

THE GROUND OF  
**RESURRECTIONAL  
RESPONSIBILITY**

By A. T. JANNAWAY

The Ground of  
RESURRECTIONAL  
RESPONSIBILITY

by

A. T. JANNAWAY

LONDON: 1921

*(Reprinted 1981)*

# The Ground of Resurrectional Responsibility

An Address to Brethren and Sisters

OUR subject concerns the doctrines of the resurrection and the judgment — doctrines which, in the sixth chapter of Hebrews are included among the first principles of the religion of Christ. On this occasion our object is not to lay afresh these two foundation doctrines, but to refresh our memories — to stir up our minds — as to the important teaching of the Scriptures respecting them. To do this, now and again, is wise; nay, it is a very necessary exercise in view of our natural forgetfulness of things divine, and of the error that is always flying about even among those who profess the name Christadelphian.

Now what the Scriptures reveal upon these doctrines of resurrection and judgment is extensive, intelligible, and extremely solemn. Whatever is difficult or perplexing about them is due, not to the character of the divine information, but to the unwarrantable suggestions and metaphysical reasonings and speculations of men, who know not the truth, or who have wandered from it. We need to be on our guard. It is easy to take on unsound ideas — to be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” Let us be cautious, and above all let us be sure that we give the Bible the supreme place; and not only read it, but closely study it, with reverence and honesty, not forgetting that there is such a thing as heresy.

“There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (I Cor. 11:19).

We will commence our consideration by quoting two familiar passages:

“There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust” (Acts 24:15).

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead" (2 Tim. 4:1).

Here is God's intention, infallibly and unmistakably expressed. Let us hope that we are all prepared to assent to it. The news is both glorious and terrible. There is to be a resurrection and there is to be a judgment.

These truths at once give rise to the question which we have now particularly to discuss — questions which must always have been burning ones when this subject was preached.

(A) *Who are amenable to this judgment?*

(B) *What is the ground of accountability?*

Let me answer these enquiries straight away, and furnish the evidence later.

In the words of Dr. Thomas three classes, embracing quick and dead, stand related to the future tribunal of Christ:

1. Enlightened sinners who will not obey the truth.
2. Ungodly saints who disgrace it.
3. The faithful who adorn it.

The basis of responsibility being Light — a knowledge of the gospel — in each case. (*See Anastasis*).

Do the Scriptures bear out these assertions? They do, without a doubt. We will listen first to statements of the Great Teacher himself, and then pass on to the equally plain and emphatic utterances of his apostles.

Christ said, in addressing his contemporaries, those who heard his word:

"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation" (John 5:24).

"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48).

"They shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29).

Such indeed is Christ's mission — to raise the dead, and, after judgment, to reward the faithful with everlasting life, and the unfaithful — those who knowingly and wickedly despise the gospel invitation — with damnation.

In harmony with the passages given we may also quote:

“God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17).

“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil” (John 3:19).

Brethren, not in our fellowship, tell us that Christ here spoke to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles. Of course he spoke to the Jews. He was only sent to these people. But the apostles later, and by divine instruction, delivered the *same message* to “all nations” — a message which contained, as we shall see, the same precious promises to the believer, and the same appalling penalties to the unbeliever.

But, it is argued, Christ's words are only applicable to those in covenant-relationship with God, and not to any out of Christ.

This was the contention of the late brother J. J. Andrew, who, although dead, has followers today, and these exert an influence. What they say may not create a conviction, but, unfortunately, this suggestion is sufficient to produce in some minds confusion and a hesitancy in accepting the truth.

Brother Andrew launched his theory on the brotherhood twenty-nine years ago, and as it was, and is, the cause of so much bother and was practically the start of the resurrectional responsibility trouble, we will briefly examine it.

At a business meeting of the Islington Ecclesia, on July 3rd, 1892, bro. Andrew moved that the following should be added to the Ecclesia's Statement of Faith:

“That Christ having been raised from the dead through his own blood, it necessarily follows that the dead in Christ will be raised through the same blood, and, as a consequence, that the blood of Christ is not available for the resurrection of any who have died in Adam.”

*This meant, as he said at the time, that no unbaptized person would, or could, appear at the judgment seat of Christ.*

Brother Andrew adhered to his theory till the day of his death. A short time before he died, he wrote in a Circular Letter (March 1904):

“Resurrection applies solely to those who pass out of Adam into the name of Christ. Never did the apostles give the slightest suggestion that God might or would raise the Gentiles for punishment.”

Here we must pause — and we need to put on our thinking caps — to note brother Andrew’s self-deception. There is, as we shall proceed to show, a flaw in his argument which renders it totally untenable, and obscures the true meaning of the sacrifice of Christ.

