

On the Nature of Man and The Sacrifice of Christ

(from brethren Robert Roberts and HP Mansfield)

The following 12 points were published by brother HP Mansfield as *Principles of the Atonement*. The first 11 originate from brother Robert Roberts (*The Christadelphian*, September, 1896, p. 339; Diary of a Voyage to Australia, p. 67-69). They were published by brother Roberts to refute the errors he found being taught in Australia that Christ did not offer for himself; the error that he did not require a cleansing sacrifice; the error that he was not “made sin in being born of a human mother under the present defiled, sin-nature constitution of the race; the error that he did not possess the “law of sin in the members”; and the error that he did not actually (but only *ritually or symbolically*) condemn and destroy the sin-principle in his own flesh. It was the same old error that has troubled and tested the faithfulness of the Body from the beginning (1Jo 3:8). Bro. Roberts described the erroneous teachings as, “**The Roman Catholic view in a modified form**” which “**revolts at the very idea of Jesus having been in any way related to sin**.” This is a zealous antipathy not inspired by knowledge.” The 12th point was added by brother HP Mansfield.

- 1. That death entered the World of mankind by Adam’s disobedience.**
“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin” (Rom. 5:12), “In (by or through) Adam, all die” (1 Cor. 15:22). “Through the offence of one, many are dead” (Rom. 5:15).
- 2. That death came by decree extraneously to the nature bestowed upon Adam in Eden, and was not inherent in him before sentence.**
“God made man in His own Image ... a living soul (a body of life) ... very good.” (Gen 1:27; 2:7; 1:31). “Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife ... unto dust shalt thou return” (Gen. 3:17, 19).
- 3. Since that time, death has been a bodily law.**
“The body is dead because of sin” (Rom. 8:10). “The law of sin in my members ... the body of this death” (Rom. 7:23-24). “This mortal ... we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened” (1 Cor. 15:53; 2Cor. 5:4). “*Having the sentence of death in ourselves*, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God Who raiseth the dead” (2Cor. 1:9).
- 4. The human body is therefore a body of death requiring redemption.**
“Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. 8:23). “He shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious body” (Phil. 3:21). “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. 7:24). “This mortal (body) must put on immortality” (1Cor. 15:53).
- 5. That the flesh resulting from the condemnation of human nature to death because of sin, has no good in itself, but requires to be illuminated from the outside.**
“In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing” (Rom. 7:18). “Sin dwelleth in me” (Rom. 7:20). “The law of sin which is in my members” (Rom. 7:23). “Every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights” (Ja. 1:17). “Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts” (Mat. 15:19). “He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption” (Gal. 6:8). “Put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts” (Eph. 4:22).
- 6. That God’s method for the return of sinful man to favor required and appointed the putting to death of man’s condemned and evil nature in a representative man of spotless character, whom He should provide, to declare and uphold the righteousness of God, as the first condition of restoration, that He might be just while justifying the unjust, who should believably approach through him, in humility, confession and reformation.**
“God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. 8:3). “Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that having the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. 2:14). “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body to the tree” (1 Pet. 2:24). “Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed” (Rom. 6:6). “He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). “Be of good cheer: I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16:33). “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare His righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus” (Rom. 3:25-26).

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7. That the death of Christ was by God's own appointment, and not by human accident, though brought about by human instrumentality.

"He that spared not His own son, but *delivered him up for us all*" (Rom. 8:32). "Him being delivered *by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God*, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23). "Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do *whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done*" (Acts 4:27). "No man taketh it – my life– from me, but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (Jn. 10:18).

8. That the death of Christ was not a mere martyrdom, but an element in the process of reconciliation.

"You that were sometime alienated in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled *in the body of his flesh through death*" (Col. 1:21). "When we were enemies, we were *reconciled to God by the death of His Son*" (Rom. 5:10). "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" (Isa. 53:5). "I lay down my life for my sheep" (Jn. 10:15). "Having therefore boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, *by a new and living way*, which he hath consecrated for us through the Veil, *that is to say, his flesh*, let us draw near" (Heb. 10:20).

9. That the shedding of his blood was essential for our salvation.

"Being justified *by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him" (Rom. 5:9). "In whom we have redemption *through his blood*, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:14). "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). "This is the New Covenant in my blood, *shed for the remission of sins*" (Mat. 26:28). "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29). "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins *in his own blood*" (Rev. 1:5). "Have washed their robes and *made them white in the blood of the Lamb*" (Rev. 7:14).

10. That Christ was himself saved in the Redemption he wrought out for us.

"In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to *save him from death*, and was heard in that he feared. Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:7-9). "Joint heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). "By his own blood he entered once into the Holy Place, *having obtained eternal redemption*" (Heb. 9:12). "Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect, &c." (Heb. 13:20).

11. That as the anti-typical High Priest, it was necessary that he should offer for himself, as well as for those whom he represented.

"And by reason hereof, he ought, as for the people, so also for himself to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a High Priest, but He that said unto him, &c." (Heb. 5:3-5). "Wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer" (Heb. 8:3). "Through the Eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot unto God" (Heb. 9:14). "Who needeth not *daily*, as those 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" (Heb. 7:27). "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens (that is, the symbols employed under the Law), should be purified with these (Mosaic sacrifices), but *the heavenly things themselves* (that is, Christ, who is the substance prefigured in the Law), with better sacrifices than these" (that is, the sacrifice of Christ) (Heb. 9:23).

12. As the anti-typical Altar, it was necessary for him to "be cleansed" and "sanctified" in order to present his offerings before God.

"Thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it... it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy" (Exo. 29:36-37). "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle" (Heb. 13:10). "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the Truth" (John 17:19).