heaven to appear in the presence of God for his people (Heb. 9:24); but was it not also for his own exaltation and glory, seeing that it is testified that "because of his obedience God hath highly exalted him?"

It is all "for us" but he himself must of necessity be included as the firstborn among many brethren whom as captain he leads to glory (Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:9). It could not be "for us" without being "for himself" also, as he was placed in exactly the same position as all his brethren of all ages being subjected to all the afflictions of an evil state as a result of the "iniquity of us all" being laid upon him, as a necessary preparation for the great work of redemption to be wrought out through him. Bro. Strickler's contention that he did not need to offer for himself to redeem himself from "that which has the power of death," which is sin, or diabolos (Heb. 2:14) would, could it have effect, nullify the truth concerning him.

The New Testament teaches that the substance of the law, or the things therein foreshadowed, are to be found in the things concerning Christ (Col. 2:17; Rom. 2:20; Heb. 9:23; 10:1). Brother Strickler cannot furnish, in harmony with his view of the matter, an antitype to the high priest offering for himself after being clothed in garments of holiness, representative of the righteousness of the Melchisedec high priest (Lev. 16:6). Nor the antitype to the uncleanness imparting bodies of those beasts burnt without the camp (Heb. 13:11); nor for the atonement made for the altar (Lev. 16:18), nor the antitype for the atonement made for the holy sanctuary (Lev. 16:33), and for the tabernacle of the congregation (ibid). He cannot satisfactorily show wherein all these things were typical of Christ if he did not require to offer for himself to redeem himself from death.

The inspired testimony teaches that as it was necessary for these typical things in the Mosaic system to be purged with blood, so it was necessary that the things typified should be purged; but with a "better sacrifice," that is, the sacrifice of Christ (Heb. 9:23). The Christ of Bro. Strickler's theory needed no "purging,"

## CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

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seeing that sin was only laid upon him “symbolically” and therefore could not possibly defile; therefore it follows that he is not the Christ of whom Paul wrote, who required purging by his own blood. For the Christ of Paul it was necessary that he should offer up himself to purge himself from the *actual* defilement of a sin-defiled nature, that having, by his own blood obtained for himself eternal redemption (Heb. 9:12), he might be able to save “to the uttermost” them that come unto God through him (Heb. 7:25).

Herein we see the beauty and perfection of God’s arrangement of mercy in Christ. He brings him under both the Edenic and Mosaic curses, from the defilement of which he is purged by his own blood. He bears the effects in his own person, and in his one great offering for sin cleanses himself from the impurity laid upon him, and as the antitypical Lamb of God gives efficacy to the sacrifices and ceremonial purifications of all faithful Jews under the law, and at the same time provides a means of purification, both moral and physical, for all the faithful of subsequent ages.

It was by the perversion of the Truth in apparently little things in the first century of the present era, that the foundation was laid for the up-spring of that great Upas tree of error which has, for many generations, shrouded the world in darkness. May those anxious about their salvation be warned, and give earnest heed to the lesson conveyed by the history of first century declension.

**W**HEN the Spirit of God by Peter says: “He bore our sins in his own body to the tree” (1Pet. 2:24; Isa. 53:6), does it mean the very acts of disobedience or their effects? As the former is impossible, it must be the latter. If, as Bro. Strickler maintains, our sins were symbolically laid upon him in the same way as they were laid on the sacrificial animals under the law, how was it that those sacrifices could not take away sins? (Heb. 10:2) and if they were the shadow where is the substance according to this brother’s theory? The ceremonial bearing of sins by the animals was the type; “the real bearing of sin by Jesus in the possession of a prepared sin-body” which he bore to death and then rose again to endless life, thereby putting away sin, is the substance.

The Scripture says “God hath made him to be sin” (2Cor. 5:21). Was he not made sin, in the first place, in being made of the same nature as his mother, who was mortal because of sin, and could only transmit her sin-defiled nature to her offspring?

The Scripture says that Christ “put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,” and that he will appear a second time “without sin unto salvation” (Heb. 9:26, 28). This is equal to saying that the first time he was not without sin. In what sense did he come the first time with sin, if it was not in the sense of having a sinful flesh nature? If you say it means a sin offering, how do you understand Paul’s statement (Rom. 6:10) that when he died he died unto sin once? He did not die unto a sin offering, but in making himself a sin offering he died unto sin. If the hereditary law of sin wrought in him unto death, we can understand how in dying he died unto sin, and how in putting away this sin nature he “put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,” and that when he returns with the spirit nature he appears a second time “without sin.”

Suppose we accept Bro. Strickler’s paraphrase and read “a sin offering;” in what did the sin offering consist? Was it not his body (which in Romans 6:6, is styled a “body of sin”), even as Paul says that we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once? (Heb. 10:10). And in what sense can this body be called sin, if it was not because it bore the hereditary effects of the sin nature from which it was derived?

Bro. Strickler maintains that Jesus did not offer for himself to redeem himself. Let us consider how redemption through the Mosaic law was effected. Under this law he was made a curse although he never broke it. His being made a curse did not consist simply in dying, but it laid personal hold of him through the mode in which he was put to death. “He that hangeth on a tree is accursed.” It is evident

that according to God's plan, before Jesus could deliver those who were under the curse of the law, it was necessary that he himself should come under that curse, although he never transgressed the law. It should be evident then, that before he could redeem others from the curse he must himself be redeemed therefrom and that, in order to do this, a sin offering was as necessary for himself as for his brethren. As he was also personally under the effects of the Adamic condemnation, equally with his brethren, was not a sin offering necessary for himself as well as for them? Therefore, like the Aaronic high priests, the Melchisedec high priest must have offered "first for himself, and then for the people" (Heb. 7:27).

A further proof that Jesus came under the redeeming power of his own sacrifice is found in the fact that, as the Mediatorial Testator of the Abrahamic Covenant, his death was necessary to bring that covenant into force. Writing of the efficacy of his death, the apostle says: "For this cause he is the mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant (the law), they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:15).

The death and resurrection of the mediator brought the covenant into force, so that all the heirs named therein might inherit the land with all the covenanted blessings. As Jesus inherits under this covenant, equally with his brethren, he could not take possession of the inheritance, until by his death he had brought it into force, or "confirmed the promises made unto the fathers" (Rom. 15:8). As God's covenants are not sanctifying to believers in their promises until they have been purged with blood (Heb. 9:16-23), it was necessary that the Mediatorial Testator should die a sacrificial death before the covenant could be made effective to the bestowal of the things promised therein. Thus, again we see the force of the Spirit's testimony that his sacrifice was "for himself" as well as "for us."

He came personally under the operation of the Adamic condemnation in order to redeem those who were under it. He came under that condemnation in exactly the same way as we do, in being born of a woman in the Adamic channel. This condemnation is not a sentence passed on us personally but an inherited condition of our physical nature, a nature which is the cause of our frailties and sins, and ultimate return to dust.

The object contemplated by God was to save the obedient from death. The plan adopted was to form a Son of the same substance as those requiring redemption, redeem this one first, and make his redemption the foundation for the redemption of others upon the principle of faith in God's promises and in what had been accomplished in His Son, and obedience to His commandments. God is the Redeemer through the Son; He redeemed His "only begotten Son" because he was obedient unto death. He redeems others on the same principle of faith and obedience. In His wisdom He required the "Son of His love" to submit to a

violent death, even the death of the cross, that He might raise him up again, and fulfil in him and through him all the promises made to the fathers. Apart from his resurrection the redemption of others through him would have been impossible.

Taking hold of our nature in order to provide means of redemption, is not based on the idea of substituting one for another, but of dealing with the nature itself in a way admitting of the redemption of the obedient possessors of this nature. God visited men in their own fallen nature, to afford them a means of being ultimately made partakers of His own glorious nature; but as no one can obtain it apart from the obedience of faith, it follows that no one can be redeemed without the connecting link of this righteous Son dying unto sin and being raised again because of righteousness. In this way God is exalted and man abased; God is honored and obedient man eternally blessed.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR WHY AN ACCEPTABLE SACRIFICE?