Let us remember that the blood of Christ was shed, not to provide a way by which sinners could be raised and punished, but to bring, through the mercy of God, eternal life to those who intelligently and appreciatively assimilate the moral lessons associated with it. The wicked, baptized and unbaptized, will appear before Christ for reprobation, because they merit it, and not because Christ died. The Andrew theory exhibits a sad misapprehension of the aim of the sacrificial death of Christ.

The new dogma, introduced by brother Andrew, says brother Roberts, “conflicts with the fact that the resurrection has already taken place in recorded cases where there could be no question of atonement; of which the son of the widow of Zarephath may be taken as a type” (*Resurrection to Condemnation*, p. 19) — “This shows the Adamic sentence is no bar to God raising the Adamically-sentenced dead, if He has any reason for doing so” (*Ibid*). God has a reason for raising enlightened rebels, as the Scriptures declare. God will not allow His offer of salvation, and His call to repentance to be wilfully spurned. If a man understand not, he is as the beasts that perish (Psa. 49:20), but if he knows the divine law, and is commanded to heed it, his position is far otherwise. Many wicked ones will be raised, and suffer “the second death,” whose immersion will have been a mockery and a farce: such men, to wit, of whom Jude speaks as having “crept in unawares” (verse

4), and the false teachers, the inventors of "damnable heresies," to whom Peter and Paul refer (2 Pet. 2:1, 9; 1 Pet. 4:3-5; Gal. 2:4).

The contention that only the "justified" (through circumcision in the Mosaic age, and baptism in this) have been, or can be, released from the grip of death, is glaringly opposed to the history of God's dealings with mankind as revealed in the Bible.

Brother Andrew sought to establish his theory, not on the basis of direct teaching of the Scriptures, but by weaving a network of what brother Roberts aptly styled "legal absurdities," and an "endless jargon of mystifying technicalities."

We would draw attention here to the warning of our brother Roberts to those who allow themselves to deny the resurrectional responsibility of unbaptized rebels. So serious was this in his eyes that he placed on record his conviction that "all who endorse the new position will do so at the risk of incurring the divine displeasure and imperilling the privilege which the knowledge of the truth has conferred upon them" (*Chris.*, 1896, p. 397).

Many of the brethren who espoused the new doctrine, speedily renounced it under the stress of criticism based on the emphatic teaching of the Scriptures. Others, although not entirely breaking away from their leader, held on in a sort of halfhearted way, saying:

"We do not know whether God will or will not raise and judge the wilful rejecter, but we do not think He will."

Many with this convictionless mind are still in the meetings out of our fellowship. These not only refuse to uphold the truth on the subject, but scruple not to undermine it by their attacks upon it. Yet they plead for reunion with us! "Let us," say they, "try and heal our wounds." Such a plea, framed as it is, on disbelief of the Word, is not sufficient to warrant us either in amending, or altering, our Basis, or in relaxing our exclusiveness of fellowship. The truth must be upheld despite the ignorant and befogged. To compromise will be helpful to none, and will only cause trouble to all concerned in the future.

For our own part we are surprised that those who are so uncertain in their conviction do not tremble. Does it not occur to them that if they are in the wrong their sin is threefold? They err in keep-

ing back testimony which God has given them to deliver; in strengthening the hands of the wicked by weakening the arrangement which God has devised to convert them; and in opposing and discouraging those who are striving to show themselves faithful stewards of the Oracles of God. We commend the reading of Ezekiel 13:22 R.V., to our undecided, halting brethren.

The resurrectional responsibility of enlightened rejecters of the gospel we regard as a part of "the whole counsel of God," and with this conviction, we are determined to preach and to defend it.

The fact that, in years now long past, some were deficient in this duty, is no argument for still leaving this truth an open question. The position now is not the same as it was in 1892. We must remember that the truth has not merely been ignored; it has been influentially assailed — entailing years of painful controversy — and that we were forced on behalf of purity and peace to take a stand. The error is now outside, and with God's help, we will keep it there.

Respecting the indifference once shown by some ecclesias, and their laxity in dealing with the error, brother Roberts was moved, in the midst of the battle, to say:

"We cannot surrender to the pressure of these misguided brethren. There may be a divine object in the pressure. It may be that we have been too supine in asserting the prerogatives of the Most High in this matter" — "It may be that God is compelling us to cease this parley with an untrue doctrine, and leading us to insist with greater stress and solemnity on the fact that he that rejecteth Christ and receiveth not his words shall be judged by those words in the last day, whether Jew or Gentile, since the extension of those words to the Gentiles, equally with the Jews." (*Chris.*, 1896, p. 396).

