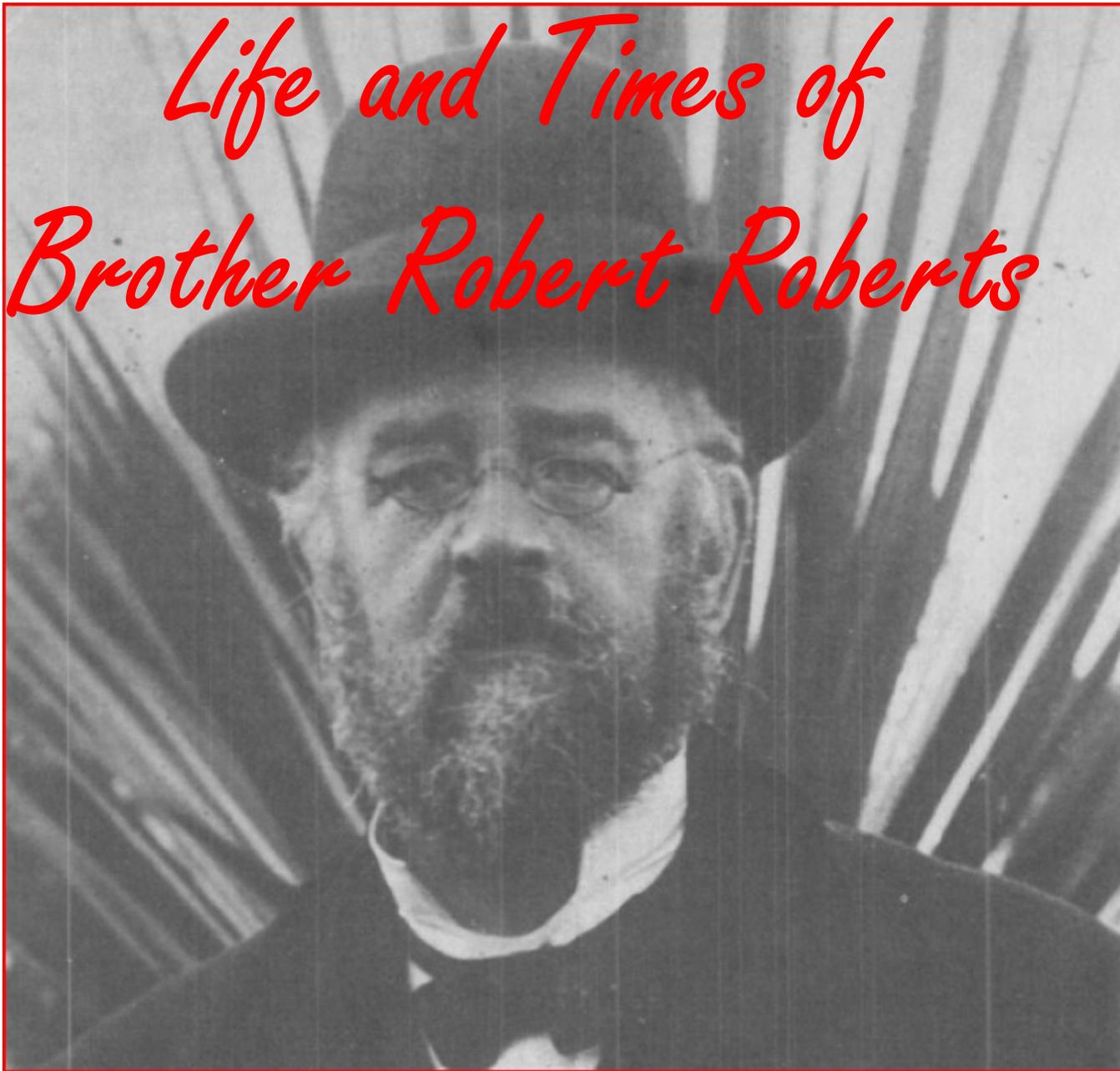


*Life and Times of
Brother Robert Roberts*



Personal Life

- Born – April 8, 1839 – Aberdeen, in the north of Scotland. Father was a sailor; mother was a devout religious member of the Baptist faith.
- 1858 – age of 19 – met his wife, Jane Norrie, and married her on his 20th birthday (1859)– Jane. She was 27 years old and has been described as a “serious minded and intellectual woman who was animated by the same hope “– a perfect companion to this young student of the Word.
- 1860 – (21 years old) - birth of first child – who died the following year.
- 1872 – (33 years old) - RR and his wife was again visited by that which claims all men – the death of loved ones - they lost two children in one month – one a four year old son and a two year old daughter.
- 1898 – (59 years old) - September 23 – Died in San Francisco, California