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**A** GAIN we quote from Bro. Strickler, as follows: “*Christ made one offering for sin; ‘once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself’ — ‘so Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many’ (Heb. 9:26, 28). There is not a shadow of a doubt in my mind that what is spoken of in these quotations are the trespasses Paul in Romans 4:25, says Christ was delivered to death for. Gather up the testimony everywhere and it is overpoweringly evident that what Christ bore in his body upon the tree was our sins of wicked works.*” (Letter to a U.S. brother).

Although Bro. Strickler sometimes mentions the “sin body” of Jesus, he, in effect, denies that he had a sin body, in denying that sin was there. Although no sin was there in the primary sense of transgression, it was there in its effects as has been shown; otherwise sin could not have been put away by him. Our brother’s denial of this truth commits him to the acceptance of the Romish fable that the actual transgressions of multitudes of the dead, the living, and the unborn were in some mysterious and incomprehensible way laid upon the sacrificial man Jesus when he was nailed to “the tree.”

The thing that he denies is the very thing that qualifies the Lord Jesus to be an acceptable sacrifice for the sins of the world. “His sacrifice was the putting of condemned and sinful human nature out of the way,” “that the body of sin might be destroyed” (Rom. 6:6); not the bearing of the actual transgressions in his body, an impossibility and an absurdity; but doing what God required to be done before believing and obedient sinners could be forgiven and saved from sin and death. “The relation of the death of Christ to the removal of the curse of the law illustrates this. He took the curse of the law out of the way—not by being put to death substitutionally for others, but *by coming under it in his own person* (Gal. 3:13; Col. 2:12; Eph. 2:15) ‘cursed is he that hangeth on a tree.’ So he took away the curse of death by bearing it in his own person. It was ‘for us’—but that was how it was done—in *himself.*”

Bro. Strickler’s teaching deprives the death of Christ of its divine meaning. Its true meaning is lost sight of by him—the meaning foreshadowed in all the sacrifices offered under the law, namely, “that God must be glorified before man can be saved. Man is to be saved through forgiveness but this forgiveness God requires to be preceded by an effectual assertion of His supremacy in the death of man in the person of one with whom He is well pleased, and whom He can raise in harmony with the law which makes death the wages of sin. Such a one Jesus had proved himself to be, for all others had ‘sinned, and come short of the glory

of God.’ God had provided him in the generation of a Son of His own in the Adamic nature of Mary. The Son resulting from the operation of the Spirit of God upon a human mother exhibited, a combination otherwise impossible — a combination essential to the salvation of man — the combination of spotless character with sinful flesh.”

Bro. Strickler does not sufficiently discriminate between character and nature. He seems to think “that sinless character must have had sinless flesh; whereas the very glory of the triumph lay in the perfect subjection of righteousness to a nature inherently sinful.” Sin being inherent in his nature it should not be difficult to understand that sin was condemned there; and how sin was “put away by the sacrifice of himself” (Heb. 9:26); and why, when he comes again he will be “without sin,” seeing that he is no longer burdened with sinful flesh.

## CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE SUNSHINE AND FOG

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**I**N *The Christadelphian* for 1873, p. 462, Bro. Roberts writes as follows, referring to the animal sacrifices under the law: "The ceremonial imposition of sin upon the animals slain was the type, the real putting of sin upon the Lamb of God in the bestowal of a prepared sin body wherein to die, is the substance."

This is so perfectly in harmony with Scripture teaching that we would reasonably expect all Christadelphians to unreservedly approve of it; but following are Bro. Strickler's remarks thereon: "*If what is intended in the above is, that the bearing of our sinful flesh nature upon the tree, was what Peter meant when he said 'bare our sins in his body upon the tree,' I don't believe it. The sinful flesh body 'a body prepared' for 'the Word of God,' made it possible for the Son of God to die a violent death on the cross, and suffer the punishment due for transgression. The testimony reads that 'he was wounded for our transgressions,' not for our sin body. If it was the sin body of Jesus that was the antitype of the sins of the Jews under the law, that were put upon the animal, the atonement has only been made for the sin body, and there has, as yet, been no atonement for sin which is transgression of law.*" (From a letter to a U.S. brother).

From the foregoing citation it would appear that the mind of the writer of it has become so beclouded by unscriptural ideas that he is unable to understand a plain statement of truth, when it cuts at the root of his theory.

It is true that "he was wounded for (on account of) our transgressions," but our transgressions were not nailed to the tree. It was the "old man" of sin's flesh that was nailed to the tree. Jesus was wholly free from "the deeds" of the "old man," nevertheless he was burdened with him throughout his mortal days. Therefore it is written: "Our old man was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. 6:6). The "body of sin" was destroyed through the crucifixion of the man Jesus, which could not have been done had he not had a sin body. It is styled "our old man" because his nature and that of his brethren was the same.

It is true that the apostle Peter, who wrote by inspiration, says of Christ "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1Pet. 2:24), but these words cannot be understood literally without stultifying reason and Scripture. The actual transgressions of believers could not be transferred into the body of another. Neither could the sins of future generations be taken away before they were committed. We have heard of such things being taught by Romish priests, who have pretended to grant indulgences and forgive sins before they were committed, but such an idea is foreign to the Scriptures. Bro. Strickler does not

mean to advocate this Romish fable, but the fact that his language, logically construed, conveys that idea, shows how little he understands the doctrine he has undertaken to expound.

Bible teaching concerning the taking away of sin, as expounded by brethren Thomas and Roberts, is not difficult to understand in itself when freed from the bemuddling and befogging ideas that have become so prevalent in the religious world. The difficulty is to get away from the fog into the clear sunshine of truth.

Let us examine some of the statements contained in the above citation. He says "*The testimony reads that 'he was wounded for our transgressions,' not for our sin body.*" Quite so; that is what Bro. Roberts believed and taught. But what was it that was wounded for our transgressions? It was the sin body, was it not? Our transgressions could not be wounded, could they? Therefore it is written, "by his stripes we are healed." But did he die on account of our transgressions only? Was it not foretold by the prophet that "a fountain should be opened in his blood for sin and for uncleanness?" What would it avail us to have our sins forgiven if there were no hope of deliverance from this "body of sin?" Salvation is a process that commences with the belief of the Truth and ultimates in incorruption. Does Christ's offering cover a part of this process only, or is it operative throughout the whole? Was it for the forgiveness of our personal sins only, and not for our redemption from this "vile body" and the curse of death? When it is testified that Christ died "for us," does it mean really for us in "body, soul and spirit," or only a part of us? Was it only for those intangible things called "evil thoughts and wicked works;" for some things we did when we disobeyed God's law, and for other things we failed to do through not obeying His law? Was it for these intangible things he died, or was it really "for us"? And if he died "for us," did he not die to save us from sin and the consequences of sin, personal and ancestral in the fullest sense? If Bro. Strickler believed that Christ died to save our immortal souls (as some teach) we could understand his writing in the way he does, but as he does not so believe, what he has written only tends to confuse and bewilder the simple.

Again, in the foregoing extract he says that if Bro. Roberts' words are true, "*there has, as yet, been no atonement for sin which is transgression of law.*" Where does he find in the Scriptures that an atonement was ever made for "sin which is transgression of law?" In our reading of the Word we find that atonement is made for transgressors, not for their transgressions; for the person defiled, not for the defilement; for the leper, not for the leprosy; for the altar, not for the uncleanness of the altar; etc. The word "atonement" as used by the sacred writers, when applied to persons, is the equivalent of reconciliation. Can "sin which is transgression of law" be reconciled to God? Why does Bro. Strickler handle this divine theme so carelessly, while finding fault with the capable expositions of abler and wiser men?

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX AN ABSURDITY AND A FALLACY

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**A**NOTHER citation from Bro. Strickler to which we wish to direct the reader's attention, is as follows: "*If that which made the offering of Jesus Christ a proper sacrifice for sin, rested in his sinful flesh, or physical sin-producing nature, then it would not be giving 'the just for the unjust.' It would be the giving of that which deserved death for those that deserved death. The apostle says that 'the body is dead because of sin,' and Christ's body was no exception; it was mortal, corruptible, and appointed to death just as much as that belonging to all men. It belonged to death. That which makes a proper Scriptural sacrifice must be a victim 'without blemish and without spot.' It was the life, the character, manifested in a nature that could die, that was sentenced to death. This character and life must be perfect, must be not under condemnation, else it could not have been laid down and taken up again (Jn. 10:17,18); sin and death, righteousness and life, stand related to each other as cause and effect.*" (Letter to a U.S. brother).

