

Dear Brothers and Sisters

In our previous Law Class we learned about the stirring up of strife among the tribes of Israel over the question of leadership. 250 Levites and their followers stood up against Moses and Aaron and charged them with taking too much upon themselves, and lifting themselves above the congregation, because Yahweh was among them as much as He was with Moses and Aaron and his sons. This form of discontent is common wherever men and women are gathered together, it sometimes occurs where men and women measure themselves by themselves and its root cause is jealousy. It was a problem that the apostle Paul had to deal with some discontented brothers among the Corinthian ecclesia in his admonition in 2Co 10:10-12 “For *his* letters, say they, *are* weighty and powerful; but *his* bodily presence *is* weak, and *his* speech contemptible. Let such a one think this, that, such as we are in word by letters when we are absent, such *will we be* also in deed when we are present. For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” And Paul adds “It is not him that commends himself who is approved, but whom the Lord commends. (2Co 10:18-1) It is certainly a flaw in human nature and it is common wherever men and women gather together with an objective. It occurred and still occurs among Christadelphians, it occurred in the Ecclesia of Christ, in the Apostolic Fellowship, and it will happen in the Apostolic Ecclesias unless the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ and his apostles are carefully put into practice. Our calling is not to be leaders but to be faithful followers and servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, our call is to serve not to leadership. However if we serve faithfully, others will follow our example because we walk in His footsteps. The apostle Peter reminds us “For even hereunto were you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was

guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judges righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going astray; but are now returned to the Shepherd and overseer of your souls. (1Pe 2:21-1)

However the congregation in their complaints were not challenging Moses and Aaron but Yahweh himself, and it was Yahweh who led the way in resolving the issues that had arisen. Moses was instructed to take a rod (a staff Heb.) one staff for each of the tribes represented by the elder of each tribe. Twelve in all each bearing the name of the elder. The rods were taken from the almond trees and the Hebrew word for almond 'shaqad' signifies to hasten. The almond tree in Israel is one of the first trees to send forth buds and blossoms. This significance occurs in Jeremiah chapter 1, where Yahweh informs Jeremiah of the work he requires him to do "See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant. Moreover the word of Yahweh came unto me, saying, Jeremiah, what do you see? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I **will hasten my word** to perform it. (Jer. 1:10-12)

So God instructed Moses to take the twelve rods each one bearing the name of its owner together with Aaron's rod and to lay them up together, thirteen in all' in the tabernacle of the congregation before the testimony (the Ark of the Covenant) where Moses would meet with Yahweh (v4). (Moses was required to do this to meet with God) Moses was then instructed that, "The man's rod I have chosen shall bloom blossoms. So the next day Moses returned to the Tabernacle of witness, and he saw the Aaron's rod had budded, bloomed blossoms and yielded or produced almonds, the Hebrew word for yielded is from '*gamal*' to ripen or mature. This was astonishing but it foreshadowed something much greater as the

prophet Zechariah teaches (6:12-13) “ This is what Yahweh of Armies declares, “Behold the man whose name *is* The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

The Lord Jesus was known as Jesus of Nazareth, in Hebrew this is the word ‘netser’ the same vowels as Nazarene (Mat.2:21) and is translated the Branch. The rods being laid up and one being presented as very much alive foreshadows the resurrection of the Lord Jesus to eternal life. This event established Aaron as truly having been chosen for the office by Yahweh was designed to take away the murmuring of discontent from the Israelites which it did and being accepted they did not die. However while this terrible time of trouble was being sorted out many of the people could see no hope and they said to Moses we are as good as dead.

Brother Robert Roberts in his Lecture, “The Slain Lamb” given in 1873 has some important teaching about being consumed with dying V.13 and the Law of Moses.

What do we find in connection with Moses? A law is given to the chosen nation. This law condemned to death all who disobeyed it in the meanest particular. Those to whom the law was given were, of course, under the Adamic curse; that is, they inherited Adam’s mortal nature, because in him when he sinned. This Adamic curse is represented by the horizontal band between “Death reigns,” and the cross; the Mosaic curse (for none kept the law in all particulars) is represented by the corresponding band below; the nation of Israel, “the seed of Abraham,” between the two. The seed of Abraham, whose nature Paul testifies (Heb. 2:16), Jesus took, are here represented as enclosed between two curses, the curse in Adam and the curse by Moses.