Death of A Pioneer

August, 1895 – August 1897 – Left England for an extensive tour and visit with the Brethren in Australia, New Zealand and America. While in Australia, he gave over 130 addresses. Returned in England in 1896 with a decision made to move permanently to Australia. He and his family returned to Australia in August, 1897. While in Australia, he felt the need to return to Britain sooner than he had first thought. He set his travel plans to make this return trip via the United States. He departed his family on August 29, 1898. As was his way in life, he continued his writings and discussions of the truth all of the way across the Pacific Ocean. It was at this time that he was wrapping up the contents of “The Law of Moses”. He arrived at San Francisco on September 21, 1898. He gave an address on the evening of September 22. The next morning, his journey in life ended. He was found dead in his hotel room. He was interned in a cemetery in Brooklyn, New York at the side of his elder brother and mentor in the faith – John Thomas. The last words of Islip Collyer’s bio gives us a true understanding of the lives and times of these two pioneers – **“Two stalwart brothers who had sacrificed all human interests on the altar of their faith lay side by side in the prison house of death. Through the blood of the Everlasting Covenant they had been made “prisoners of hope” awaiting the unerring judgment of the last day.”**

Epitaph

Here lies Robert
Roberts of Birmingham
England Editor of the
Christadelphian, Author
of Christendom Astray
and many other works
who for forty years in
the front ranks of the
Christadelphians aided
and continued the work
begun by Dr. Thomas
by whose side he now
sleeps in Jesus. Born
April 8th, 1839 Died
September 23rd, 1898



IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

- 1849 – age of 10 – first exposed to God's Truth – taken to hear an address by a visitor to Aberdeen – Dr. John Thomas, but slept through the lecture, per CSSS notes.
- 1850 – age of 11 – left school and went to work. Worked in a rope cellar catering to needs of ships; assistant in a grocery; then worked with a printer and a photographer. Attended night school for a while during this period of life. **Found a copy of "The Herald of the Kingdom" and was hooked by the logical reasoning of the author. He described his finding of the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come* by Dr. Thomas in the following way. "I expected the usual sort of religious reading - but lo!. I was startled. I was awakened. I was filled with new joy. The power of the article lay in its argument. I became a voracious, and even excited reader of it and the Bible."**
- 1852 – Age of 13 - Obtained a copy of *Elpis Israel* and became entranced with the teachings therein.

IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

- 1853 – age of 14 – baptized. Gave his first address on Psalm 95 per CSSS
- 1854/1855 – Age of 15-16 - created a daily reading plan which after several changes became the **Bible Companion Reading Plan** that many Christadelphians have used throughout the years.
- 1856 – age of 17 – Wrote his first document that was published in *The Herald of the Coming Kingdom*
- In late teens – he began to work as a journalist. Was described as an individual with a great command of the language, a good general knowledge and a specialized proficiency in shorthand. As a reporter, he travelled to various places and provide reports of local events. It was on one of these business trips, he gave his **first public lecture** – subject = *Daniel's Vision of the Four Empires and the Coming Kingdom of God*

IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

- At the age of 22, he gave twelve lectures at his local ecclesia. These were deemed to be so in tune with the Truth that was believed by those that heard it, that they were printed one at a time. These “Twelve Lectures” were later combined in one printing (1884) and the accumulation of these lectures was published under the title of **“Christendom Astray”**.
- 1862 – 23 years old - Brother Thomas made first visit to RR. At that time, “The Herald of the Kingdom” magazine was no longer in print. JT suggested to RR that the young man take on a regular publication. At the age of 25, RR began the publication of this monthly magazine under the name of **“The Ambassador”**. In 1870, RR changed the name of the magazine to **“The Christadelphian”**, at the suggestion of JT. In the first edition of “The Ambassador”, he took five pages to state the objective of his work and mission with the magazine. Within this mission statement, we find these words that should ring true with all faithful servants of all ages:

Mission Statement - “The Ambassador”

“We recognize an obligation from which no man can escape who puts himself under law to Christ, a duty which we cannot evade and be guiltless, a responsibility which we cannot shirk and be faithful; and what if some are timid? Weak in their convictions? doubtful about their duty? ‘To our own master we stand or fall’. Leaving the irresolute and undecided to settle the matter for themselves, we go to work. We cannot afford to waste time discussing such cold preliminaries. The time is too short and the ‘old man’ naturally too strong to be taking care lest we serve Christ and the truth too much. The bridegroom is at the door; the thunders of God’s overturning judgments are at the point of out-bursting and shall we pause to consider whether it is legal or not to say so? Away with such formalities, such luke-warmness, such spiritual bluntness and incapacity.”