It is certainly an extraordinary thing to be told that it was "*the life, the character*" of Jesus, "*that was sentenced to death.*" A marvellous thing to ask us to believe that the righteous God of Israel sentenced to death the character of His Son, a character "without blemish and without spot."

As Bro. Roberts has said, "It is a fallacy to speak of 'life' as distinct from 'nature.' 'Life' is used by the Lord and by his apostles in a way to cover the whole idea of existence; and not as an element of existence to be considered abstractly by itself. Thus the sacrifice of Christ is expressed variously as 'the laying down of his life,' 'the giving of his body' (Luke 22:19), 'the pouring out of his soul' (Isa. 53:12), or 'the offering of himself' (Heb. 9:25), as the case requires. All these literally mean his submission to death, and not the disentanglement of a so-called 'life' from his body for presentation to the eternal throne. It was 'a body' that was prepared for sacrifice, and not a 'life!' It was death and not life that was required for the putting away of sin." (*The Slain Lamb*, p. 6). "Jesus was of the nature of David, Abraham, and Adam, and we cannot speak of his life as a something separate from that nature. The sacrifice of his life consisted of the offering of his body, which was a living body before, and a dead body after crucifixion. If it was his life (so-called) that suffered condemnation, he did not bear our condemnation, for our condemnation rests on the flesh, substance, or nature by which we are mortal, and not on the life, and if it was his 'life' that was offered for sin, 'life' must be the thing condemned, and we might suppose that immortal soulism is not so far wrong which regards the life-essence as the sinner and the thing condemned; and the body as the place where it resides for a short time."

This talk of life having moral relations as distinct from body is a fiction; we only argue it thus to show its absurdity. To teach that God "sentenced to death" "a character and life" that were "perfect," in order that lives and characters that were not perfect might be saved, is to charge God with doing that which ought not to be done. "God's way is perfect and good, and in harmony with all His revealed principles of action. Christ was in the *condemned nature of David, Abraham, and Adam*. Therefore when he died that happened which *ought to be*. God's law was not violated in the death of His Son. On the contrary, it was upheld and made honorable. The glorious sequel which was proposed could come without compromise, without dishonor, without anything taking place which ought not to take place. This was the Father's way that He might retain His place towards sinners, and yet sinners be saved. *Christ rose* because he was a holy one, and it was not possible in the workings of God that a holy one should be holden of death — (Acts 2:24); being raised, it was his part to carry on the work to its further stages in relation to sinners. God worked to Christ, and Christ works to us. He is the mediator — the one between, and because he is the Father in manifestation it is God in Christ working; and what does God in Christ require? That we relinquish our connection with the condemned Adam, and put on the name of the new Adam in whom the condemnation of the old is escaped by resurrection. Baptism is this requirement in its ceremonial compliance. Having killed, we bury the old man in the grave of Christ, and rise to union with the new. If there were no risen new Adam, whose life we might partake by association, we could not be saved."

Bro. Strickler's way nullifies God's way of salvation; "for our salvation depended on sin being condemned in its own flesh, in the person of a sinless sin bearer, who should afterwards escape the condemnation by resurrection, and 'be a name for all the sons of Adam to run into,' in which they might, through the forbearance of God, in the forgiveness of their sins, obtain a title to that eternal life realized in one of their own nature, in whom God dwelt and opened a way in His love for our escape, without violating the principles of His wisdom."

Bro. Strickler refers to those for whom Christ died as being "*deserving of death.*" This is not as the scriptures speak. It is not for those who are deserving of death that Christ died to save. Obedient believers of the gospel, although unclean of nature because of subjection to the consequences of ancestral sin, are not considered by God deserving of death, or He would not have interposed for their salvation. It was to redeem such as righteous Abel and faithful Paul that Christ died, and this class are nowhere in the Scriptures said to be deserving of death. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

## CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN A PURIFICATION SACRIFICE

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**H**E further says: “*It was not necessary for Christ, morally or physically, that he should offer for his cleansing an offering for atonement.*” (*The Atonement*, sheet No. 3). This assertion is opposed to Scripture teaching in type and antitype. The following, from the pen of Bro. Roberts presents the truth of the matter:

“Now, this is part of the Mosaic figure. There must be an antitype to it. What is it? The holy things we know, in brief, are Christ. He must, therefore, have been the subject of a personal cleansing in the process by which he opened the way of sanctification for his people. If the typical holy things contracted defilement from connection with a sinful congregation, were not the antitypical (Christ) holy things in a similar state, through derivation on his mother’s side from a sinful race? If not, how came they to need purging with his own ‘better sacrifice?’ (Heb. 9:23).

“Great difficulty is experienced by various classes of thinkers in receiving this view. Needless so, it would seem. There is first the express declaration that the matter stands so; ‘it was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these (Mosaic sacrifices), but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these’ (Heb. 9:23). ‘It was of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer,’ (8:3). ‘By reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins’ (5:3). ‘By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption’ (for us, is an addition inconsistent with the middle voice of the verb employed, which imports a thing done by one to one’s own self — 9:12)... We have only to receive the simple facts testified in the case to reach the end of all difficulty. With immortalism and eternal torments, the solution is impossible. With the doctrine of human mortality it is otherwise. We see Jesus born of a woman, and therefore a partaker of the identical nature condemned to death in Eden. We see him a member of imperfect human society, subject of toil and weakness, dishonor and sorrow, poverty and hatred, and all the other evils that have resulted from the advent of sin upon the earth. We see him down in the evil which he was sent to cure; not outside of it, not untouched by it, but in it to put it away. ‘He was made perfect through suffering’ (Heb. 2:10), but he was not perfect till he was through it. He was saved from death (5:7) but not until he died. He obtained redemption (Heb. 9:12), but not until his own blood was shed.

“The statement that he did these things ‘for us’ has blinded some to the fact that he did them ‘for himself’ first — without which he could not have done them

for us, for it was by doing them for himself that he did them for us. He did them for us only as we may become part of him, in merging our individualities in his by taking part in his death, and putting on his name and sharing his life afterwards. He is, as it were, a new centre of healthy life, in which we must become incorporate before we can be saved” (*Law of Moses*, pp. 158-9; \*4th ed.: pp.172-174; 1971 ed.: 171-174).

“All which enables us to understand why the typical holy things were purified with sacrificial blood, and why the high priest, in his typical and official capacity had to be touched with blood as well as anointed with the holy oil before entering upon his work. When they say... that the death of Christ was not for himself, but only for us, they destroy all these typical analogies, and in truth, if their view could prevail, they would make it impossible that it could be for us at all; for it only operates ‘for us’ when we unite ourselves with him in whom, as the firstborn, it had its first effect.” (*Law of Moses*, p. 165; \*4th ed.: p. 180; 1971 ed.: p. 179).

## CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT CHRIST AS A PROPITIATORY, OR MERCY SEAT

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**A** GAIN we read from Bro. Strickler: "*Whatever sins were borne on the cross were the sins for which propitiation was made. Is it possible that enlightened Christadelphians will commit themselves to a theory that makes it necessary for God to be appeased because His creatures have mortal bodies, such as they are helplessly forced into the world with, death-stricken natures?*" (Letter to a U.S. brother).

To insinuate that the acceptance of the conclusions of brethren Thomas and Roberts commits us to such an absurd "theory," is misrepresentation so gross as to arouse one's righteous indignation; but the indignation is blended with pity that one claiming to be an "enlightened Christadelphian" should betray such a lack of understanding of what has been written by these faithful servants of Israel's God. Could our sleeping brethren, whose teaching he so grossly maligns, read what he has written, they would probably be moved more to pity than anger, and be disposed to pray "Father forgive him for he knows not what he does."