We will now continue the evidence which proves that the Gospel, with its attendant blessings and curses, has been transmitted from the Jews to the Gentiles. On the eve of Christ's departure, he delivered to his apostles the following instructions:

"Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations"  
(Matt. 28:19), (margin).



“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15,16).

Faithful to this commission, Christ’s messengers (including Paul, who was subsequently chosen) went forth, proclaiming the same “Word which God, sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ” (Acts 10:36). “Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world” (Acts 1:8; 10:37; Rom. 10:18; Col. 1:23). A part — an integral part — of the apostolic message, was the judgment of quick and dead. At the house of Cornelius, Peter told those assembled that Christ had expressly enjoined on the apostles the duty of declaring this truth:

“He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained to be the judge of quick and dead” (Acts 10:42).

The reason for this is perfectly evident, if we keep in mind the peril of the wilful rejecter of the gospel — “He that believeth not shall be damned.”

This, too, gives force and significance to the words of Paul to the Corinthians:

“Knowing the terror of the Lord (attached to the judgment) we persuade men” (2 Cor. 5:11).

Paul reasoned, not only with his brethren and sisters concerning the terrible side of the judgment seat, but as we are endeavouring to show, with “men” in general. “According to my gospel,” said the apostle, “will God judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ” (Rom. 2:16). The gospel, expounded by Paul, contained no hint — not a vestige of one — that a disobedient hearer could render himself immune from resurrectional responsibility by despising the ordinance of baptism, or refusing to submit thereto. This novelty belongs to “another gospel” (Gal. 1:7-12).

We lay stress on the fact that the same gospel message (of salvation, to the receiver of it; and condemnation, to the rejecter of it) was delivered alike to Jews and Gentles — at Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, and other places:

“All they which dwelt in Asia heard the words of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10).

“I kept back nothing,” said Paul, “that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying *both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks*, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:20, 21).

Let us not lose sight of the fact that to heed this message was, from the apostle’s standpoint, to exhibit obedience, and wickedly to disregard it, was to exhibit disobedience (Rom. 1:5; 16:25, 26; Acts 6:7). This bearing of the gospel must be kept well in view in our enquiry. As to the fate of the disobedient, Paul states:

“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Thess. 1:7, 8).

Brethren who would draw a distinction between the baptized and unbaptized disobedient adopt a mind and a course of action for which they may be more than sorry when in the presence of their Master.

God, as we have seen, made no distinction in His conditional offer of salvation, between Jews and Gentiles — “God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34, 35; Rom. 2:11). On this point, Paul’s writing in Rom. 10:12-18, is also instructive and confirmatory, as regards the equality of Jews and Gentiles, and the respective outcome of belief and unbelief.

Who among all these people attained to the resurrectional accountability stage is a matter for Christ to say — we cannot. It is the *principle* for which we have to contend. Respecting Light, brother Roberts spoke well — “A man may hear, and not understand. Or he may understand, and not be convinced. Conviction makes him responsible.”

We follow Paul to Mars’ Hill (Acts 17.) The apostle in his address at this place referred to those times of darkness, in which God “suffered all nations to walk in their own ways” (Acts 14:16), adding:

“The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).

“**Commandeth** all men everywhere to repent.” Here was a per-

empty summons to holiness — in other words to, “do works meet for repentance” (Acts 26:20). Paul gave a reason for the command:

“Because He (God) hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised him from the dead” (17:31).

Here we would make a remark or two respecting Christ’s day of judgment. Correct views are essential, otherwise the teaching in Paul’s speech for which we are contending will be missed.

“I came not to judge the world,” said Christ, in the days of his weakness. When is this part of his ordained mission to be fulfilled? At his second appearing.

When Christ returns to the earth his work as judge will commence with the “quick and dead” amenable to His judgment seat, but it will not end with these, it will extend to all nations — it will start at Sinai, and spread to the uttermost parts of the earth.

It is to this judgment epoch that men in all the ages have been led to look for reward and punishment (Ecc. 12:14; Mal. 3:16, 18; 4:1, 2; Matt. 16:27; Rev. 11:17, 18). and it is to this epoch that hearers of the gospel have been exhorted to wait for the rectification of the affairs of all mankind. In that day it will be said:

“The LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; He will save us” (Isa. 33:22).

“The LORD shall endure for ever: He hath prepared His throne for judgment. And he shall judge the world in righteousness, He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness” (Psa. 9:7, 8).

The comprehensive nature of the future judgship of Christ is also to be seen in those passages of Scripture which join the judicial work of Christ at the resurrection, with the same work in its later national and individual phases, e.g.:

“It is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue confess to God” (Rom. 14:10-12; Isa 45:22, 23).