End Quote – page 37 –Collyer’s biography

IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

- 1865 - he issued the first edition of the Christadelphian Hymn Book as the *Golden Harp*. "His aim was to combine liberty with order"
- In March, 1871 – RR heard of the death of his mentor, friend and elder brother in the Truth – JT. Bro. Thomas had appointed RR to look after his affairs in the case of death, in which he went to the US and completed.
- 1872-1873 – Had to deal with the **“Renunciation” heresy**. We will talk of this later in our presentation. He dealt with this issue with J. J. Andrew.
- 1873 – wrote **The Slain Lamb** and **Dr. Thomas: His Life and Works**

IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

- 1874 – per Islip Collyer – page 84 of the bio –
“Some of the magazine (The Christadelphian) readers resented the editorial decisions with their definite objective and repudiation of all things which tended to place obstacles in the chosen course. They would have preferred more open discussion with place found for all sides. RR stated that he would have nothing to do with such policy. In the magazine, he wrote these statements –

“What would be thought of a man attempting to steer a ship who was ignorant which way the course lay? And what would be the sensations of sensible passengers if the captain, in the neighborhood of sunken rocks, were to try one way and then give up the helm to another who was in favor of a different course on the plea of ‘fair play’ and giving a chance to both sides?”

IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

- 1879 – Published **“Seasons of Comfort”** – book contained 52 exhortations – one for every week of the year.
- 1880 – published **“Thirteen Lectures of the Apocalypse”**
- 1881 – published **“The Ways of Providence”** and began a series of articles in the magazine entitled **“The Visible Hand of God”** which was later published as a companion to the first book
- 1882 – prepared **“The Ecclesia Guide”**
- In 1884-85, another serious challenge to the one Truth arose among the Ecclesias. This time, the problem was the **“Partial Inspiration” theory**. We will talk about his in more detail later.
- 1885 – Published **“Further Seasons of Comfort”** – another volume of 52 addresses

IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

- 1885- Began a series of articles in the magazine entitled “Christ – His Life and Works 1800 Years Ago”. The substance of these serial articles was later published in 1890 in book form and entitled – **“Nazareth Revisited”**.
- 1885 – He published some **letters “to the elect of God in time of trouble”**. Islip Collyer remarked (page 118) that “these “letters” were considered by some to be height of his abilities. They revealed a great understanding of human struggles, such sublime confidence in the mercy of God and such power of expression to administer the needed comfort.”
- 1894 – **Resurrectional Responsibility debate** with Brother J. J. Andrew - We will talk about this in much more detail later in our presentation.
- 1896 – wrote **The Parables of Christ** and an **exposition on Daniel**
- 1896 – Included a series of articles in “The Christadelphian” on the **Law of Moses**, which was published in book form in 1898
- 1898 – Began to write **Ministry of Isaiah** which was later completed by C.C. Walker

Responses to Critics

There were always critics of the magazine, the articles that were published in the magazine and even of the editor himself. In 1881, he responded to some of the criticism of the day with these comments – “This periodical is conducted with specific objects. **It is not an organ of public opinion nor an open battle ground on the ‘not responsible for the opinion of contributors’ principle. It is an enterprise devoted exclusively to the promotion of apostolic faith in its entirety and purity. From this policy we shall not diverge a hair’s breadth however much we may desire to win the good opinion of friends or propitiate the wrath of foes.**”

This is good advice not only for his magazine or other magazines but also for Bible Schools and Ecclesias and even for our personal objectives.

Christadelphian Controversies

- **Renunciation Theory**
 - 1872 – 1873
 - Edward Turney and David Handley
- **Partial Inspiration**
 - 1884-1885
 - Robert Ashcroft
- **Resurrectional Responsibility to the Judgment Seat of Christ**
 - 1894
 - J. J. Andrew

Renunciation Controversy

1872 – 1873 – The Renunciation heresy came into the Body and had to be dealt with. There were two primary individuals responsible for promoting this false doctrine Edward Turney and David Handley. It is important for us to remember that during this controversy, brother Roberts worked with Brother J.J. Andrew to fight against this false doctrine.