Was it necessary for God's anger to be appeased every time an Israelitish woman under the law gave birth to a child, because sacrifice was ordained for her ceremonial purification? Absurd and God-insulting as such a conclusion would be, it would be a logical inference from the language used in above citation. He does not understand what our brethren have written on this subject of sin and sacrifice. He evidently has still lingering in his mind the heathen idea of God's anger having to be appeased, and he reads this idea into their writings. That such an idea was foreign to the minds of these brethren, the following extracts, which might be multiplied, will prove: "The lesson of sacrifice is not so much the idea of man's punishment as God's vindication. Heathen religions have seized and magnified the former idea with its concomitant notion of justice finding satisfaction in the blood of a substitutionary sufferer. Revelation through Moses and Christ exhibits it as the enforcement of the will of God as the law of human action. With this every element of divine truth vibrates in harmony. Even the kingdom and the cross unite here, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'." (*Law of Moses*, p. 85; \*4th ed.: p. 92; 1971 ed.: p. 91).

The following is from an address by Dr. Thomas: "God has graciously offered to be at peace with us, and it depended entirely on ourselves whether or not we became reconciled to Him. God was not, as He was frequently represented at revivals, a vindictive, wrathful being, requiring to be appeased... God had already done all that He possibly could to save men, by sending Jesus as a

saviour, and causing a revelation of His will to be given to mankind. It now only remained for those wishing to be saved to comply with the conditions... The prevalent custom of representing God as a vindictive being, ready to devour mankind, and requiring a more benevolent being in the person of Jesus to intercede with Him, was a custom transferred from paganism to the apostasy... God was not to be propitiated in any such way. All who come to Him must be drawn to Him, as Jesus had said, drawn by the power of love upon a scriptural understanding of the manifestations of God's love as revealed in the prophets. For it was the goodness of God which led men to repentance. Those who so heard and learned the prophets as to be drawn to the Father, recognized Jesus as the Christ crucified, and in all such a new man was developed — that is, a new mode of thinking, a disposition like Christ's when he said 'not my will, but Thine be done'." (*The Christadelphian*, January, 1880).

Having vindicated our sleeping brethren from this aspersion, let us now examine the first sentence in the above citation from the letter to a U.S. brother, which is as follows: "*Whatever sins were borne on the cross were the sins for which propitiation was made.*" This is not clear writing.

Actual sins could not be really "borne on the cross," as Bro. Strickler elsewhere recognizes, although the language used by him in several places might lead one to suppose that he thought so, seeing he rejects the only alternative: viz. sins borne in their effects in the sin-body of Jesus, by divine arrangement.

The Greek word *hilasterion* (Rom. 3:25) does not mean "propitiation," although it is so translated in the English Bible. Its Hebrew equivalent, *kaphoreth*, (a covering) was applied to the golden lid of the ark in the Most Holy, upon which the over-arching cherubic glorybearers stood, which were also of gold and of one piece with the kaphoreth, or mercy seat. They formed part of the blood-sprinkled cover lid or mercy seat; a divine foreshadowing of the great truth that the glory to be revealed at some future time would spring out of the sufferings of the sacrificial man Jesus. Of this mercy seat God said to Moses, "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony" (Ex. 25:22).

Christ is the antitypical mercy seat as we learn from Romans 3:25; "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiatory (or mercy seat) through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness *for the remission of sins that are past* through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus."

As the Melchisedec High Priest, Christ put on the holy garments of righteousness by his perfect obedience, and thereby also attained to "newness of life." He was crucified in "flesh of sin;" and then "sin was condemned in the flesh." But when he rose again he became spirit-body, called by the apostle "spirit of holiness" (Rom. 1:4). He is now no longer oppressed with our filthy nature, but

## CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE DEVIL.

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“clothed in a garment white as snow” (Dan. 7:9). As an altar (Heb. 13:10) he was cleansed by his own blood as a result of his soul being made an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10); thereby becoming an altar most holy, so that all who touch it are holy. Having entered through the veil (that is to say, his flesh—Heb.10:20) into the most holy by his own blood, he there communes with the Most High over the blood-sprinkled mercy seat, and intercedes for those who have passed through the laver of water to the altar, having been thereby sprinkled in heart by the blood of sprinkling, which is the blood of the Altar-Covenant (Heb. 10:22). It is as an Altar Most Holy that Jesus has been set forth by God as a mercy seat or propitiatory for the remission of sins that are past through faith in his blood (Rom. 3:25).

This scriptural exhibition of the matter enables us to see that the “Lamb slain” was not a mercy seat when he “bare our sins in his body on the tree.” Resurrection and immortalization were also necessary before he could be constituted such. He is now no longer a sinbearer, having borne away the sin laid upon him into everlasting oblivion. But this, so far, has been done in himself and for himself only. All others are still under its power, being not yet released from that which “has the power of death,” which is diabolos (Heb. 2:14). He is now Yahweh’s glory bearer, inviting others to come to God confessing their sins and seeking forgiveness through him as the High Priest of Israel, over the blood sprinkled mercy seat which has been set forth in him by the wisdom and goodness of God, that God-honoring, sin-repudiating men may be saved through his arrangement of mercy in Christ.

In his crucifixion sin was condemned in its own flesh, so that in the crucified body the iniquity of his people was made to meet upon him (Isa. 53:6, see margin) that through connection with him they might become dead to sin and alive to righteousness, first morally by the belief and obedience of the Truth he taught, and afterwards physically, when, at his return, their mortal bodies put on immortality; God giving them the victory through the Lord Jesus Christ (1Cor. 15:57). Thus did God in Christ provide a means whereby the believing world might be reconciled to Himself. It was the obedience of the only begotten of the Father that brought resurrection to life for himself and others; and this perfect obedience was made possible through the power imparted to him in conception, making him of “quick understanding in the fear of the Lord” (Isa. 11:3). God saves believing men through him that salvation may be of favor and not of works, lest any man should boast.

**A**CCORDING to New Testament teaching, the Lord Jesus was God manifest in sinful flesh for the destruction of the devil and his works (Heb. 2:14; 1Jn. 3:8). The devil (diabolos) is that in the nature of man which causes to transgress and has “the power of death.” We read that “the devil,” which is only another name for fallen human nature, “sinneth from the beginning” (1Jn. 3:8), and is, therefore, the impelling cause of all the wickedness in the world. Consequently, the only way to suppress rebellion against God and put an end to the wickedness and misery that prevail, is to destroy the devil; for once he is destroyed, his works (of transgression) will necessarily cease. Jesus partook of our sin-cursed, devil-possession nature that through death he might destroy this devil in himself first, and ultimately, as a result of his triumph over him, in all his people (Heb. 2:14). Death destroys the devil in every man, but it also destroys the man. But here is one in whom the devil has been destroyed and yet he lives, because he successfully resisted the devil and Satan during his life in the flesh, being “tempted in all points like his brethren, yet without sin.”

All who bear the diabolos nature are under the power of death; therefore, to release the faithful from death, diabolos must be destroyed. Diabolos having a physical embodiment must undergo a physical destruction; which enables us to understand why it was necessary for Jesus, the one prepared of God to destroy diabolos, to partake of the same nature as Abraham and his children. The divine plan goes to the root of the mischief and removes the cause; human substitutes only skim the surface.

There is little place for the devil in Bro. Strickler’s system or theory. We read much about “sin, iniquity, and transgression,” works of the devil, but the impelling cause of it all appears to be lost sight of, yet this was the very thing that Christ appeared to destroy, in relation to himself, as a necessary foundation for the accomplishment of his mission “the taking away of the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29), a work which **will not be consummated** until the devil and his progeny have been extirpated from the earth, or sinful flesh and its works have forever ceased to be.

The faithful are exhorted to “resist the devil.” If they do this, “striving against sin,” in the earnest endeavor to obey God’s commandments, their sins are sins of weakness and not of wilfulness, which God is pleased to forgive on the intercession of their mediator, Christ, when confessed through him. If they, like the captain of their salvation, continue faithful to the end of their probation they will in due time be saved from the power of diabolos—from sin and death, and

made equal to the angels in whose nature sin—diabolos—or that which incites to transgress, and has the power of death, does not exist.