“For we know Him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth

unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people" (Heb. 10:30; Psa. 58:10, 11).

We come now to Paul's two pronouncements on the subject when before Felix (Acts 24). Here the apostle sets an example, not only of faithfulness but also of fearlessness, in keeping to the front the teaching concerning resurrectional responsibility. On the occasion of the first utterance — a public official affair — he reminds the Roman governor of the truth that the dead will be raised, both the "just and unjust" (verse 15). The second occasion was a private interview, arranged so that Felix and his wife might learn more of "the faith in Christ" (verse 24). Let us give the expression — "the faith in Christ" — its full weight and bearing. When we remember that Paul was no man-pleaser — that it was his wont to keep back nothing through fear of giving offence — we can imagine how he would expatiate upon the stern and solemn realities of Christ's judgment day. But we are not left to surmise: the narrative, short though it is, tells us that he "reasoned of righteousness, and temperance, (i.e., self-control), and the judgment to come," and that as he did so, "Felix was terrified" (verse 25, R.V.). Why should Felix tremble? His past infamous career, together with his refusal to repent, is the answer. What unbaptized, unrepentant man, with the enlightenment which Felix possessed, would not shake as he heard the doom of the willing rejecter — the doctrine of Gehenna — discoursed upon by such an one as Paul, the ambassador of Christ, with earnestness and conviction? Supporters of the Andrew teaching, in order to maintain a theory, whittle away "the judgment to come" to the destruction of Jerusalem!

"There is no resurrectional responsibility resting on men and women," it has been argued, "till they voluntarily say, in the language of the children of Israel, 'All that the Lord hath said, will we do.'" In support of this extraordinary notion, the parable of Christ, "Count the cost" (Luke 14:28), is brought forward. But, as we have already shown, a person, who intelligently hears the Spirit's voice, has no option other than to obey. Christ in his teaching, meant nothing more than that hearers of the gospel, on apprehending God's will, should with the view to a successful probation, con-

sider well, and prepare for, the ups and downs associated with the life of a true disciple. And how wise is the counsel! To be forewarned is to be forearmed. To experience difficulties and hardships unexpectedly is unnerving, but to know beforehand that these will arise, and to realise the necessity for overcoming them, is helpful, and enables the mind to brace itself for the encounter.

A Scripture frequently quoted in support of the Andrew theory, is: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22).

The argument is that no one can experience the "making alive" apart from union with Christ. But what is the "making alive"? Is it the mere restoration to flesh and blood existence? This is not the "making alive" which the apostle had in view. He had in mind a "making alive" to die no more. He shows this by saying that Christ was the first-fruits in the process, and that others would follow at his coming (verse 23). Christ could not be called the "first-fruits" if the "making alive" applied only to a resuscitation to mortal life, for in this many had preceded him. One example from the Old Testament has already been cited. Other illustrations occur in the raising of Lazarus and Jairus's daughter. Our Lord was the first to rise to incorruptibility and immortal life. Paul's reasoning requires the "making alive" to be the attainment of a spiritual body (verses 42-44).

Psa. 50:5 — "Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice," is another passage which is wrongly enlisted to help the non-responsibility theory. Who are God's saints, and for what purpose is the gathering? Is it a gathering of good and bad for judgment? Or is it a gathering of the faithful for the consummation of their blessed hope, the eternal and all-glorious union with Christ? The Psalm sets the scene with Christ in the earth, in power and glory, working overwhelming disaster on Yahweh's enemies, and it is then the Spirit is made to say, "Gather my saints," etc. The Spirit does not call men such as Judas, Ananias, and Alexander the coppersmith, saints. The word in the Psalm is *Chasid*, which means, says Young, "kind, pious, virtuous." This rendering is confirmed by Psa. 30:4; 37:28; 116:15; where the same word occurs. The saints are those whom God preserves, not those whom He destroys (Psa. 97:10). The

latter will never be gathered in the sense of *Psa. 50:5*. Their temporary appearance, whilst the saints are in process of being gathered and redeemed, is a mere passing incident of which no notice is taken in this passage, and many others (*Matt. 24:31*; *1 Thess. 4:16,17*; *2 Thess. 2:1*; *Rev. 14:4*). The gathering is a gathering of faithful ones to be "ever with the Lord." The time is that when the "saints" shall be joyful in glory. This honour have all his saints" (*Psa. 149:5-9*).

