

## **"WHOSE SON IS HE."**

**MATT. 22:42.**

It seems as though evidence of the presence of Christ Jesus is every day accumulating.

It is a curious fact that the same thing which was the cause of division during the ministry of Christ Jesus on earth, is the cause of division now. The same questions which were agitating the people then are agitating them now. It seems as though the sifting is going on from one grade to another. What does not cause separation at one time is only reserved to cause separation or division a little farther on. The question, a short time ago, was, When and how does Christ come? Then, a little after, Has he come? Is he present?

There was a test question then, but it was the test for that time – for that sifting. Now, there is another test, and it is a noticeable fact that the present test is the one which occupied the minds of the people about six months after the third Passover which was observed by our Lord; that is, about six months before his crucifixion. It was at the Feast of Tabernacles, "the last great day (the eighth) of the feast." (John 7:37.) Some said one thing and some another, some thought he was the Christ, and some did not (verses 40,42). "So there was a division of the people because of him" (verse 43).

About that time, in a conversation with the Pharisees, Jesus said (John 8:18,) "The Father that sent me beareth witness of me." "Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father?" (vs. 18,19.) Jesus answered, "Ye neither know me nor my Father; if ye had known me, ye would have known my Father also." If JOSEPH had been his father, this would not have been the fact, for his ("supposed") "father and mother" they knew. (John 6:42.) "He being (as was

supposed) the son of Joseph." (Luke 3:23.) Some suppose the same thing now, and remind us very much of those Pharisees then, who, after a lengthy conversation, (in which Jesus refers to the fact that they were "doing the deeds of their Father") said, "WE have not been born of fornication; we have One Father, God" (Jno. 8:41). (See E.D. for text and rules of emphasis), which evidently was a sarcastic intimation that he had been born of fornication, which if Joseph were his father, would have been true. But even if Joseph was not his father, yet if he came into the world by natural generation, it would have been true, for he was conceived before Joseph had taken Mary as his wife.

Suppose, as the editor of the "Day Star" teaches, that Jesus was brought into the world just as other men are, i.e., according to natural laws, can its editor give us any good reason from the Old Testament writings or the new, why God should have chosen to have his son (or, as perhaps the editor of the Star would say, he who was to become his son) enter the world in a way that would seem to give sanction to the violation of his own moral law?

The editor of the Star uses three columns of his paper to meet an argument which, we should think, no careful Bible scholar would offer, viz., that the sign, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel," was given to Ahaz in particular; whereas the prophecy reads, "Hear ye now, O house of David." He quotes from Young's Concordance showing that it was "announced to Ahaz and the people of Judah as the sign that God would give them deliverance from their enemies" (the italics are ours), and then says that "the birth of Jesus, which occurred in the neighborhood of 700 years after Ahaz slept with his fathers, could have been no sign to him that God would protect him from the two kings who purposed doing him evil. Now, is it possible that this editor supposes that this remarkable sign was given to Ahaz

particularly (and when he would not ask for it) and related only to his difficulty with those two kings?

No, he evidently does not, though the above has that look, for in another place in the same article he says, "Because of their desire God promises a sign, which [R443 : page 5] is to be a son conceived of a virgin, whose name is to be called Immanuel." He moreover says, "that wayfaring men" though fools, "should see that to be any sign to Ahaz, the child must have been born shortly after the prophecy was given." Now, any intelligent, careful reader can see that such a use of language as this would render much that Jesus said of no use to us now. Such words as "ye," "you," and "we," used by Christ and the writers of the epistles, would only have reference to those present at the time the words were spoken, e.g., "Go ye and teach all nations;" "lo, I am with you always." But as he does not believe that the birth of Jesus was a fulfillment of that prophecy, but believes that it was fulfilled in time to be a sign to Ahaz touching those "two kings," Will he tell us (we do not want to "challenge" him) when that prophecy was fulfilled? Surely the fulfillment of so remarkable a sign as that, which he allows God promised, (and this, too, in "the O.T. writings,") would not fail to be plainly recorded. We shall wait with interest for his answer.

Again, in the same article, he says the child "was to eat butter and honey, that he might know to refuse the evil and choose the good" (ver. 15.) "Now," he continues, "to be consistent, we must admit that the honey represents good and the butter evil, or vice versa," (we do want to be consistent and will admit it,) "and further, that if the child was to eat both, then IT FOLLOWS that he must participate in both good and evil DEEDS." Hold! If that is what you call consistency we did not understand the meaning of the word, for this is illogical, the inference is wrong.