Renunciationists – “renounced the belief that Adam’s nature became “sin” by his transgression. Renunciationists believed that Adam was created mortal and required the fruit of the tree of life to sustain himself. Having transgressed, he was merely barred from the fruit and mortality took its course. Since this concept has no change of nature because of Adam’s sin, there is therefore, of course, no need of sacrifice for that nature. Thus, all men, including Jesus are born as a new Adam; and only Jesus has not forfeited life via transgressions. (Christadelphians – The Untold Story)

This concept prompted the drafting of a statement of Faith to refute it, and a specific “Doctrine to be Rejected”, now number 4. –

“That Christ was born with a “free life”.

Renunciation Controversy

RR thought that withdrawal was necessary from those that believed this doctrine. The statement that he drafted was called The Birmingham Declaration and was dated Oct 14, 1873. The Declaration read: "I do not agree with the doctrine concerning Christ which has emanated from Nottinham, in the Tract entitled "Thirty-two Questions." On the contrary, I believe that Jesus, in the days of his flesh, was a manifestation of God, in the mortal nature of David, and therefore, inheriting, in his flesh, equally with ourselves, the mortal effects of descent of Adam, from which, by the Father's power, he was himself delivered by obedience, death, and resurrection, and is now the deliverer of all who truly come unto God by him. I hereby withdraw from all who do not believe this." This declaration was drafted by RR.

This declaration is thought to be the beginning verbiage of what was to later become article VI of the original 1873 Birmingham Statement of Faith.

This controversy caused the Birmingham Ecclesia to dissolve and then be "reconstituted". 142 Ecclesia members voted to dissolve the Ecclesia. Tickets were provided to those who did not believe this false doctrine. The ticket would allow one to participate in the Memorial service and those who did not have a ticket were only "allowed to be present in the gallery".

Renunciation Controversy

Page 95 – Collyer’s bio - RR wrote these comments in the spring of 1879 about the death of Edward Turney – “His last days have been made desolate by isolation. He was separated from the people who had adopted his views in Nottingham, severed from the magazine he had started, and estranged from his relatives in business. We lament his sorrowful end. **We bore him no ill will. There was much in him that we admired** ... All is now over for Edward Turney as it will shortly be with all of us apart from the appearing of Christ. There remains for him and for us all the judgment seat, which to him will seem to have come March 18, 1879. There were some who did not give up hope that sooner or later he would relent and return to his former fellowship and cooperation in the Gospel. But he has chosen to leave the adjudication to Christ. Well, this will shortly be manifest, and every son of God will rejoice in the Lord’s decisions whatever they may be. He is merciful as well as faithful, and if He please to forgive the mischief that has resulted from the acts of the erring brother now dead, **none will shout a louder amen than the editor of the Christadelphian, who can call to witness that he has stood aloof from Edward Turney and his doctrines from a sense of allegiance to the cause of God’s righteousness and from this alone.** The hallowed morn of Christ’s glorious day will chase away the multiplied sorrows of the dreadful night ... **Meanwhile we must be faithful to the trust imposed upon everyone who is privileged to know the glorious truth. The trust is a very comprehensive one involving many duties some of which are onerous, bitter to perform and hard to endure, but the issue is momentous, the prize of unutterable worth. Christ himself encourages us to steadfastness: “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”**

Partial Inspiration Controversy

RR wrote in the December, 1884 edition of his magazine these words – “An issue has been raised in a very unexpected manner as to whether the Scriptures are wholly or only partially inspired ... The circumstances are painful and the issue exciting, and both are such as the majority of us would have excluded from the category of possibilities ... However much we regret the situation we cannot get rid of it. It is to be feared that many will be hurt by it, it is certain that others will be purified and brought to a greater degree of confidence and consecration. But whatever the result there is only one course for faithful men and that is to maintain at the hazard of all consequences the absolutely divine authorship of the Bible throughout.” These are wise words that we could use as counsel for any false doctrine that is tried to be introduced into the One Body.

In response to the "Inspiration Question", he wrote “Is the Bible the Word of Inspiration?” Brother Roberts wrote these words in regard to the overall issues of this false doctrine – “Speaking for myself, **I shall refuse to remain associated with any assembly that tolerates the doctrine that any part of the Bible is not inspired**”.