We might refer to other objections. There is one in reference to "miracle" and "open vision," which says that the means of securing conviction which were at work in apostolic days to not now exist. Some have advanced this argument to show that people who live now are not on a par with those in the first century, and in consequence, many of the New Testament allusions are not applicable to us. Well, if there is an appreciable difference between their privileges and ours, God will take this into account. We are not now dealing with those who are unable to believe; we are dealing with wilful rejecters, those who reach the necessary degree of knowledge. If men now can be brought to a knowledge of the truth, if they can reach a standard of enlightenment, which will bring to them eternal life, why may not men and women also attain to sufficient knowledge to justify God in condemning them, if wicked, in the great day of account? Miracles were wrought by Christ, it is true, as a witness, but the Bible record is intended to serve a like purpose to you and to me. These things "are written." said John, "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (*John 20:30, 31*). There is being worked today before our eyes a greater miracle than the miracles that were worked in the first century. We refer to the fulfilment of prophecy. Let us fear lest we under-estimate this God-given evidence. Also the still greater evidence in the resurrection of His Son. We are persuaded that God sets a higher value than man on the "assurance" He has given in this well-attested fact. It is an open question whether the evidence calculated to produce conviction is one whit less at the present-day than when Christ trod on earth.

"If an alien becomes sufficiently enlightened and convinced," it has been said, "he is sure to connect himself with Christ by baptism." This hardly requires serious notice. The idea is excluded by

Christ's doctrine concerning "everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not" (Matt. 7:26). It is false and illogical, inasmuch as it makes human nature different today from what it was in Bible times. Man, who could be wilfully perverse then, can be equally so now.

Again, there are some who say: "Yes, we will allow a resurrection and a punishment for enlightened rejecters, but we contend they will not appear for judgment with Christ's household"; and the reason given is "Because it is inappropriate — they have not been on probation — they are not saints." But why talk like this? Surely, the distinction that is drawn between these sinners is imaginary. What is there that is really inappropriate in all enlightened sinners, whether baptized or unbaptized, being judged, condemned, and punished together? They are all disobedient. They have all the same carnal mind. They all wilfully refuse to conform to the gospel requirements. That some may have allowed themselves for awhile to come under the influence of the truth, will not alter the nature of the punishment — why then alter the time?

We also remember here the various references to the time of judgment. There are not two days mentioned — only one, and that "the last day" (John 12:48), the day of Christ's coming (Matt. 16:27; Rom. 2:16; 1 Cor. 4:5; 1 John 2:28; Jude 14, 15), the time of the dead (Rev. 11:18).

What shall we say in conclusion? We do not think we can do better than read a letter that was sent forth by the South London Ecclesia twenty-four years ago, at a time when the controversy on this subject was raging. What was said then is timely today. The letter states our position, the reasons we had for taking it, and it also expresses the attitude our Ecclesia takes towards those who cannot see eye to eye with us:—

## THE SOUTH LONDON ECCLESIA

*in relation to the Resurrectional Responsibility Question.*

To prevent misunderstanding, the brethren meeting in Gresham Hall, Brixton, desire it to be known that their basis of fellowship includes a recognition of the truth regarding the resurrectional responsibility of enlightened alien, and that they invite

the fellowship of those only who are of **one mind** with them upon this doctrine.

The brethren wish also to remind the ecclesias that a denial of this doctrine has been within the last few years actively and publicly propagated, and that efforts are still being made to negative the righteous upholding of its truth.

They urge, therefore, that a bold and faithful attitude towards the doctrine is now imperatively called for.

The error that has been advanced to antagonise the doctrine has been fully exposed in Christadelphian literature, and what has been written should be sufficient to make manifest the truth and its moment. Should it, however, still be asked — “Is the doctrine of sufficient importance to warrant us in standing aside from those who cannot receive it?” the reply is simple. The denial of this feature of the Judgment involves an adding to and a taking away from the word of God, and is a tampering with the means which God Himself has instituted for the sobering and conversion of the natural man. Peter was commanded to preach the doctrine to the Gentiles (Acts 10:42). Paul tells us that he included it in his gospel proclamation (Rom. 2:16), and that in reference to it he “persuaded men” (2 Cor. 5:11), which last point is exemplified in the case of Felix (Acts 24:25).

The brethren sympathise with those Ecclesias which have in their midst some who cannot receive the Scriptural teaching upon the subject, and would remind them that whilst duty calls for the utmost exercise of patience and forbearance, duty forbids the sacrifice of revealed truth on their account. If there are some who fail, after all that has been said and written, to receive enlightenment, the only course open to the Ecclesias, if truth is to be preserved in their midst, is to act independently and leave such to the Word and to God, who withholds not wisdom from those who ask.

**“STAND FAST IN ONE SPIRIT, WITH ONE MIND STRIVING TOGETHER FOR THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL.”**