

Dunkirk, N.Y.
May 2, 1928.

Mr. Chas. A. W. Herrmann
468 Broome Street
New York City

Dear Bro. in Christ:

It is not for any lack of interest in the matter that your letter bearing date Nov. 29th, 1927 and addressed to the saints gathered to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ at #124 E. 27th St., New York City has not been answered by me before.

Throughout the two years that are past since Mr. Frank Allaben's letter of June 5th, 1925 fell into my hands, I have had continual distress of heart because of things taught in that letter.

Up to the time that I heard that he had passed on to be with the Lord, I did not cease to cry to the Lord that he might see that some statements made in that letter were without Scripture foundation, and dishonoring to our Lord.

When you wrote me that you were preparing a letter bearing on the subject I could but hope--for the wish was father to the thought--that you might somehow be led to clear yourself and the New York assembly of complicity in a doctrine that I could not receive, because not a line of Scripture had been presented to me to substantiate it.

You certainly should be able to imagine something of my disappointment and sorrow when upon reading your letter I found it to be an apology for the use of a word by Bro. Allaben which you prefer not to use.

This is what you say p.2 par. 9 of your letter. "For myself I prefer not to use the word 'creature' realizing that I might either unwittingly or unconsciously slight the wondrous preeminence due our Lord & C".

Brother, if you prefer not to use the word "creature" how is it that you and the New York assembly make bold to send out this letter offering an apology for Mr. Allaben in his use of the word creature?

You may remember that on May 23rd, 1927 when I met some of the New York assembly in their hall, that it was said to me by one of your number: "We do not ask you to call Christ a creature". At the moment I did not see the answer to that statement. It is this: "You have already said it for me, for what you teach I am responsible for".

It was on that principal that I withdrew from the Methodists in Feb. 1893. To remain connected with them was to be responsible for the doctrines they taught.

Thus the whole matter turns upon one point: Do Mr. Allaben's letters of April/June 1925 contain error as to the person of Christ, or are they expressed in the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth?

You have told us what you think on this point--and as your letter is sent out under the approval of the New York assembly they have told us what they think of the Frank Allaben letters; for on p.2 par. 4 you say: "But for such contradictions, Bro. Allaben without doubt would have confined himself to the Scripture words, 'The Word became flesh' except however that this to Mr. A.W. Sr. did not mean the same as to you and me, for he had an impersonal manhood

before him."

Mr. Allaben then told us things about Christ that he had not learned from God's Book. And do you think that he was wise in doing this? It appears to me that you do on p. 2 par. 6: "But as previously intimated Bro. Allaben saw himself forced to use the word 'Creature' as that term could not be circumvented in the way the term 'flesh' on 'man' or 'manhood' had been done by Mr. A.W. Sr. Psa. 119:96 says: "I have seen an end of all perfection: thy commandment is exceeding broad", but you are telling us that Mr. Allaben's word is broader than God's word, for when Mr. A.W. Sr. had circumvented the Scripture word "flesh" and "man" he could not circumvent Mr. Allaben's word "creature".

Brother read your own letter again and see if you really do mean what you have said I cannot think it of you.

You may recall the fact that in the early months of last year I wrote you from Porto Rico something like this: "The doctrine that Christ is a creature gives us a point of contact with the Unitarians, and unless it is judged we shall have no ground to stand on".

You challenged me to show in any of Mr. Allaben's letters where he said that Christ is a creature. To this I replied: "When Mr. Allaben says, 'Christ became a creature, a man' I understand the words to mean that he became a man and is a man--that he became a creature and is a creature."

As you did not reply to this I was left in the dark as to the distinction you made and desiring light made application to some whom I met for aid along this line. Finding none who can illuminate me here I must turn back to you for instruction.

Will you not kindly enlarge on your p.1 par. 13 and explain. If as you say Bro. Allaben's chief contention was that the Creator became a creature (it seems a humiliating confession to make that his chief contention was for a word he did not find in Scripture--as applying to Christ) does that not mean that at the moment of His becoming a creature He was a creature? How then can it be wrong--an injustice to Mr. Allaben--to say that his letters teach that Christ is a creature unless we are prepared to say that he is not the same yesterday, today and forever.