If the principle of corruption had not pervaded the flesh of Jesus; if there had been no devil in his nature inciting to transgress he could not have been tempted in all points like his brethren, nor could sin have been condemned there, neither could he have borne our sins “*in his body to the tree.*”

If some professing Christians of the second century, while admitting that Jesus was flesh, had not affirmed the spotlessness of that flesh, the immaculate conception of the virgin would not have been invented to account for it.

“Sin, whose wages is death, had to be condemned in the nature that had transgressed; a necessity that could only be accomplished by the Word becoming Adamic-flesh, and not Elohistic.” (see *Eureka*, vol. 1, p. 106).

There was no devil (*diabolos*) in the nature of our first parents at creation; nothing inciting and tempting them to sin; nothing causing moral and physical corruption.

In this connection, the following from Dr. Thomas will be read with interest:

“The word sin is used in two senses, that of transgression of law, and also to express that combination of principles within us which in excitation is manifested in passion, evil affections of the mind, disease, death and corruption. They are called ‘sin’ because their manifestation was permitted as a consequence of transgression.

“The thing called diabolos in Heb. 2:14, rendered devil in the English version, is sin in the flesh. He that walks according to the flesh ‘serves sin,’ or the devil. The mortal body is ‘a body of sin,’ or sin incarnate; which with its affections, lusts and transgressions, is called ‘the old man’ (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9). Destroy the ascendancy of the sin principle of the flesh over the thoughts and actions, and you have a morally developed ‘new man’ (Col. 3:10), and then eradicate it from the flesh by the spirit in the resurrection or transformation to eternal life, and you have a new man in combined moral and physical manifestation, ‘equal to the angels’ (Luke 20:36). There is no sin in 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, there are no works of sin among them.

“This diabolos is the ‘power of 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 a thousand years longer. The rest of the dead who are to inhabit the earth forever with the saints and their king will be extricated from its deadly embrace; for the ‘last enemy, death, shall be destroyed’... Death cannot be

abolished so long as sin exists in the flesh, for ‘the body is dead because of sin’ (Rom. 8:10); it 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.’ The power of death is that which causes death. ‘The sting of death is sin’ (1Cor. 15:56); ‘the wages of sin is death,’ (Rom. 6:23); but Christ’s brethren will get the victory over sin and verify the saying ‘death is swallowed up in victory’... ‘The body is dead because of sin,’ (Rom. 8:10). How does the body get rid of this deadly principle so as to be pronounced victorious over death? It will be attained by an instantaneous change wrought in their mortal bodies by the energy of the spirit which will destroy the sin-power therein, which gives place to that which hath the power of life, the spirit. This is transformation... Sin in the flesh then, and the spirit of God, are two 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 termed the Lord, the Spirit (2Cor. 3:18).

“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;’ ‘sin taking occasion through the commandment deceived me;’ ‘Eve being deceived, was in the transgression,’ and ‘the serpent beguiled her through his shrewdness.’ 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, ‘he that doeth 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 says ‘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.’” (*Herald of the Kingdom*).

## CHAPTER THIRTY A VINDICATION.

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**I**N his letter to a U.S. brother, and also in the one to a Canadian brother, Bro. Strickler tries to drag in Dr. Thomas as a partner in teaching that our sins were symbolically laid upon Jesus; at which none can be more indignant than the doctor himself will be when he awakes to find that one claiming brotherhood in the Year of Our Lord 1912, was found teaching this Romish fable, and trying to make it appear that he (Dr. T.) had taught the same. But when the Word of God is so perverted for the same purpose, it is not surprising that the writings of His servants are made to do duty in the cause of error.

*The Rock* is a religious periodical which is, or was, published in Britain. Some of its readers in 1870, were finding fault with Christadelphian teaching and accusing them of believing various forms of error. One of the things written therein was "If the manifestation of Jesus was, as he (Dr. Thomas) says, in sinful flesh, then Jesus was a sinner. Does he mean to say this? What then becomes of his justification?" "Propitiation is also ignored." To which Dr. Thomas replied as follows— "Testimony says if the manifestation of Jesus was in sinful flesh, then Jesus was a sinner, and desires to know if I mean to say this. Christadelphians mean to say neither more nor less than Paul saith. This unsurpassed teacher says that God sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, which He declares was the same as ours. (Compare Rom. 8:3 with Heb. 2:13-17). And he, says too in Hebrews 7:27, 'He offered first for his own sins and then for the people's when he once offered himself.' But what is to be understood by "his own sins?" The sins committed by others and borne in his body on the cross, as testified in 1 Peter 2:24, saying 'who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,' upon which he 'became a curse for us.' In the Mosaic and Christian systems, the *unsinning victim* is regarded as the sinner, in the sense of being a sin bearer. Personally, Jesus was 'holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners;' if he had not been so, he would not have been fitted for the *sin bearer* of the world; the purpose of God being *the condemnation of sin in the nature that transgressed in Eden, in the person of one who had himself committed no sin.*

"Christadelphians, then do not ignore 'propitiation.' They teach that the crucified, risen, and glorified Jesus is the propitiatory, mercy seat, or sin-covering of the Christian system: that he is the robe of righteousness provided for the covering over of the sins of naked sinners, who are invited in 'the Word' of 'reconciliation' to put on this heaven-provided Christ robe in the only way 'miserable sinners' of high and low degree can do so; namely, by believing the now unpreached gospel ministered by Paul, and by such believers being

'immersed into the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit' (Gal. 1:8; 3:27). This is the covering of the Spirit—the robe of justification made white in the blood of the Lamb." (*The Christadelphian*, 1870, p. 72).

Bro. Strickler says he agrees with the above. The writer heartily wishes he did, for in that case there would have been no need for the writing of this defence and vindication. He thinks he agrees with it, doubtless, because he reads his own ideas into it. He does so by giving a literal construction to language used figuratively, after the style of the prophets and apostles.

He makes no allowance for the caution imposed on the doctor in writing to the Presbyterian readers of *The Rock*, but sets such teaching against what the doctor has written in *Elpis Israel* and *Eureka*. There is no contradiction but perfect and beautiful harmony; as the reader will see if he understands the subject in all its bearings and understanding to which, unfortunately Bro. Strickler has not yet attained.

Writing of Jesus, Dr. Thomas says "In the former state the flesh was the 'filthy garments' with which the Spirit-Word was clothed (Zech. 3:3); 'the iniquity of us all' that was laid upon him; 'the soul made an offering for sin' (Isa. 53:6,10) but as he now is, the filthy garments have been taken away; 'his iniquity has passed from him,' and he is clothed 'with change of raiment.'" (*Eureka*, vol. 1, p. 108).

Here the Doctor plainly teaches that the iniquity of us all that was laid upon Jesus was his flesh. When did this iniquity of "us all," which was also "his iniquity," pass from him? The doctor answers the question on the same page; it was when his flesh was transformed into Spirit. His teaching in *Elpis Israel*, pp. 114-116 (later ed.: pp. 127-129), is that Jesus was made sin in being made of our nature. He says sin is a synonym for human nature in the Scriptures, and on page 116 he quotes "that which is born of the flesh is flesh" and adds, "or sin." In his Sunday morning address delivered in London in 1869 from which Bro. Strickler quotes, the doctor says "The transgressions of us all laid upon him (that is, the Spirit-Word) constituted the victim." Bro. Strickler says he agrees with him in this. Did the doctor in making this statement contradict what he had written in *Elpis Israel* and *Eureka*, and teach what Bro. Strickler is teaching? No, not for a moment. Bro. Strickler sees contradictions where there are none. To say that the transgressions that were laid upon the Spirit-Word constituted the victim, is a very different thing from saying that they were put on the victim as a load altogether outside of himself. "*Did the transgressions of the Israelites laid upon a goat constitute the goat?*"

The teaching of Dr. Thomas in each case, and uniformly in all his writings is that the sin, iniquity, or transgression of us all was laid upon the Spirit-Word through his being made of our nature. That the sin principle, which is the cause of all transgression, was laid in his flesh, ingrained in his being as it is in ours. It is a sin-impelling principle (and also has the power of death), but it never

impelled him to sin; he triumphed over it and so destroyed it.

