



Preface

For some time discussion and questions have taken place about the body of the Lord Jesus Christ after resurrection but before immortalization.

This small booklet is designed to provide answers to the questions from the scriptures as well as from Christadelphian pioneer writings, and from contemporary Christadelphian writers.

We hope and pray that all who read give careful thought to the information without preconceived bias.

W.McAllister

The Beginning

Scripture tells us that sin entered the world through “one man’s disobedience” Romans 5:19 , causing mankind ever after to be subject to the “law of sin and death” Romans 8:2.

Inexorably this “law” has effectively worked in our members since then so that even the apostle Paul, exasperated cried, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

Like the “law of gravity” no one has been able to break its power until salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ was offered by our Heavenly Father

This way of salvation was hinted at in the promise given in Eden and known amongst us as the Edenic Covenant.

In Genesis Chp. 3 the "seed of the serpent" was to bruise the "heel" of the "seed of the woman" - which was Jesus. This "bruising" occurred when the "seed of the serpent" put Jesus to death on the cross. If he had not been raised it would have been a fatal wound.

There was no “cleansing” of Jesus by death. In fact by hanging on a tree Jesus became "cursed" (Gal.3:13).

However, when Jesus was raised from the dead by God - *and then* given immortality, diabolos was "cleansed" from his body (the serpent power had received a fatal "bruise to the head").

When we apply this simple, yet profound formula to the literal death, burial and resurrection of Christ all argument should disappear.

Hebrew Chapter 2

Some do not apply the formula of the Edenic Covenant when deciphering the meaning of the apostle Paul's exposition of Hebrews chapter 2:14.

“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;”

Emphasis is often applied by some to the word “destroy” in the verse, suggesting that it means *complete annihilation* of diabolos on the cross so that the Lord was raised with a different body to that with which he had prior to crucifixion.

This is of course false and does not fit with the Divine formula of the Edenic Covenant as explained above.

The original Greek word for “destroy” is “*katageo*” and **Strong's Concordance** says the word means “to be(render) entirely idle(useless) literally or figuratively.

Moulton's Vocabulary of the Greek NT says the word means, “to render idle or inoperative”.

Wuest Studies in the Greek NT says the word means, “to bring to nought, to render inoperative” and goes on to explain that, “Satan (Wuest's false understanding of diabolos) was not annihilated at the cross, his power was broken”.

Thus the **Revised Version** translated this passage as, “that through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil.”

And finally, **The Diaglott**. The literal translation of the Greek says, “So that *by means* of death he might make powerless him the strength having of the death, that is the accuser”. The English interpretation next to the verse states, “By means of his death, he might vanquish him possessing the power of death, that is the enemy”.

So death was not the absolute destruction or annihilation of diabolos but the means by which it would be annihilated by a change of nature, from mortality to immortality

What The Scriptures Teach

Besides Genesis chapter 3 which we have already considered we find that the Apostle Paul deals with the matter of the Lord’s resurrection and answers a question posed in the title of our booklet.

"How are the dead raised up and with what body (Gk. "to what body") do they come" - 1 Cor.15:35.

The apostle Paul only deals with the resurrected body in two sequences. 1)The body on the ground immediately after resurrection and; 2) the body immortalised.

He emphasises that the body brought up out of the grave appears ,

- 1) in “corruption” Vv 42;
- 2) in dishonour Vv43;
- 3) in weakness Vv43;
- 4) a natural body Vv44.

This is how the Lord came forth from the tomb before immortalisation because the apostle Paul was referring to his

resurrection as the model for all - see his conclusion -" as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly", 1 Cor.15:49.

Interestingly, Bro. Thomas also says of the Lord, "*Such was the model*, or Heavenly Man whose image etc all must bear....They, as he come forth from the unclean house of death earthly, and are therefore, *unclean bodies*."

(Eureka Vol.5 Logos edition pages 236 -238).

The original Greek word that is rendered "*raised*" means "to be built up" - that is, the weak body that comes forth from the grave needs to be built up into immortality.

Paul is **not** talking of a process commencing under the ground – and indeed there would be thousands of saints whose bodies have no graves because they had been eaten by wild animals, burnt at the stake or lost at sea

More than likely, the apostle saw this sequence in the parable of death and resurrection which Daniel experienced in Daniel Chp.10 and was also alluded to in Isa.26:19 – (see Eureka vol.1 page 141- 142.)

Notice the apostle carries on with the two part sequence in his closing words of 1 Cor.15.

Verse 53. "For this corruptible (the resurrected but yet to be immortalised body) must put on incorruption, and this mortal (the bodies of the living saints at Christ's return) must put on immortality.

Verse 54. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then

shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?”

Death, the grave, sin or the diabolos did not have the victory – it was the power of God to bring forth the Lord from the grave and destroy forever “him that had the power of death” and declare Jesus Christ our Lord, “to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” (Rom 1:4).

What the Pioneer Brethren Taught

Brother Thomas and brethren ever since have upheld this understanding, explaining that Christ was raised with the same body he had before death and that diabolos was “cleansed” from his nature by immortalisation.

Quotes From the Pioneers

Bro. Thomas in his reply to a Mr. Cook referring to "The Bible Doctrine Concerning the Tempter" in the Herald of the Kingdom and Age to come" (1852/3 Vol.2 #9 -page 200) said:

"The Old Man in his individual, social and political manifestations is the diabolos or devil of the New Testament mystery, and treated of accordingly. Destroy the ascendancy of the sin-principle of the flesh over the thoughts and actions, and you have a moral development of the New Man, and then eradicate it from the flesh **by the spirit in a resurrection or transformation to eternal life**, and you have the New Man in combined moral and physical manifestation..."

