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REPLY TO A CHRISTADELPHIAN.

MELBOURNE, December 21, 1905.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

Having had occasion several times of late to write to Christadelphian enquirers, I am sending herewith an extract from the latest, and copy of reply to it. If something on this subject could appear in ZION'S WATCH TOWER might prove interesting, and would at least save writing it in a letter.

With much love in the Lord,

Yours faithfully, in Him, E. C. HENNINGES.

WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY:

Dear Sirs: – We are exhorted to "try the spirits, whether they be of God," and this test I have carried out with your paper and its teaching, and have found it wanting in the necessary speaking according to the law and the testimony (Isaiah 8:20), so can only conclude that there is no light in it. You are right and scriptural in your contentions that man has not an immortal soul, and "the dead know not anything;" but contending that all will be raised, you teach a thing pleasing to the "flesh," no doubt, but not in accord with truth. [R3725 : page 55]

When quoting I Cor. 15:22, consider that altho we are all in Adam by descent, a way is prescribed whereby we may come into Christ, or put on Christ; hence all are not in Christ. Altho what Paul writes to Timothy about Christ dying for all is also true, the death will not benefit those who do not come into Christ in the way laid down. Can you in the light of your teaching explain the following, which show that, at any rate, some will not be raised,

thus upsetting your pleasant theory? – Isaiah 26:13,14; Jeremiah 51:39,57; Proverbs 21:16; Psalms 49:12,20. And Ephesians 4:17,18 shows that ignorance alienates from God.

The Bible is the source of all wisdom, and is the basis of all that is true, so I hope that you will carefully examine the above, and will be pleased to receive a reply, if you deem this worthy of one.

Yours sincerely, TASMANIA.

REPLY

Dear Sir: – We are very sorry that the explanations of the Word given in the columns of ZION'S WATCH TOWER have not appealed to you more strongly than they seem to have done. Yet we are glad that you have not condemned it without having looked at it at least a little. Possibly you would have found more to commend, had you looked further.

Experience shows that in teaching the raising of all (both just and unjust), we are not giving out something that is pleasing to the "flesh." The "flesh" prefers to believe that it has a soul that lives while the body is dead, which of course makes the resurrection unnecessary, so that this doctrine is no more acceptable now than it was in the days of the apostles, who preached Jesus and the resurrection.

So far as you have expressed yourself on I Cor. 15:22, we are quite in harmony, for we also believe that no one will be made alive, except he have come into Christ in the ways of faith and obedience appointed thereto. The difference between us in this connection would be more in that we understand the Scriptures to teach that all will have an opportunity to come into Christ, and that none will be destroyed in the Second Death without having had this opportunity, and that if some have died on account of

Adamic death before the "day" appointed in God's Plan for the bringing of the blessing to all the families of the earth by the Seed of Abraham (Christ and his joint-heirs), and without the enlightenment that God purposes to give to every man (John 1:9; I Tim. 2:4), such will be waked up out of their sleep, will be enlightened, and will be confronted with the responsibility of choosing either to obey the Great Prophet and live, or to disobey Him and perish; whereas your idea seems to be that those who have died in ignorance of the "Only Name," as most of our race have done, will never hear about him and his love for them, which would be contrary to the above Scriptures and many others, and would be a very great pity, as well.

If we understand your idea correctly, it would represent the Lord as having given a price sufficient to redeem the whole race, from Adam onward, yet getting an opportunity to bless only about one in a hundred of all those for whom he gave a sufficient price. (I John 2:2.) You would not be very well pleased with the result [**R3725 : page 56**] of a transaction which would return you 1 pound for every 100 pounds; is it any more reasonable to suppose that the Redeemer of the world should be satisfied with the opportunity to bless only one soul, when by the investment of his entire capital (Himself – I Tim. 2:6) he purchased with a price the right to bless a hundred? Would not such an outcome of the Great Transaction be a reflection on the Justice of the Almighty, to whom the price was paid? Could the first portion of Isaiah 53:11 in such a case be said to be accomplished?

We are quite prepared to believe that some now dead will never be raised, namely, those who have wilfully sinned against the sufficient enlightenment of the truth. (Heb. 6:4-6; 10:26-31.) And in so far as these conditions are met by those described in the references you cite from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Proverbs and Psalms, we are bound to believe that they belong to the class that will not be raised. But there were not many in Old Testament times (if

there was one) that could fulfil the conditions mentioned in Hebrews, and even since Pentecost the greater part of the world has been left in so much darkness that for them to have come under these conditions has been impossible. A certain amount of enlightenment is necessary, and this has been withheld from the world as a whole.