On p.2 par. 1-3 you give us first a quotation from J.N.D. Collected Writings Vol. 10 p. 521 then from John 1:14 Luke 2:7 Psa. 22:9-10 Matt. 27:50 Luke 23:46 various quotations.

As your letter seems to be a defense of Mr. Allaben's: "The Creator became a creature "I presume that these quotations are brought forward as props to that expression.

If you did not mean them to do duty as props, kindly tell us just what it was you did mean to teach by them. If you did mean them as props, are you really contented with the work they are doing? For not one of these six quotations says that the Creator became a creature.

But there is another point that I must call your attention to.

In Bro. Allaben's contention against the deceitfulness of the language of Mr. A.W. Sr. (p. 1 par. 4) "bro. Allaben saw himself forced to use the word 'creature' as that term could not be circumvented in the way the term 'flesh' or 'man'.....had been done by Mr. A.W. Sr."

In the conflict against error it would seem that the sword of the spirit had failed our Bro. Allaben and he therefore saw himself forced to forgo a

weapon on his own anvil which should be invincible and irresistible--one infinite in its power and extent, for it could not be circumvented."

Am I falsifying your words dear Bro. Herrmann, in this or only giving the faithful wounds of a friend?

Brother would you and the New York assembly count it a joy to have me as a resident of the City meeting with you three or four times a week and speaking to your face such words as I am now writing to you? Would you take pleasure in my company or should I be a thorn in your side as I contended for no departure from Scripture not even by the wisest among us?

I must tell you frankly, dear Bro., that your letter seems to me to be contrary to those words in Ezek. 45:10 "Ye shall have just balances, and a just ephah, and a just bath."

You have condemned Mr. James Boyd because of what he wrote. You have framed excuses for Mr. Allaben though he wrote as you have told us what he did not find in Scripture. Is this weighing with an even balance?

Let no one misunderstand my position. I take sides with no party nor school of doctrine. Mr. James Boyd has not convinced me that his "Incarnation of the Son" is the doctrine of Christ. I therefore reject it, and he of necessity must go with his teaching so long as he clings to that teaching.

You and the New York assembly with you have confessed in this letter dated Nov. 29, 1927 that Mr. Allaben forged his own weapon in his contention with Mr. A.W. Sr. How can you say then that he was abiding in the doctrine of Christ?

My contention is not with men, but with our enemy who deceives even us--the people of God--into error, and thus seeks to rob souls, not alone those who believe and teach the error, but also those who are confused and beclouded by the influence of such teaching.

Do you remember, Bro. Herrmann, that when I was with you in New York on May 23, 1927 and was reading to you Col. I:15 that you tried to stop me when I came to the end of that verse? I do distinctly. Have you forgotten that I insisted on reading verses 16 and 17? If you have not forgotten that verses 16 and 17 follow verse 15 in Col. I why did you not refer to them also on p.2 par 9?

Do you not think that the Spirit of God has put them there to guard us from the very error I am contending against, and the very error that you prefer not be guilty of--that of applying the term "creature" to Him "who", even as born of Israel's race," is over all, God blessed forever?

Brother, you who speak French, will know the meaning of "chief" in I Chron. 26:10. But let me beg you to look it up in your Heb. concordance and also in the J.N.D. German translation and convince yourself that Christ is the chief or head of every creature, because all things came into being by Him--not because He ever came into being. There is a verse which some who defend Mr. Allaben in his teaching that the Creator became a creature have used in support of that expression, and because your allusion to Bro. Wm. Huss' letter of instruction to me led me to think that you hold the same interpretation, I refer to it now.

The verse is "But I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men and despised of the people". (Psa. 22:6). Now those who use this verse in defense of Mr. Allaben in this controversy of April/June 1925 with Mr. A.W. Sr. are not

Mr. Allaben's supporters but the opposite to that.