Bro. Thomas later wrote (Eureka Vol. 5 Logos edition)

(a) page236

"Would any one intelligent in the Word affirm that an unclean body, made yet more unclean by becoming a corpse, and therefore defiling to everyone who touched it, becomes clean by being put into an unclean placeBut passing through the grave cleanses no one "

(b) page 363

"*All that comes out of the ground is cursed, and unclean; so that **even the body of Jesus**, and the bodies of the approved saints in resurrection, require to be justified, rectified, purged,*

or perfected, by all-absorbing Spirit: which makes every atom of their substance instinct with incorruption and life; in other words, transforms it into Spirit. In such a removal of curse and uncleanness, a higher nature is developed."

Bro. Thomas: "Herald of the Kingdom" 1852 page 200

"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.3:10). 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)."

Bro. Thomas goes on to say further down the page:

"That diabolos, rendered devil in the common version, is sin, appears from the expressions of Paul in various parts of his writings.....

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."

Phanerosis

Some have quoted from **Phanerosis** (page 71) under the title, "What Moses Taught Concerning The Christ" where we find a list of 5 headings, viz.

- 1) He was to be born of Adam's race;
- 2) He was to be seed of the woman and Son of God;
- 3) He was to be killed;
- 4) He was to rise from the dead; and
 - i. *Now note* - in Phanerosis Bro. Thomas puts the word "**and**" on the end of item (4) which some overlook - but with it there, item(4) emphasises that "He was to rise from the dead ;**and**
- 5) He was to destroy the power that killed him - notice that this emphasises that it was to take place **after** he rose from the dead and **not at** his death.

Bro. William Smallwood [The Bible teaching concerning sin and sacrifice] quoting Bro. Thomas from Eureka, Vol. 1 page108 said,

"When did this iniquity of "us all", which was also "his (Jesus' *WJM*) iniquity," pass from him? The doctor answers the question on the same page; "it was when his flesh was transformed into spirit."

Bro. Roberts (Law of Moses)

a) Page 248

"he (Jesus) needed only a cleansing or justification by spirit of his physical nature..." (Notice the "cleansing" ingredient is the "spirit" - not death).

b) Page 249

"He(Jesus) only required cleansing in nature, which was done , as said, *after* resurrection" (Note again cleansing was "after resurrection" and not by death)

5) Debate between Bro. JJ Andrews and Bro. Roberts

The subject of "cleansing " came up and here are some excerpts:

Bro. Andrews *asking the questions.*

Bro. Roberts *answering.*

#454 "Was there any uncleanness which was not fictitious?"

Answer "Yes"

#455 "Will you mention some?"

Answer "The uncleanness of nature, as involved in child-birth, for example."

#456 "That was not fictitious. Is it not the unclean nature spoken of here, when the apostle says, 'The blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh'?"

Answer "Impossible, for the law never did cleanse sin nature".

#467 "Never did cleanse sin nature?"

Answer "**The cleansing of sin nature is reserved for the resurrection**"

Now a little further into the debate.....

#468 "Then if the flesh under the law was unclean, and required a shadowy purification, where was the shadow, or where was the prophecy, if you so like it, in *regard to Christ*, if our nature does not require cleansing through blood-shedding?"

Answer "Our nature does require cleansing. It will be cleansed at the resurrection, and that will be because of Christ's obedience unto death."

#469 "By immortalisation do you mean?"

Answer "Unquestionably; it is not cleansed until then".

(Notice in question #468 Bro. Andrews suggestion that a cleansing occurs by "*blood-shedding at death*" whereas Bro. Roberts says it happens at immortalisation.)

See this section of the Debate in "The Atonement" - pages 128-129

What Bro.H.P.Mansfield Taught as is shown in his booklet "Key to the Understanding of the Scriptures"

Page 45

"He spoke of 'sin that dwelleth in me' (Romans 7:17), thus using the term as a synonym for human nature, the promptings of sin which reside in the flesh.

Christ conquered sin by triumphing over the flesh in his lifetime, and by submitting to the death upon the cross. He rose from

the grave to life eternal. With *this change of nature*, the serpent power of sin had no longer any hold on him. It had bruised him on the heel, in that he had been put to death, but in rising from the grave, he had recovered from the blow, and in attaining unto life eternal he had administered a fatal blow as far as he was concerned.

1) The Atonement page 188 (HP Mansfield)

"Thus the obvious teaching of both Exodus and Ezekiel is that Christ our altar, was cleansed from human nature through his own offering, by being raised from the dead to life eternal"

2) The Atonement page 200 (HPM)

"The type taught, that as a member of the human race, he would possess a nature that had been made subject to mortality by sin in the beginning, and *that from this nature he would need to be cleansed by a change to immortality.*"

3) The Atonement page 359 (G.E.Mansfield)

"Christ was buried, and for three days he lay in the grave. It was a temporary triumph for the serpent power, for thereafter the Lord rose to life and immortality. So Paul reasons: 'He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification' (Rom. 4:25). It was the vision of the joy and gladness that would follow his sacrifice, which sustained him (Heb. 12:2). He endured, for his mission was to save us, and that salvation to bring 'many sons to glory' would follow his

resurrection. *The serpent power was defeated when the power of a changed nature destroyed forever the diabolos in Christ. "*

In Conclusion

I believe that our consideration of the scriptures and the writings of the brethren demonstrate that the Lord was raised with a mortal body before immortalisation.

Any other conclusion is verging on “strife of words” and will lead onto a dangerous unscriptural tangent.