

ATONEMENT – RESURRECTION.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." – ROM. 5:10.

One of the prominent features of God's plan, by which his love is manifested, is Christ's death.

Perhaps no other feature has been opposed so much as the idea that the death of Christ should have anything to do with man's salvation; and much effort has been made by some to explain it away, or so modify the teachings of the Bible on this subject as to make it palatable to the natural mind.

The bold and reckless spirit that declares, by word or action, that we will believe nothing unless it accords with our reason, may be characteristic of the age in which we live, but it does not savor of the meek and quiet spirit that trembles at the word of the Lord. We do not oppose the searching and comparing of the Scriptures to ascertain what they teach. That is really the disciple's work. And it is right also to bring all theories to the test of God's word – to "prove all things [by that standard] and hold fast that which is good." And in all this we shall find room for the exercise of the faculty of reason; but if in our searching we find a fact stated, the philosophy of which we cannot see, it is hardly becoming in a Christian, to ignore or belittle the fact.

We may fail of seeing for two reasons – either because God has withheld his reason, or because we are still ignorant of some other revealed fact which in due time will be made plain. Better, if need be, to say, "I do not understand," than to deny the facts.

No careful student can fail to be impressed with the stress that is laid on the death of Christ. That some have overlooked other truths, and so laid too much stress on the death, we will not deny; but that is no excuse for our belittling the death by overexalting other features. A morbid desire for something new and peculiar, should be checked by a careful reading of the context before using a verse, or a small part of it, in proof of a new theory.

"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet, peradventure, for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died **[R483 : page 6]** for us" (Rom. 5:6-8). How can Christ's death show or commend God's love to us unless that death meets a necessity in the sinner's case?

To do for us what we could or must do for ourselves would not be an expression of benevolence. To say that he died to meet our necessity would be a strange thing indeed, if it were only his life that could help us. But verse 10 shows us the value of both the death and the life, and should forever prevent us from confounding the two or ignoring either one. "Reconciled [atoned] to God by the death of his Son,...saved by his life."

That there is an atonement by the death of Christ the above passage clearly teaches, and is so translated in verse 11. And even if the salvation by his life is elsewhere called reconciliation, or if there should be discovered a dozen other reconciliations, still it remains true that we are "reconciled to God by the death of his Son," and it is an expression of God's great love for the world of sinners.

That this atonement, by the death of Christ, has no reference to the breaking down of the middle wall between the Jew and Gentile, is clear, because the apostle goes on to explain, and shows

as plain as words could make it, that the atonement secures to mankind what was lost through Adam.

"Wherefore," in the 12th verse, relates back to the atonement of verse 11, and it is stated that as by one man all men were condemned to death, so by the atonement all men are justified to life. To overlook this is to ignore the "wherefore" and "therefore" of the apostle, verses 12-18. We do not overlook the fact or value of Christ's obedience any more than we overlook Adam's sin. Sin brought death, and righteousness brings life. But that the death of Christ, the righteous one, was a necessity, is the idea for which we here plead.

Now, if any one can read carefully the whole passage and not see that Christ's death secures to man recovery from DEATH, it will prove that the human mind is greatly biased by its own determinations.

It is not an isolated text, however, that teaches the recovery from death by the death of Christ.

ATONEMENT IS THE BASIS OF RESURRECTION.

The apostle has shown us that Christ's death is the atoning act. We shall, therefore, expect to find the death of Christ associated with man's recovery from death.

We are not forgetting the resurrection of Christ, nor overlooking its value as the entrance of the Head into endless life, and, therefore, as the key of immortality for mankind; but we are seeking to give his death its place as the PRICE of redemption or recovery.

Certainly man's recovery from death is one thing, and the gift of immortality is another, and they should be so considered, though they are intimately related to each other. The former is the basis of

the latter, and the latter is the object for which the former is accomplished; hence it is said, "Reconciled by his death, saved by his life."

"He died for our sins." It is not said that he rose for our sins. He is the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world. The world's sin is Adam's sin. "In whom all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12 – marg). "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree." He became a curse for us." "Wounded for our transgressions." "By his stripes we are healed." "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel – not with the wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect" (1 Cor. 1:17). If Christ's death in itself does nothing, then it is of no effect. The cross must refer to the death and not to the after life. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but to us that are saved it is the power of God" (verse 18).

"The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified" (verses 22,23). "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified" (Chapter 2:2). From what he said in the first chapter, we know Paul made a specialty of the death in his preaching.

The cross is the basis of all the glory. He laid down his life for the sheep. "No man taketh it from me. I lay it down of myself." To Pilate he said, "Ye could have no power at all were it not given you from above."

After the hour for the Passover (he being the antitype, and it must be fulfilled on time) he no longer sought to protect himself, nor allowed others to protect him, but gave himself into their hands. His hour had come; then and not till then "they killed the Prince of life." "He gave his life a ransom for many" – "A ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Hence, being redeemed – "bought with a price" – we are not our own.

That Christ died in the same sense in which men die, and in which men are counted dead before they die, must be true, or there would be no relation between his death and theirs. Here, again, the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead (not all actually dead, but counted dead) – "death (sentence) passed on all." His death was of the same kind, MET THE CLAIM AS A RANSOM, so that all are his, and counted alive, for the object as stated, "that he died for all, that they who live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again." The idea is here suggested that he gained the right to control all for whom he died....

This work of redeeming by death, is not to be confounded with the work of the second Adam, which is to impart spiritual life.

CHRIST DID NOT BECOME THE SECOND ADAM UNTIL HE WAS MADE A QUICKENING SPIRIT.

That our Lord Jesus is the antitype of Adam, as Head of a new race, is true, but he is more than that. Adam, besides being head of a race, was lord of all [the earthly] creation. So, too, Jesus died and rose again that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living (Rom. 14:9). So, too, the uttermost parts of the earth are to be his possession (Psalm 2). That this is not a baseless assumption is shown in Heb. 2. There we learn that the very purpose for which Christ took our nature was, that "by the grace of God he might taste death for every man." – "That through death he might destroy him that had the power over death, i.e., the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He binds the strong man, the prison-keeper, and delivers the captives. He delivers them from the death of which they were afraid during their lifetime. They never had a spiritual lifetime, and never dreaded a spiritual death. Christ took the natural that he might redeem the natural, and possesses the spiritual that he may impart the spiritual,

is the evident teaching of the Bible. The same thought of his having power over the dead is brought to view in Rev. 1:18. "I am he that liveth and was dead: and behold I am alive forevermore; Amen; and have the keys of Hades and of death."...

This is in keeping with all the rest. Christ died that we might live, and lives that we might live forever. This view of the subject does not shut God out of the work and plan, for it is his plan to work in and by the Lord Jesus. That the terms death and life are used figuratively, sometimes, we freely admit, and the context will determine it; but when speaking of the penalty of sin and resurrection from it, the death of Christ must serve as the key. Thus, as well as page 6 otherwise, we can glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brethren, let us beware of anything that belittles or sets aside the death of Christ as the offering and PROPITIATION FOR SIN, not ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. The simplicity, nature, object and extent of this RANSOM will be testified – made known in due time.

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