The closing words of the address by the doctor referred to above, will enable the discerning reader to see for himself that he does not contradict his previous teaching. He says:

“In saying that Christ ‘was made sin for us,’ Paul did not mean that he was made an actual sinner, but that he was made a sin offering for us. Our iniquities were laid upon him. He bare our sins in his body, on or to the tree. On what principle? If we knew the nature of sacrifice in type and antitype, we could answer: Under the Mosaic law, on the day of atonement, the High Priest first offered for his own sins and then for the people’s, to cover up their transgressions. Hence it was called a day of covering or atonement. There were two goats, one for Yahweh, which was slain, and one for Israel, called a scapegoat. On the head of the latter was laid, or supposed to be laid, a mountain of sins, committed during the previous year. A clean person then led it away into the wilderness. In the same way our sins were laid on Christ, who carried them away by going to the Father in heaven.

“Christ’s body was also an offering for sin, like that of the goat slain. It was a complete offering, for after his resurrection and quickening, his body was of quite a different nature from what it was before the crucifixion. His old body no longer existed. His new body was the same in shape, but different in nature. The high priest in his case was the Eternal Spirit, and our transgressions laid on him constituted the victim.

“The interesting question to us was, how do we obtain a personal benefit from this sacrifice? By faith, for the apostle says we walk by faith. Just as in ordinary life, when walking we expect to get somewhere, so in walking by faith we expect to arrive at some destination. We get to the cross, not literally, but by faith, and so our sins are remitted, being regarded as having been borne by Christ on the cross, the world whose sins were laid on him, was that world which will ultimately be composed of all the faithful.” (*The Christadelphian*, 1880, p. 7).

The reader must bear in mind that it was only “sins that are past,” that were ceremonially laid upon the goats in the typical offerings of the Mosaic system. What is the antitype of this? It is that through the condemnation and destruction of sin in the sin body of Jesus a covering has been provided in him for all sinners who get connected with him in the way divinely prescribed. When they do this by the belief of the gospel and obedience in baptism, their “sins that are past” are covered, or forgiven. They thereby put on the robe of righteousness which God has provided in Christ for the covering of the nakedness of believing and obedient sinners. The symbolical laying of sins on the goats under the law, was a mere ceremony, having foreshadowing reference to what was to be accomplished by God in Christ. According to Bro. Strickler’s understanding of the matter the laying of sin on Jesus was a mere ceremony also, for he says our actual sins were

laid upon him symbolically, as they were laid upon the goats in the type. It is therefore all ceremony, all symbolical, according to his view.

It is only by a figure of speech that actual transgressions may be said to have been laid upon the man Christ Jesus. The doctor and Bro. Roberts sometimes express themselves in the figurative language of Isaiah and Peter, and at other times in precise literal terms. To people having only a superficial knowledge of the subject, and whose minds are beclouded by error, they appear to contradict themselves; but not so.

For the actual putting away of sin it was essential that the Spirit-Word called Jesus Christ should be made of the human or sin nature that sin, or diabolos, (that which has the power of death) should be ingrained in him as it is in us. Hence the “body prepared” for divine manifestation was a “body of sin.” We see the typical reference to this in the high priest under the law being required to eat the sin offering in order that he might “bear the iniquity of the congregation, and make atonement for them before the Lord” (Lev. 10:17-19). The sin offering was figuratively called sin, as it represented the sins of the Israelites supposed to be laid upon it. When the high priest ate this “sin,” by the process of digestion and assimilation it became a part of his nature. This is the shadow; the substance is to be found in the things concerning Christ. Blessed is he that readeth and understandeth, and doeth all things necessary for his redemption from ‘sin, sins, and the wages of sin,’ which is death.

What did Dr. Thomas mean by saying, in above, that “In the same way our sins were laid on Christ, who carried them away by going to the Father in heaven?” Did he mean that our actual transgressions were carried into the very presence of God who is “of purer eyes than to behold iniquity?” Or was it done symbolically? The doctor would have been much surprised had any brother asked him such questions. In *Eureka*, vol. 3, pp. 587-588 (\**Logos* ed.: vol. 5, pp. 306-307), he teaches that Christ ascended to the Father on the day of his resurrection, when he was “revived” or “made a quickening spirit;” or in other words, when he ascended to his Father’s nature. As already noticed, in vol. 1, p. 108, he teaches that at the same time, when he was changed from flesh to spirit, he put away “the iniquity of us all” that was laid upon him. So in the address from which we have quoted, and which is used by Bro. Strickler to make it appear that he contradicts himself, he said the body of Jesus was also a sin offering, like that of the goat slain. It was a complete offering, for after his resurrection and quickening, his body was of quite a different nature from what it was before crucifixion. His old body no longer existed. His new body was of the same shape, but different in nature. The high priest in his case was the Eternal Spirit, and our transgressions laid upon him (Spirit-Word) constituted the victim. This is only saying, in other words, that the medium of divine manifestation was sinful flesh, or a “body of sin,” and that this body of sin, or “the iniquity of us all” laid upon the Spirit-Word,

constituted the victim.

The doctor's teaching is harmonious throughout; he understood what he was writing about, unlike his critics, whose name is legion. But it requires scriptural intelligence and the ability to discriminate between things that differ, to see this. His writings require to be rightly divided like those of the Spirit in the Word.

So with Bro. Roberts. The brunt of the battle in defence of the Truth, which had been "fully and finally discovered" by the doctor, providentially directed, fell on him. In this continual contention for the faith against error and errorists, sometimes one feature of the Truth would be emphasized and prominently exhibited, sometimes another; and it is easy for one so minded to persuade those whose perceptions are dim that he contradicts himself. It is not the part of a friend to try to set this able defender of God's truth against himself, as Bro. Strickler does.

## CHAPTER THIRTY ONE A DEFENCE OF "TRUTH DEFENDED."

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THE writer is constrained to say a few words in defence of his pamphlet entitled *The Truth Defended*. Bro. Strickler is reported to have said, more than once, that since it was written the writer thereof has changed his mind on the subject of the atonement. That he should think so must be due to his inability to distinguish between things that differ in connection with this particular subject. The error opposed in this booklet is one thing; that combatted in *The Truth Defended* quite another; apart altogether from the question of the grounds of resurrectional responsibility dealt with therein. Bro. Strickler evidently believes that because the writer does not approve of his present teaching on the atonement, he must have gone to the other extreme, and embraced the error of J.J. Andrew, and the *Advocate*. He fails to perceive that the truth of the matter lies between these two extremes.

In *The Truth Defended* the writer was opposing a modified form of what Bro. Roberts has called "the vulgar priestly dogma of original sin." The following citations from that pamphlet of teaching opposed therein should make this apparent:

In the *Advocate*, for Jan. '95, the following question is asked:

- "Can you give one single quotation of Scripture to show that original sin is remitted at baptism?" To which the editor replies: Yes, many. The Scripture that says that John's baptism was for the remission of sin and that Christ was baptized by that baptism is one proof, for he had no individual sins."
- Again: "Adam's sin was Christ's to the extent to which it could be called his own" — *Advocate*, vol. 10, p. 331.
- "Christ's blood was shed for the remission of sins" (1Jn. 1:7). "It was shed for himself, and he being without personal sins, the sin remitted, cleansed, pardoned, or covered, must be of necessity Adamic" — vol. 10, p. 334.
- "We are said (in Rom. 5:12, see marg.), to have sinned in Adam. Does this need forgiveness?" Answer: Yes, to remit that which placed us in a condition needing reconciliation is to forgive the sin" — *Advocate*, vol. 9, p. 233.
- "Baptism removes original sin" — T.W.
- "Baptism justifies from racial sin" — T.W.
- "I believe that federally and racially we are held guilty of original sin" — T.W.

- “The entire race is guilty before God. The grounds of guilt are first Adam’s sin” — T W
- “In the legal sense Adam’s sin is imputed to his descendants” — J J A
- “If Adam’s sin was not in some sense imputed, why did Christ have to make an offering for it in relation to himself?” — T W
- “It is Adam’s sin that placed us in alienation, it must be removed, or pardoned before reconciliation to God can be accomplished” — T W

It has been said that extremes meet. The truth of the saying is illustrated in the teaching of the “Advocate” in above extracts, and that of Bro Strickler. Both of them, in effect, make Jesus a sinner, which is an all-sufficient condemnation of their teaching.

