

Questions and Answers.

QUES. If Christ laid down his natural life, to redeem the natural life of man I can see how Christ's death might benefit the world who are to be brought back in the natural or flesh-life, but how in that case could his death be any benefit to the Christian who is to be raised a spiritual body?

ANS. As we are counted dead in Adam before we actually die so are we counted alive again in Christ, before it is actually brought about. The object of counting the church redeemed now is that they may be on trial for eternal life, which they could not be if they were still counted dead.

The plan of God is to redeem from death first and bring to the knowledge of the truth afterward as has often been shown. That is the rule, but with the church there is an exception. As they get the knowledge before the time, for special reasons – that they may be developed as the Bride to assist the Husband in the future work – so they are dealt with as if they had already been redeemed. An unredeemed man has nothing to give to, or use for the Lord. All was lost in Adam. But the Christian is always counted free from the claims of the Law and the Devil, in the word, hence he is expected to live for and use ALL for the Lord. "Ye are bought (redeemed, ransomed) with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are his." We quote on this point a short extract from a letter of one who appreciates the value of Christ's death even to the Christian.

"If a man wished to bestow a title of honor and an inheritance on a slave, would he not first make him free? How could a single soul be converted if not first counted alive in God's sight? 'Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light.' Our

freedom, so that we may choose eternal life, is based on the death of Christ." Rom. 5:10.

Christ is both our ransom to redeem us, and our example of voluntary obedience. He consented to the crucifixion. "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him" &c. Phil. 2:9, and if we by the same Spirit, "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts" we like him will be raised [R51 : page 7] a spiritual body. In the successful life – "faithful unto death" the object of redemption is attained. The world being raised in flesh will then have the flesh to crucify. Christian, you are now enjoying the benefits of Christ's death, you are also made partaker of the Divine Nature by the Spirit. "Therefore ye are debtors, not to, the flesh, for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." When the work begun in you is perfected, then "mortality will be swallowed up in life."

QUES. Do you believe Christ came in the character of a Bridegroom at the beginning of both the Jewish and Gospel harvests?

ANS. I do. I understand that he came in that character at the beginning of the Jewish harvest as a part of the pattern, and at the beginning of the gospel harvest as a parallel. John 3:29, is a clear statement of the fact in relation to the first. The second depends on a number of evidences drawn from the prophetic periods and the parallelism of the Two Dispensations including the application of the parable of the "Ten Virgins."

To deny that he came as Bridegroom at the beginning of the Gospel Harvest in 1874, is to ignore the proper parallelism between the thirty years of tarrying at each Advent. He is revealed as both Bridegroom and Reaper in both harvests. The first is the type – the second the antitype. He did not come at the first to be espoused to the gospel church and go away. His espousal to the gospel church did not take place until the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost,

(the antitype of Eleazar, meeting Rebecca at the well where she received the bracelets and earrings – the "Earnest") and all know that this was after Christ had gone away. His ministry in the flesh was not to the sons but to the servants – the Jewish church. "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Hence his command: "Go not in the way of the Gentiles," &c. It is true the natural seed in some sense belonged to God, but when Christ became a Son, God became a Father, and the Son represented his Father, hence "He that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me." Christ's work in the flesh was to finish the work of God, with the typical seed.

His coming as Bridegroom like all other features was a part of the pattern. Christ as his Father's representative could say: "All mine are thine, and thine are mine and I am glorified in them." Jno. 17:10. This was of the disciples.

Though the natural seed belonged to God, yet of Christ it is said: "He came to his own and his own received him not." He came as Bridegroom and was rejected. They were bidden but were found unworthy, hence the turning to the Gentiles – "the highways and hedges." And those murderers he destroyed and burned up their city. See Matt. 22:1-14. We hope all will continue to search carefully and prayerfully until they find the true relation between the work of the Father and the Son. Truth is what we want.

QUES. Why do you not admit the distinction made by the Savior between the work of the Father and the Son? Jno. 5:21,22.

ANS. We do admit the distinction if we understand what it is. We have failed to express our thoughts correctly to any who suppose we make no distinction. We will try again. The coming of Jesus in the flesh, we regard as the dividing line between the two works referred to by the Saviour. "My Father worketh HITHERTO (i.e. before I came) and (now that I have come) I work." V. 17. There is a sense in which all things were made by Him, as the Pre-existent One, but we

do not find any scripture which speaks of Christ as the Son until the coming in the flesh, and that is the standpoint of Jesus when he used the above language.

"My Father worketh hitherto," &c., we use as the key to unlock the rest. "For as the Father (hitherto) raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, EVEN so the Son (now and henceforward) quickeneth whom he will," and the reason given is that the Father has given the work into his hands. "All things" (ver. 20) which includes "Judgment" (ver. 22) and "raising up the dead." (ver. 21 and 29.) The tense of the verb "raiseth" (ver. 21) is the same as "worketh" (ver. 17), and yet the **[R52 : page 7]** Saviour puts it in the past by the word "hitherto." When Christ says: "I work" he does not mean that he does a work "distinct from the Father," for he says: "The Son can do nothing of Himself" (ver. 19) and "The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the work." Even of the work of judgment committed to Christ he says: "I can of mine own self do nothing, as I hear, I judge," &c., (ver. 30.) "And if I judge, my judgment is true, for I am not alone, but I and the Father which sent me." 8:16. Before Jesus came, God did the work, but since the Son came the Father works by Him. It is not less true that God works by Christ since the resurrection than it was before. If the Divine hidden in the flesh was able to express itself in acts of power, surely the fully developed Son of God should have just what he claims, "All power...in Heaven and Earth." "The Father judgeth no man," we must understand as teaching that he does not judge "distinct from the Son" for he had committed the work unto the Son – "Immanuel." We have already shown that Christ so taught, and Paul expresses the same thought; "God hath appointed a day in the which HE will judge the world, by that man whom he hath ordained." &c. Acts 17:31. God judges, and yet Christ "will judge the living AND THE DEAD at his appearing and kingdom." 2 Tim. 4:1. "The Father judgeth no man" and yet "God (is) the Judge of all." Heb. 12:23.

In the prophecy of the invitation going to "all the ends of the Earth" God says: "There is no God beside me; a just God and a Saviour, none beside me." "I am God...I have sworn by myself, that unto me every knee shall bow." Isa. 45:21-23, and yet God hath exalted Jesus and given him the Name at which all shall bow, and Christ is the Saviour. Phil. 2:9,11.

"We trust in the living God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." Here Christ is not mentioned, shall we therefore conclude that God does it all "as distinct from Christ?" or shall we believe that Christ is the mediator by which God does the work? God raises the dead, but Christ is his Agent, so to speak. He will quicken the mortal bodies of his saints, but by "Christ in you." Compare Rom. 8:9,10,11, where "Spirit of God," "Spirit of Christ" and "Christ in you" are used interchangeably. The distinction Christ makes is between what was done before he came and since. And we understand him to teach that since he came His work and the Father's is one and not distinct one from the other.

If any can not see it thus, we still pray for Heaven's blessing on you all.

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