(Our pioneers recognized the principle of the sin of toleration as taught to us in the epistle of John – II John 9 – 10.)

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate - 1894

Subject of the Debate

“That resurrection to the judgment seat of Christ will comprise some who have not been justified by the blood of Christ.”

That proposition brother Roberts will affirm, and brother Andrew will deny.

Importance of Subject Matter - JJA

At first sight this subject may seem to be an unimportant one, that is the question as to whether any outside Christ shall be raised from the dead. But a closer examination leads to a different conclusion. **It affects not only the question of unbaptized rejectors of the Word but the position of baptized believers, first as to the change which takes place when they enter on their probation, and second as to the relationship that they occupy to Christ during probation.** That is to say, previous to probation are they under God's wrath (disfavor – per definition in opening comments) for what they have done and for what they have inherited? If they are, then the baptism takes away the wrath in both cases. If they are only under God's wrath for what they have done, then there is no need for the taking away wrath for anything else; in fact, there is no wrath to take away, in regard to what they are by inheritance or nature. Apparently, that is the distinction which this question has brought to the front as to the respective beliefs of different brethren. **According to the teaching of the scriptures the wrath (disfavor) of God rests upon men by their birth, as well as subsequently by their evil deeds. By their birth they are under condemnation to death. At baptism, the wrath is taken away, and consequently the condemnation in a legal sense, in regard to both aspects of sin, is also taken away. They then stand in Christ completely clothed with His righteousness, no longer tainted legally with that which they had previously, whether sin committed or sin inherited.**

Importance of Subject Matter - JJA

According to the opposite view there is at baptism only a taking away of the wrath of God for the evil deeds committed, and then there is to be a course of well-doing in order to nullify the sin nature which has been inherited. That involves this unscriptural position, that probationary well-doing can counteract or nullify the sin nature. It cannot do anything of the kind. Probationary well-doing is to obtain eternal life, and to avoid condemnation in the future. It cannot take away condemnation in reference to the past; to say that it does is to say in effect that good deeds can nullify bad ones: this the Scriptures do not teach, apart from blood-shedding. **There must be blood-shedding in order that condemnation arising from sin may be taken away,**

Importance of Subject Matter - JJA

The principles which determine this question are, **1st: That the death arising out of Adam's offence is, in the absence of justification, without end;** and **2nd: That resurrection is through Christ on the basis of justification from sin.** Man brought death through disobedience; man brought resurrection through obedience, including blood-shedding. Therefore, resurrection is on the basis of that which was effected by Him. Inasmuch as Christ was at birth in the same position as His brethren, and as He was raised from the dead through the redemptive work He effected, so are they, and thus resurrection does not comprise those who do not come within the scope of that redemptive work. The **third** principle is that **the judgment seat is for the purpose of making known whether those who have been candidates for eternal life are deserving of that life or of a judicial death.** **In regard to those outside Christ there is no such thing as determining whether they are worthy of either the one or the other, and therefore there is no fitness in bringing them before a tribunal specially so provided. To bring them to that tribunal is to transform the judge, in relation to them, into a mere executioner, and that is not the object of the judgment seat.** They can give no account at that judgment, and there is no necessity for them to be asked a word, or to utter a word. If they are brought there, their very presence will be evidence as to what they are about to undergo, whereas in regard to the members of Christ's household it will not be known what is their individual destiny until they have rendered their account, and Christ, as the judge, has pronounced the verdict in relation to that account.

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894
Opening Remarks – Brother Roberts

It seems to me an unnatural association of ideas to make the infliction of condemnation depend upon the attainment of reconciliation (which is the central idea of justification by the blood of Christ).

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Opening Remarks – Brother Roberts

If, on the other hand, the question is asked, **What** in the Scriptures **is** the formulated — the specifically alleged — **ground of condemnation ? the answer is invariable : " Light "** (Jno. iii. 19); "the word spoken" (Jno. xv. 22) ; "Knowledge " (Jas. iv. 18),; " to whom much is given " (Luke xii. 4.7). **The reason of condemnation is always alleged to be disobedience.** It is "Because

I have called, and ye have refused. I have stretched out my hand and no man regard * * * Ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof" (Prov. 1. 24 25). Or, as Paul expressed it, "To them that are contentious and do not obey the truth (implying it has been presented to them), but obey unrighteousness (there shall be) indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of both Jew first and also of the Gentile * * * in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ " (Rom. ii. 9, 10, 16).