Verse 14 of Psalm 49 seems to show that it is necessary to seek some interpretation of verse 19 that will not cause the inspired writer to be saying that they shall never be brought back from the dead; for how could the upright have dominion over non-existent persons? Does not the Psalmist rather seem to be saying that those who persist in the foolish ways of the world shall be allowed to go on so, without being enlightened concerning a better way? They shall never see light before death overtakes them; but who can say that they will not see a very great light when the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning? You will see that this is harmonious with all the rest of the Psalm, and with other Scriptures already mentioned; and should it not be the aim of every Bible student so to interpret the Word that all the parts harmonize, and no plain statement need be ignored?

Proverbs 21:16 seems to express exactly the sentiment elaborated in Hebrews. Observe that this is telling about the man who wanders out of the way of understanding. It refers, therefore to one who has been enlightened; and whatever it may say about him, it teaches nothing concerning those who have never been in the way of understanding, which has been the condition of most of the race.

In Jeremiah 51:39,57, the word "perpetual" is translated from the Hebrew word "olam." Now, I doubt not that you have often explained to those not so far enlightened that this Hebrew word does not in itself mean "endless," and quite likely you have cited references supporting this assertion. Yet you insist on applying an

extreme definition of it in the case of these sleepers. Why do you do this?

The word "olam" seems rather to signify "lasting" or "enduring," and the length of the duration must be determined by the context, or by other Scriptures. That it comes short of meaning "endless," is readily seen by reference to the Scriptures, and it is instructive to place in parallel columns some texts which describe certain things as "olam," with other texts which tell of the doing away of the same.

"OLAM"

Exodus 29:9.

Here the Aaronic priesthood
is "olam."

Jeremiah 25:9.

Here the seventy years
of desolation are "olam."

Jeremiah 51:39,57.

The
"olam"
sleepers.

"OLAM" ENDED.

Hebrews 7:12.

Here the Aaronic priesthood
is supplanted by the
Melchisedec order.

Jeremiah 32:15.

Here the "olam" desolation
is ended.

Isaiah 25:7; Ezekiel 37:12-14
with **16:53,55,61-63; Jeremiah 48:47;**
49:6,39; Psalm 86:9;

Phil. 2:10; Acts 3:24.

"Olam" sleepers awake.

The "perpetual" sleep of the Babylonian desolators of Palestine has not been interrupted as yet, but it is to be, for "he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations." That is to say, "He will swallow up death in victory." They have slept long; but they shall be waked up in due time, and with the Assyrians, Egyptians and Israelites (Isaiah 19:24,25), with the Moabites, Ammonites and Elamites (Jeremiah 48:47; 49:6,39), with the Samaritans and with the Sodomites (Ezekiel 16:53,55) and all the *nations* whom God has made, shall come and worship (Psalm 86:9), and with all the *families* of the earth shall receive the blessing through the promised "Seed," which is the Christ. (Galatians 3:8,16,29.) Yea, at the name of Jesus every *individual* knee shall bow, whether it be on the earth or under the earth; and surely those under the earth will need to hear his voice and come forth, and will need instruction before they can acknowledge the Lord Jesus, and confess to the glory of God the Father that he is the Lord. Surely, there is nothing in Jeremiah 51:39,57 that conflicts with the grand testimony of all God's holy prophets, Jeremiah included, concerning the "Times of Restitution of All Things."

The "lords" in Isaiah 26:13,14 we understand to mean the various nations and systems that have oppressed Israel. Some of these are dead, and the remainder will die, and as institutions they shall not rise; but this in no way antagonizes the thought that the individuals shall be brought back from death. How else **[R3726 : page 56]** shall this passage be understood in harmony with the Scriptures above cited?

Without doubt, ignorance has alienated and does alienate (as we are told in Ephesians 4:17,18) men from the life of God; but when, under the Kingdom, the knowledge of the Lord shall cover

the earth, all will learn to know God, and many, we trust, will gladly obey him, and will no longer be alienated, but will become members of his family. Indeed, the same Apostle assures us that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, and shall then be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." – Romans 8:21.

We hope, dear sir, that you will look further into the publications recommended, and particularly that you will carefully and prayerfully study the volume entitled, "The Divine Plan of the Ages." It will be a pleasure to lend it to you, if considerations of the small price stand in your way.

Yours in the Redeemer's service,

E. C. HENNINGES.