He then adds: "If this is applied to Jesus, then it makes him a sinner." Now, we will admit, that "if this is applied to Jesus" in that way "it makes him a sinner," but we would not wish to endorse [R444 : page 5] so lame an application as that. He still further adds, that this "places him in exactly the same position as Adam, who had to do wrong in order to know good and evil." Now, we will try to be consistent and admit that such an application would do all that; but the application comes from the illogical deduction that evil necessarily implies evil DEEDS, which requires no argument to refute. We regard it as impossible to have placed "Jesus in exactly the same position as Adam," except as to purity, for Adam had no view of misery and death which Jesus had. Jesus felt the evils of sin without sinning; he "ate butter and honey," good and evil, but not evil deeds. He suffered on account of others (not as a substitute in suffering) who evil entreated him, who, on account of their blindness, occasioned by the fall, misapplied his teaching, etc. There were many ways in which he "ate" (experienced) evil. Lazarus, his friend, died on account of the fall, and that caused Jesus to sorrow; and the hard heartedness of the Jews, as shown at the grave, caused him to "groan in spirit."

Now, with this long line of evil, misery, pain, dead and dying men before him, must Jesus "participate in both good and evil deeds in order to be able to choose between the two?"

Can any one think this is so, and Jesus living by faith too? Considering, too, that he understood the Scriptures (Old Testament writings) so well that he puzzled the doctors when he was only twelve years of age, and yet did not know how to refuse the evil and choose the good, but, like Adam, (who had no such exhibition of the effects of sin) "had to do wrong in order to know good and evil?" Now, must we admit all this "to be consistent"? Would such admission be consistent?

The article from which the above quotations are made is not inaptly headed "Misapplications."

In the same number, under a subheading of "Childish Idea," the writer says: "When Jesus said Sanctify them through thy truth, thy WORD is truth' (John 17:17), He must have referred to the OLD TESTAMENT WRITINGS, for the New were not then, nor for some time afterward, in existence."

Now, let us turn to the first chapter of John, where exactly the same word in the original is used, and let us read, in parenthesis, this application: "In the beginning was the Word (Old Testament writings), and the Word (Old Testament writings) was with God, and the Word (Old Testament writings) was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by (or through) him" vs. 1-3. "And the Word (Old Testament writings) became flesh and dwelt among us,...full of grace and truth" (verse 14).

It goes on to say: "This is authority sufficient for us, for Jesus was also sanctified by the truth" (John 17:19). Now, is it not strange that it should make such a statement as that, and then give a scriptural reference as though the Scripture referred to substantiated the statement? But, on looking at the 19th verse, we find Jesus saying: "And for their sakes I sanctify MYSELF (i.e., set apart, consecrate), that they also may be sanctified in truth." [See E.D. – R.V., and Rotherham's translations.] In harmony with John's statement quoted, is another statement of Jesus (recorded by John 14:6), "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life," and we can see that through him, "the Word," and "the Truth and the Life," they were sanctified, while he sanctified himself.

While it is true that we should search the Scriptures (Old Testament writings) for they are they which testify of Christ Jesus, let us not forget that they are God's written word, and could not be fully understood until God's living Word (Jesus Christ) came and

stood beside them, showing their signification, and what would be accomplished for the world when the body, (the Church) of which he is the head, should be complete.

While we have been writing the above, our heart has gone out in loving sympathy and tender regard for him whom we love, yet see to be in error. We have not written to be sharp or sarcastic, nor bitter; but there are many things lately put before the public in the "Day Star" that are made to appear crooked, and, with such applications as those referred to, cannot be otherwise than crooked; and have a tendency to mislead, and, as we have been asked more than once, in person and by correspondence, for an expression of our views, we have felt it necessary to define our position as to these things.

We can but hope that the editor of the "Day Star" will yet see, how hard it is to harmonize Scripture on that line.

If any will admit the supernaturalness of the Scriptures, and of Jesus who was the fulfilling of them (Old Testament writings), letting go of naturalism, and not reasoning after the method of the materialistic school part of the time, and as a Christian part of the time, we think he will see that the first man (Adam) was of the earth earthy, and that the second man (Adam) was the Lord FROM heaven; and that, with the POSSIBILITIES which he possessed of transmitting a perfect race, he gave himself (thus sacrificing all the POSSIBILITIES of a sinless man) as a ransom for the race, who had suffered the penalty of death, for their sins, and could only rise when there should be "found a ransom." HE took their place. "Wherefore God also hath HIGHLY exalted him" – "glorified him with (in addition to) the glory which he had with the Father before the world was."

We would seriously ask the editor of the "Star" to give us a good reason why the peculiar language – "I will put enmity between

thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed," (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4), and "Made of a woman" – if there was nothing of more than ordinary significance attaching to it? Is it not obvious that if Jesus came into the world, just as "we all" have, there would be no force to this language and no occasion for using it?

So we say, in answer to the question which we have used for the heading of our article, "Truly this WAS the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54).

J. C. SUNDERLIN.

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"Preach the Word; be instant in season and out of season [i.e., when it suits your convenience and when it does not]; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. 4:2.)

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