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Opening Remarks – Brother Andrew

"To be perfected physically in the spirit" (eternal life- bh) is, according to brother Roberts, "justified from Adamic sin"; not so, however, according to Apostolic teaching. This event is more correctly defined to be the consummation of a previous justification; failure to realize it can only result from "sowing to the flesh" (Gal. vi. 8), not from possession of the flesh. Therefore "the flesh" must have been the subject of a justification when probation commenced.

Believers who are "baptized into his death" (ver. 3) necessarily partake of that justification, but with this difference—that their probation is only beginning, whereas his was at an end ; and they then receive forgiveness of individual transgressions, of which he was quite free. **The two-fold aspect of their justification** at this time is very concisely explained Col. ii. 13 : "You, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." The phrase "uncircumcision of your flesh" is synonymous with "sin in the flesh" before justification.

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Opening Remarks – Brother Andrew

The fact that the physical consequences of Adam's "offence" are not removed at baptism is no evidence that Adamic sin is not then the subject of justification; **... It is, therefore, erroneous for brother Roberts to confine justification from Adamic sin to the change from mortality to immortality; this must be preceded by a legal justification, as he himself recognized in 1878.**

Nothing I have said invalidates God's prerogative to change His laws. I fully recognize that God has given laws and taken them away; He has a perfect right to do so, unless His promises preclude it.

God has laid it down for the present dispensation that baptism is essential for justification; therefore He is precluded by His own faithfulness from justifying any without baptism as long as that law is in operation.

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Brother Andrew Questions to Brother Roberts

77.—Have you always held your present contention that enemies of Christ, or those outside Christ, will appear at the judgment seat?—Always.

111. – **Is “sin in the flesh” the subject of justification through the blood of Christ? - It will be ultimately.**

112. – Is it not now? – No; we have it with us now.

118. – Are we not alienated from God before we commit a single wicked work? – Not in the same sense.

124. -**Were they (humans who died before they committed a single act) not in a state of alienation from God at birth? – Alienation is only applicable to those who are capable of reconciliation.**

125. – Is it not applicable to any who are unable to do right or wrong? – No, it is a moral relation – not affirmable of an unconscious babe.

129.—**Are we not justified from " sin in the flesh“ at the same time as from wicked deeds?—That is your way of putting it. I put the facts : that God forgives our sins when we are baptized, and takes away sin in the flesh when we are changed.**

148.—For what was Christ condemned on the cross? —For the sins of the world.

149,—**Was He not condemned for sin in His own flesh ?—He was part of the sin stock, and stood there as the representative of the whole race, that all might afterwards come to God through Him in being crucified with Him.**

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Brother Andrew Questions to Brother Roberts

241 – **Is not “sin in the flesh” the subject of justification at baptism? – No, it will be at the resurrection.**

284. – Did Christ require to die of Himself? – In view of the work He came to do, Yes, but if there had been Himself only, no.

285. – He would not have had to die for himself?– I have answered the question. He came as the representative of our condemned race to lay a foundation for our salvation, and for that reason it was needful He should take our nature and stand as our representative, and die as one of us, and we die with Him in being baptized.

290. – But did He (Christ) not fulfill the Aaronic type of offering for Himself and then for the sins of the people? – No doubt.

291. – What was it in relation to Himself for which He had to shed His blood? – He stood there as bearing the sins of His whole brethren.

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Brother Roberts Questions to Brother Andrew

304.—Is not that the cause of punishment at the judgment seat, knowing the will of God, and refusing to do it ?—Yes, for those who are under probation.

306.—I only wish to see the basis clearly defined to know whether the reason of punishment is not refusal to do the will of God when you know it ?—Yes, for those who are under probation.

307.—Were the Gentiles under probation?—Not those who did not enter Christ, certainly.

308.—Did He punish them ?—Yes, in this life.

309.—Then He punishes them without probation ?— I have already admitted that.

310.—Why does He do so ?—Because of their wickedness.

311.—Why is wickedness the reason for punishing them ?—Because God is righteous.

312.—Why does His righteousness call for their punishment ?—It answers itself.

313.—Because they deserve it ?—Oh, yes.

314. —Very well, we are discussing the ground of resurrectional punishment.