But before we consider how these two curses converge upon the Messiah (represented by the cross) that he might bear them away, let me ask what the law was given for. It was “added (to the promises) because of transgression” truly; but suppose the Jews had been able to keep it, what would have been the result to them? Now here let special attention be given to the testimony of the Word. Paul says, in the 7th chapter of Rom., 10th verse: “The commandment (speaking of the law) was ordained *to life*.” Does that mean eternal life? Yes. This is shown by what we read at Luke 10:25: “And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him saying, Master, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* He said unto him, *What is written in the law?* How do you read it? And he answering said so and so (recapitulating the chief points of the law). And he (Jesus) said unto him, Thou hast answered right: *this do, and thou shalt live.*” Now there is the word of the Master himself confirming the statement of Paul that the law given was unto life, *if they kept it*.

But then how about the Adamic condemnation in such a case? Well, if there had been a Jew who had kept the law in all things, having done the will of the Father from the very beginning of life to the end of his life, he would have been in the very position of the Lord Jesus himself; it would then have been in his power, by dying, to cleanse himself from the Adamic condemnation, and his righteousness would have caused his resurrection from the dead. It is by the *righteousness* of one that resurrection has come (Rom. 5:18; 1 Cor. 15:21); it is not by the “free life” of one. “Free life” is a myth; an invention of the new heresy. Adamic mortality would not be to our “eternal death,” if we were ourselves “without spot” of disobedience. God will keep no man in the grave because of Adam’s sin, if he himself be individually righteous. Death purifies him from hereditary condemnation (Rom. 6:7; 1 Pet. 4:1); resurrection comes by righteousness (Rom. 5:9). How came it, then, that life could not come by the law, as Paul says, in the 3rd chapter of Gal., at the 21st verse: “Is the law, then, against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” Let me give the Spirit’s

answer, Rom. 8:3: "What the law could not do, in that it was *weak through the flesh*, God" has done in the way which we shall consider when we come to that point. Here, then, is the Spirit's teaching that the weakness of the law, in relation to the bestowing of life eternal, lay in the *incapability of the flesh to keep it*; as Jesus said to his disciples: "The Spirit indeed is willing, but *the flesh is weak*." This is the teaching of the Word, and the teaching of God's Word is decisive in such matters. You may shake a theory over it, and try to make it of none effect, but there the fact remains.

We next come to the question, Why was the flesh weak? Could not God have made human nature after such a pattern or constitution that it would have been able to keep the law? Doubtless He could. Why did He not? He had His own reason, and our wisdom lies in simply seeing and accepting it. I will give it you in the words of the Spirit: Gal. 3:22: "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, *that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe*." But this suggests another question: why was it devised that the promise should come in that way? The Spirit's answer is: "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19). But again, we ask why? The final answer of the Spirit is, "That He may have *mercy* on all (Rom. 11:32); that no flesh should glory in His sight (1 Cor. 1:29); not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph. 2:9). This answer is symbolized on the chart by the lines proceeding from the sun toward the cross and the resurrection point, and by the concluding motto to the right. The Spirit and essence of the plan of God's redemption by Christ is that the praise and the glory may be to Him, and that no flesh should glory in His presence, in which we see at once the profoundest philosophy when we remember that God only exists inherently; that all things exist by His permission only; and that the highest delight of created beings is the recognition and adoration of the eternal prerogative of the Creator. In the proof I quote of these things, I use the words of the Father Himself. I give you the Father's own declaration of the Father's mind. I will read further testimony. Rom. 3:9: "What then, are we better than they? No, in no wise; for we

have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that *they are all under sin*" (9th verse). The reason of which you will find in the 1st chapter of 1 Cor. 1:29: "That no flesh should glory in His presence;" "Mine honour I will not give to another;" "Unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess" (Isa. 45:23). As Paul otherwise expresses it, the glory shining in the face of Jesus is the glory of the Father, not of mere man (2 Cor. 4:6).