In his *Up And Be Doing* pamphlet the editor of the *Advocate* claims that he has been misunderstood and misrepresented. If so, he has certainly been unfortunate in his choice of language, for the above citations clearly embody the idea of the remission of “original sin” at baptism, which is the essence of the “vulgar priestly dogma of original sin.” The above mentioned pamphlet was issued from the office of the *Advocate* in April, 1902, and notwithstanding the editor’s disclaimer, we find him printing in the *Advocate* for June, 1905, without any comment, the following from one of his active supporters— “When Paul said that ‘by the offence of one many were made sinners,’ what one did he refer to? This shows how that one act affected others to their great hurt. Then too he says, ‘by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation.’ How will our brethren handle these texts? They show me a GUILTY world, all involved, (helplessly, it cannot be doubted) in the sin of the first man, and with him partaking of the results of his sin. We may not attribute guilt in the same sense (or degree) that we do to Adam, *because he did the overt act*. Look at it as we will there must be a sense in which all are sharers in the guilt, if there is to be any just or reasonable conception of the ways of God in the transaction. Is it possible there can be CONDEMNATION, and NO GUILT? Is it possible there can be uncleanness and no sin, no guilt? Isn’t uncleanness a STATE of guilt, when that uncleanness is SIN? How are we going to get away from these facts? I have as little use as any of them for the clerical notion of original sin and its consequences and removal, but it seems to me they are treating the subject as lightly as does THE CHRISTADELPHIAN.” (*Advocate*, June 1908, p. 192)

In the above the writer teaches what is the very essence of the Romish dogma of “original sin,” and yet at the same time tells his readers he has no use for it. His editor friend appears to do the same.

The writer is not a reader of the *Advocate*, and rarely sees a copy. When a stray number that happens to come his way contains such error as the above, it is not unreasonable to conclude that it is not an isolated instance of such teaching in recent years.

But to return to Bro Strickler. He is reported to have said that notwithstanding my opposition to his present teaching, he agrees with what I wrote in *Truth Defended*. If he has made this statement lately, it shows, either a lack of candor, or an imperfect acquaintance with its contents. For instance, on p. 41 it is stated that “by his Father’s contrivance Jesus was ‘made sin’ in being born of a woman,” and on p. 43, “in Heb. 9:26 the apostle testifies that Christ in his death ‘put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.’ He did this in putting off ‘this infirmity,’ ‘sin’s flesh.’” Bro Strickler denies both these truths, and this denial constitutes the foundation of his error.

*The Truth Defended* was written in defence of the Truth set forth in what the editor of *The Christadelphian* styled “A Canadian Declaration,” and which appeared in *The Christadelphian* magazine for August 1902. The writer has seen no cause to change his mind on the doctrines enunciated in that declaration. It was drawn up by him as expressive of his belief on the subjects dealt with and it expresses his belief still. He is on the same rock foundation now as then, and hopes, with God’s help and blessing, to steer clear of all the pitfalls of error until the end of his probation. What Bro Strickler has written, though doubtless hurtful to some, has been, in some respects, of advantage to him. It has led him to give the subject renewed attention, and he has received, in consequence, a quickening of his perceptions and appreciation of the “mystery” of “God manifest in flesh,” which is the central glory of the gospel.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO A SUMMARY OF ERRORS.

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**S**OME of the errors noticed in the foregoing pages may be summarized as follows:

- (1) That the apostle in 2Corinthians 5:21, in teaching that Jesus “was made sin for us” does not mean that he was made a bearer of our sinful nature, but that he was made a transgressor of the Mosaic law, in being brought, by his Father’s contrivance, under its curse.
- (2) That the apostle does not teach in Hebrews 7:27 “that Christ offered ‘for his own sins,’ either in or out of the flesh.” That he did not and could not possibly have offered for himself as a priest during the days of his flesh.
- (3) That the accumulated sins of his brethren of all ages were, in some indefinable way, laid upon Jesus, and he bore them in, or on his body “to the tree.” Sins were symbolically laid upon him, in the same way as they were laid upon the goats in the sacrifices made under the Mosaic law.
- (4) That Jesus did not offer an atoning sacrifice for himself to redeem himself. That “it was not necessary for Christ, morally or physically, that he should offer for his cleansing an offering for atonement.”
- (5) That Jesus was not made unclean by his nature, but was defiled as an altar, by the transgressions of his brethren that were laid upon him, and which he bore “to the tree;” from which defilement he was cleansed by his own blood.
- (6) That the sacrifice of Christ was for purging from moral defilement only, not from “sin in the flesh” as well.
- (7) That there never was a divine atoning sacrifice offered under the Mosaic system, where there was no transgression.
- (8) That it was “the life, the character” of Jesus that was “sentenced to death.”
- (9) That Jesus “suffered the penalty due for the sins of his brethren;” “suffered the punishment due to sin.”
- (10) That the sin “put away” by “the sacrifice of himself” was actual transgression and not sin in his nature, and that the “sin” without which he appears the second time unto salvation, Hebrews 9:28, is sin in his brethren, or, a sin offering.

Such teaching must produce confusion in the minds of all who receive it. “Turn away” from it, if you would not go down “to the chambers of death” (Prov. 7:27).

Brethren who have read *The Slain Lamb*\* know how strenuously Bro. Roberts defended the Truth against the teaching of Edward Turney. The reason he gave for his earnest contention against “Turneyism” was that the meaning of the death of Christ, as a sacrifice, and the truth concerning his nature was beclouded and rendered doubtful. Bro. Strickler’s teaching has exactly the same effect, and in its logical results nullifies the Truth on a doctrine of vital importance to all believers of the gospel. It strikes at the very foundation of the system of saving truth revealed in the Scriptures and expounded in the writings of Brethren Thomas and Roberts, and will be resisted by all the faithful who discern its true character.

If brethren once grasp the *central idea* in connection with the work of God in Christ, they will be proof against the kind of error the writer is opposing. This “central idea” is that God in Christ was working out redemption from curse and death in a representative man of His own providing, who, though a possessor of the sin nature and tempted in all points like his brethren, was able to evolve sinlessness of character, thus triumphing over sin, and abolishing death *in himself*, that others might share in the results achieved (through the forbearance of God) on compliance with the prescribed conditions.

The principles of divine wisdom required that *the work of redemption should be wrought out in Christ himself first*, before others could be redeemed through him. As Brother Roberts has said, “This is the whole principle: redemption achieved in Christ for us to have, on condition of faith and obedience. It is not only that Israel are saved from the law of Moses on this principle, but it is the principle on which were are saved from the law of sin and death, whose operation we inherit in deriving our nature from Adam.”

If Bro. Strickler’s view could prevail it would make it impossible that it could be “for us,” because, as Brother Roberts taught, “it only operates ‘for us’ when we unite ourselves with him, in whom, as the firstborn, it had its first effect.”

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\* Now available in the volume, *The Atonement*, obtainable from the *Logos* office.  
— Publishers

## CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS ERROR AND ERRORISTS

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ON sheet No. 20 of his paper on the Atonement, Bro. Strickler says, "*When the last word has been spoken, when the last poisoned arrow has been driven through the heart, when love has been turned to hatred and the highway of truth and righteousness has been strewn with the wreck of families and ecclesias, the simple and comprehensive statement of the apostle Paul to the Corinthians, will still shine as the Star of Bethlehem.*" (cp. 1Cor. 15:3-4).

What is this but an appeal to feeling as against the claims of truth and duty. Would he deny to others the privilege he claims for himself, and which he has exercised to the denial of fellowship to members of the "Advocate party?" Brethren are not at liberty to do as they please in the matter of fellowship. The apostle John in 1John 1:1-7 lays down the doctrine of fellowship very clearly. His teaching shows that fellowship on the basis of the one faith embraces the members of the ecclesia, the Truth, the Father and the Son. Anyone holding a wrong doctrine is walking in darkness to the extent of his error and has not the fellowship of the Father and the Son; and all who know of the wrong doctrine and fellowship the one holding it, are partakers with him in his walking in darkness, and thus have not the fellowship of the Father and the Son. All doctrinal error is darkness, and the Truth only is light. In reference to a wrong doctrine prevalent in his day the apostle forbids his brethren to receive those holding it into their houses (for fellowship), or to bid them God speed. "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deed" (2Jn. 1:10-11; see also Tit. 3:10).