Why do you object to the application of that principle to resurrectional punishment, that men who know God's will and refuse to do it, will be brought up then?—I do not object to it in relation to those in Christ.

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Brother Roberts Questions to Brother Andrew

315.—I am not speaking of those in Christ, but those who know the will of God, and refuse to do it? —They will not be raised.

316.—Do not they deserve it?—They deserve whatever punishment God will give them.

317.—Do not they deserve resurrectional punishment?—It is for God to say whether they do.

326.—My question relates to those who rise. Will not the judgment be for those who receive and those who reject His words?—Yes, understanding that they are probationary.

327.—Can a man be probationary who rejects Christ altogether?—Certainly, there were certain in Peter's day who denied the Lord that bought them.

328.—Did Christ refer to them when he said " 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 at the last day?" —He referred to Jews living in his days.

329.—Did he refer to those who once recognized him? —Those who recognized Moses and the prophets, but rejected the Messiah.

330.—**That is not my question. My question is, will not those who reject Christ altogether be present at his judgment seat to be condemned by Him?—Yes, Jews and Gentiles under probation.**

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894
Brother Roberts Questions to Brother Andrew

331.—**Can a man who rejects Christ be under probation?—**
Certainly he can.

332.—Give me a case,—The Jews in Christ's day. Many of them looked forward to Christ appearing, accepted the baptism of John, but when Christ came they were disappointed and rejected Him. That did not invalidate the justification which they already had from previous sins.

333. – By John's baptism do you mean? – Yes, and by the sacrifices offered up under the Mosaic law. That brought upon them a special condemnation for rejecting Christ.

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Brother Andrew Questions to Brother Roberts

401.—Did He not require to shed His blood to cleanse Himself from His own sin nature, and has not God made that the basis by which those in Him may be justified from the sin of that nature, and have forgiveness of sins ?—I prefer the scripture description of what was done by the death of Christ. The scriptures never use the word cleanse in that sense.

402.— Never use the word cleanse in regard to physical sin ?—Not in that connection.

403.—Did not the inanimate things of the Mosaic tabernacle require to be cleansed, justified, or atoned for by bloodshedding ?—Yes, as a shadow, doubtless.

404.—Was there any moral guilt attaching to them ? —You do not require me to answer that, of course?

405.—Then it was for imputed guilt?—It was a ritual prophecy.

406 — **Does it not teach that the sin nature, which in the first instance has no moral guilt, requires bloodshedding in order that it may be cleansed or Justified? - Bloodshedding is never spoken of except in connection with actual sin.**

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 bloodshedding?—Our nature does require cleansing, it will be cleansed at the resurrection, and that will be because of Christ's obedience unto death.**

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Brother Andrew Questions to Brother Roberts

682.—Is a man, when baptized, legally freed from Adamic condemnation?—What do you mean by "legally freed?"

683.—I mean that the wrath of God or condemnation pertaining to him as the result of his being descended from Adam is taken away.—It is commenced to be taken away, but nothing more. It all depends; it is a process.

685.—Yes, but have you never taught that Adamic condemnation is legally taken away at baptism?—I am not aware that I have.

686.—**Do you recognize this from the Christadelphian of 1878? : "Legally a man is freed from Adamic condemnation at the time he obeys the truth and receives the remission of sins, but actually its physical effects remain until this mortal (that is this Adamic condemned nature) is**

swallowed up in the life that Christ will bestow upon his brethren at His coming. Those whom Christ at that time does not approve are delivered up to death again because of their sins and not because of Adam, **Although reconciled in Christ, we remain under the physical effect of Adam's sentence till we are changed in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump "** (page 225). —I fully endorse that.

687.—Then a man at baptism is legally freed from Adamic condemnation, and receives, as an additional thing, the remission of his own individual sins, Is that so or not?—You see how nicely you can put a question when you see the point. I mean to say I fully endorse that statement. **The word "legally" is a little hazy. I am not quite sure whether I did not borrow that from you, brother Andrew.**

Resurrectional Responsibility Debate – 1894

Brother Andrew Questions to Brother Roberts

725. – Do you not think it inappropriate for those outside Christ, rejectors of the word, to be brought before the judgment seat with members of His house hold? – It is not I who am responsible for that inappropriateness. With the servants came the rebels; “Those mine enemies who would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me.”

726. – Have you never thought it was inappropriate? – I have no recollection of having done so.