For if you argue that Christ is a creature because he says: "I am a worm and no man" and a worm certainly is a creature; then to be honest in that system of expounding Scripture, you must confess that He acknowledges in plain words that He is "no man".

Surely a death-blow to all Mr. Allaben's arguments.

But, dear Brother, if we only take the pains to read with care the whole verse, and understand its first two statements in the light of, and in connection with, the last two statements, we shall, I judge have no difficulty in seeing that what our blessed Lord is telling us (prophetically) is that men in general took Him to be a thing of naught, and those who had the scriptures of truth in their hands, refused to Him the place of preeminence that those very Scriptures gave to Him.

How sad for any of us to be found wrenching those few words: "I am a worm" from their setting and giving to them a meaning just the opposite to what all Scripture teaches and the opposite to what you and I believe!

Since some who teach that Christ is a creature, use Col I.15 as well as Rev. 3:14 as evidence in their favor, I wish to say as to that latter passage that Webster's Dictionary (1913 Ed.) defines "beginning" (2nd definition) as "That which begins or originates something; the first cause; origin; source. Then quotes; "I am.....the beginning and the end Rev. 1:8" and although J.N.D. omits the word "beginning in Rev. 1:8 yet I believe you will find that the Greek lexicons give the same sense to the original in Rev. 3:14, as sighted above, from Webster. Now if we go back to John 1:3 we shall see the same thought confirmed. "He was in the beginning with God. All things received being through him, and without him not one (thing) received being which has received being (J.N.D. transl.)

Webster defines creature as "anything not self-existent" 2. A human being in pity, contempt or endearment etc."

Since these are some of the meanings that English-speaking people will attach to the word I refuse to use it of our Lord--as I have refused for these past 35 years--and neither will I consent to others using the word as applying to my Saviour--God.

Some years ago, I met an agent who was selling C.T. Russell's books. In the course of the conversation, upon getting from him the confession that he believed that Christ was a creature I said: "Do you worship Jesus?" "Yes", he replied. "Then", I said, "you are a heathen and not a Christian for that is what all the heathen do according to Rom. 1 (ver. 25) "worship the creature."

Now Bro. Herrmann, was that sound reasoning on my part or did I take an unscriptural position in what I said to that man?

This leads me to another point. On p.2 par. 8 you say. "On the other hand as to the word 'creature' we must bear in mind that in the doctrinal history of the church this word has a bad repute. For Arians, Socinians, and others, have dishonored our Holy Lord through the doctrine that the Son was personally inferior to the Father etc."

Many of us know but little of Arius and Socinus but some of us have encountered Russellites, Mormans and Seventh Day Adventists. And when I found

it necessary to withstand their evil doctrine as to the person of Christ I always considered my position established when I had brought forward Scriptures to show that Christ is the eternal God; since a creature is a person or thing which has been called into being by another, and Jesus is the self-existent eternal "I am".

Do you think that I occupied untenable ground by taking such position?

Webster tells me that Arius "held Christ to be inferior to God the Father in nature and dignity, though the first and noblest of all created beings."

I can understand how a man who does not know our Lord might give place to such a doctrine, but how those who believe that "all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father", how those who hold that "what things soever he (the Father) doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise", how those who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit who came down to be the witness that the Man who died on Calvary's cross between two thieves is now seated upon the throne of God; I say how those can apply the term creature to him--the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity--is past me to explain, unless by some course of reasoning unknown to me they can persuade themselves that Creator and creature are equivalent terms. I Cor. 13 is my warrant for believing that you and those who stand with you mean better than you say, but this does not allow me with good conscience to consent to teaching for which I find no Scripture foundation.

I know of no better way to prove my love to you than to withstand you to the face if I believe you to be in a road that is leading you to Christ's dishonor and your damage.

Do not spare me, dear brother, if my arguments are unsound. "Let the righteous smite me, a kindness" (psa. 141:5) I hold you to be a righteous man one who wants nothing but the truth.

I expect to continue loving you whatever our conflicts may be, as I honor the memory and value the services of our beloved brother Frank Allaben--gone before.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) R. H. Hall.