Bro. Strickler presents us with a clumsy mixture of truth and error — compounded of Romanism, Turneyism, and Truth, and asks brethren to swallow this nauseating compound as a substitute for the Truth in its purity. True brethren will refuse to countenance such teaching knowing it to be darkness and offensive to God. Those who have been begotten by the Truth and changed by the Truth, who are controlled in all their actions by the principles, obligations, and commandments of the Truth, will refuse to be co-partners with error and errorists.

As Bro. Roberts has said, "**The only practicable rule of operation at present is fellowship on the basis of oneness of mind.** It is a rule fraught with embarrassment and pain, but it is not of human appointment, and cannot be set aside where faithfulness to the Word of God is not extinct. ...**The only practicable method of work, in an age when God has chosen to be silent, is for each man to judge for himself, and as many are of one mind to work together... If oneness of mind be not the condition — precedent of oneness**

**of association, then let us return to the churches and chapels with all speed.** Why stand apart from the orthodox communities, with their many advantageous connections and associations, for the sake of a spiritual fad, if the one faith is not essential to the one body? ...It is a thing apostolically enjoined, a thing commended by the highest reason, to contend earnestly for the faith in its integrity, **and to stand aside from all who corrupt it.** It is a thing, the absence of which in the first century, led to wholesale corruption, **and would in our day have already destroyed the distinctive features of the Truth.** In the arduous battle for the Truth, it is a thing beset with many difficulties, and **a true friend of the spiritual order would not increase those difficulties by protesting against it,** but would rather **abet and encourage every tendency in the direction of faithfulness** in this gloomy and unfriendly age ...We are one with those **who hold the Truth as a finality,** who do not require to 'lay again the foundations;' but who, strong in faith and filled with all wisdom, are engaged in the work, not of discussing the Truth, but advocating it for the development of a people who shall be found in all assurance of faith, looking and preparing for the second appearing of the Son of man in power and great glory.

"To the charge of holding 'that the knowledge of Scripture, in the writings of Dr. Thomas has reached a finality,' we plead guilty. If we were ignorant or unfamiliar with the Scriptures ...we should not have ground sufficient to entertain this conviction, but our acquaintance with them in daily intercourse for a lifetime enables us to be confident on the point. Our reading has not been confined to the Scriptures, or to the writings of Dr. Thomas. We have read what others have to say in many realms of human thought. We have, therefore, all the materials to form a judgment, and our judgment is distinctly to the effect imputed—that **in the writings of Dr. Thomas the Truth is developed as a finality,** and that they are a depot of the Christian doctrine. In this sense we are 'committed to Dr. Thomas.' Dr. Thomas has been laid aside in the grave for a season; and so long as God permits life and health, we shall defend the mighty results of his labors against all ridicule or opposition from friend or foe. Were he in the land of the living, some who are in hostility would be in a different attitude towards him. When he reappears, they will be ashamed. Meanwhile, God, who used him in the doing of His work, lives to note the gap made by his death, and the results which were not unforeseen to Him. **In His sight, and with His help, we shall hold fast to the Truth brought to light by his means;** and, please God, will rejoice with him at the near-impending realization of all the hopes of the saints, in the day when the bitterness of present warfare will only add sweetness to the hour of triumph. **We shall try and endure the odium which calls this a dictatorial spirit. The clear perception, strong choice, and resolute defence of that which is true and good is not the offspring of dictation;** nevertheless, if enemies or friends choose to consider it so, we must heed them not. It is this spirit

that enables a man to say at last, 'I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith.'

"We recognize in sorrow and compassion, the painful position of all men who love the good things revealed in the Scriptures, and incline to pursue the course that is right, and yet find themselves in a strait between their desire to live peaceably with all men, and their resolution to walk in faithfulness to the gospel to which they have been called. We have from the beginning suffered from this agonizing embarrassment, and can sympathize with all who suffer in the same way. This sympathy takes off the edge of the resentment we should feel at the odiums cast upon us by many who love peace and misunderstand our attitude. At the same time, it cannot relax enlightened determination to persevere in the policy of the past. Dr. Thomas recommended that policy, and we have found it the only practicable one; **to give the Truth the benefit of all doubts, and to accept such co-operations only as uncompromising loyalty to it might allow.** There are, of course, extremes in the application of this principle to which Dr. Thomas himself did not go; and to which we cannot lend ourselves—(where unrevealed details admit of variety in opinion). But as regards the great general truths involved in 'the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ,' there is no tenable ground between returning to the churches, or restricting our ecclesial associations to those who yield an unqualified assent to these elements of truth." (see *The Christadelphian*, March, 1898, pp. 126-129).

Of Bro. Strickler's sincerity there can be no doubt; but sincerity is no reason why his error should be condoned and fellowshiped. There are few in this position who are not sincere. It is desirable that he should exercise a little more candor, and let us know how far he has diverged from Christadelphian belief. He told a Canadian brother some time ago that "*there was no difference between the nature of Adam before he sinned and that of Jesus,*" and also that "*the flesh is clean.*" This is the logical outcome of his teaching, but when asked, on a subsequent occasion, questions designed to elicit a declaration of his belief on these points, he refused to answer, on the plea that the questioner "was trying to catch him!" We cannot imagine Dr. Thomas or Robert Roberts or Paul refusing to answer a plain question on a point of doctrine on such a plea.

May God help all true-hearted brethren and sisters to discern the Truth on the matters dealt with herein, and may they be courageous in its defence, knowing that he who perverts the Word of God touches the apple of Yahweh's eye, because He has magnified His Word above all the attributes of His name.

## CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR CONCLUSION

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**I**N conclusion. The subject is a great and important one, and our only safety lies in the acceptance of Scripture teaching in its entirety. In this Brethren Thomas and Roberts have shown great fidelity to the testimony. They have given a place in their expositions to all parts of it, and the writer will not yield for one moment to anyone who declares that one part of their teaching is neutralized by another. So long as God spares him life he will defend, to the best of his ability, the result of their labors; and resist theories which, in their logical outworkings, eat into and destroy the Truth.

It is for the faithful to remain steadfast to the Truth in its purity, unmoved by the instabilities everywhere manifesting themselves around us. Perilous times have come for those who have "no root in themselves;" and even for those whose feet are firmly fixed on the rock, there is danger. The circumstances impress us with the necessity of keeping close to the Holy Oracles, and being careful to rightly divide the Word of Truth, "trembling at Yahweh's Word," and not daring to pervert that Word in order to establish the serpent reasonings of sinful flesh, which have ever been gratifying to the carnal mind; pleasing for the time being but destructive in the end.

We need not be surprised that some, whose knowledge is but superficial, are inconstant and wavering. Even in apostolic times there was a disposition, on the part of some, to be "carried about with every wind of doctrine," which evoked from the apostle words of warning. In his day, as in ours, there were men of "cunning craftiness lying in wait to deceive," and some who "were ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the Truth." Notwithstanding the warning of the apostles, there were some ever ready to give heed to seducers, who, "with good words and fair speeches" drew away disciples after them, "deceiving and being deceived." In the closing years of the beloved disciple John there were many anti-Christ.

We have the consolation of knowing that the pre-adventual apostasy which is stalking through the brotherhood, will not be permitted to extinguish the light of Truth a second time; that the Lord at his coming will find some faithful ones who will have steered safely through all the snares, pitfalls, and dangers of the latter days, and remained steadfast to the end of their probation in the faith once for all delivered to the saints. There are well-meaning perverters of the Truth abroad, claiming to be "messengers of light," and it will require the utmost diligence and vigilance to preserve it in its integrity. God has permitted the uprising of such to put us to the test.

It is a sorrowful duty to have to defend God's precious and much misunderstood Truth against an aged brother who ran well for a long season in the past, and who has "refreshed the souls of many" but the Truth is an affair of principles and not of men, and its principles must be cherished and defended by the faithful, whatever the effect may be upon those who pervert them.