727. – **Do you recollect this in Christendom Astray (1884), “Rejectors of the word, who do not come under the law to Christ by belief and obedience may be reserved till the close of the thousand years. It does not seem reasonable that those who put away the counsel of God from themselves should**

be passed over without judgment, and yet, since they do not become constituents of the household of faith, their resurrection at the time when account is taken of that household would seem inappropriate. May they not be dealt with at the end? (p.108).
- Ah, that is a mere question as to when they will be dealt with.

730. – You would not write that now? – It is probable I would not. It is an immaterial point altogether. It is the fact of the resurrection of the disobedient that we want.

What can we conclude from studying the debate?

Erroneous doctrines put forth by Brother Roberts

- Adamic Condemnation not removed until we receive immortality
- Baptism is for personal sins only
- Light is basis for resurrectional condemnation
- Those who reject the Word and are not in covenant will be raised for resurrectional judgment
- Humans are not alienated from God at birth
- Christ only had to die because He was our sin bearer, not because of His sin nature.

Post Debate Comments

The chair man of the debate made these comments – “The present writer (Brother G. F. Lake) was chairman at that debate, and followed it very closely. **In the excitement of the debate and under the stress and pressure of very subtle and acute questioning, Brother Roberts was led into making statements which were at variance with his former writings. After the second night I made kind and brotherly remonstrance with him upon the matter. He admitted the mistake and undertook to correct it – which was done when he wrote, immediately afterwards, ‘The Blood of Christ’ (1895) and ‘The Law of Moses’ (a series in the Christadelphian, 1896 and in book form in 1898)”. End quote.**

In 1954, P.O. Barnard of Australia, made these comments in his “Open Letter” dated July 7, 1954.

“Having over the years carefully studied the history and (from both sides) the substance of the ‘Responsibility’ controversy, **I came to the conclusion long ago that able brethren – including Brother Roberts – were momentarily put ‘off balance’ by Brother Andrew’s line of argument in which he skillfully represented his denial of the accountability of enlightened rejectors to the judgment seat of Christ as the logical outcome of the fundamental doctrines regarding sin and sacrifice** – doctrines that he and Brother Roberts had staunchly defended in 1873 when Brother Edward Turney ‘renounced’ them in favour of the ‘free life’ theory now taught by ‘Nazarenes’”

Post Debate Comments

RR makes these statements in the “Law of Moses” – “The position of men was that they were under condemnation to die because of sin, and that not their own sin, in the first instance, but ancestral sin at the beginning. The forgiveness of personal offenses is the prominent feature of the apostolic proclamation, because personal offenses are the greatest barrier. Nevertheless, men are mortal because of sin, quite independently of their own transgressions.”

Two Statements of Faith

Unamended Statement

XXV. - That at the appearing of Christ prior to the establishment of the Kingdom, **the responsible (faithful and unfaithful)**, dead and living of both classes will be summoned before his judgment seat "to be judged according to their works;" "and receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad."

Amended Statement

XXIV.—That at the appearing of Christ prior to the establishment of the kingdom, **the responsible (namely, those who know the revealed will of God, and have been called upon to submit to it)**, dead and living — **obedient and disobedient** will be summoned before his judgment-seat "to be judged according to their "works"; and "receive in body according to what they have done, whether it be good or bad".

Brother JJA's Comments upon the Death of Brother Roberts

“It was in the spring of 1866, four or five months after our immersion, that we made the personal acquaintance of Bro. Roberts. The friendship then commenced continued for about 28 years, and during this period we had a high appreciation of his zeal, energy, and self sacrifice in the advocacy of Bible truths. We did not, it is true, always approve of his methods, but, believing him to be sound in the main; we were disposed to view such conduct leniently. This friendship would doubtless have continued to the end of his life if he had not, some four or five years ago, to support resurrection out of Christ, adopted a view of Christ's sacrifice which he (and we) once vigorously opposed. No one was more astounded, and grieved, at the course he then took than we were. **It was with indescribable sorrow that we were compelled to antagonize him. Nothing but fidelity to Christ would have led us to take such a course. It is some satisfaction to know that subsequently he returned to his earlier attitude on this point.** We much regret, however, that he did not live to recognize Bible teaching of condemnation in Adam and justification in Christ. One lesson which we may all learn from his sudden death is that none of us know how near we are to the end of our probation, and in effect, to the Judgment seat. Therefore, let us so live as to be ready at any time for our record to be closed.” The Sanctuary Keeper, December, 1898 page 62.