

EXCEPT A CORN OF WHEAT DIE.

"Verily, verily I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: But if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." - John 12:24.

Thus beautifully and forcibly does Jesus teach the necessity for his death, and the results which shall follow. The grain of wheat was himself – "the *man* Christ Jesus." He was alone. All other men were either dead or dying – under condemnation to death and reckoned of God as dead already. Rom. 5:15. These were all imperfect decaying grains of wheat. Jesus *alone*, had life. He might have continued to live, there being no cause for death in him; he was holy, harmless, undefiled. But if he should carry out his original purpose, on account of which he had left the glory which he had with the Father and been made *flesh*" he would now *die*, as a grain of wheat in order that his life might be imparted to many – the first Adam and all his race.

It was while considering his death, and when he knew that the time or hour was about at hand, that Jesus used these words to his disciples to explain to them the necessity for his death – in order that the human race should be justified to life – "If it die it bringeth forth much fruit." Then realizing as no imperfect man could do, the greatness of the sacrifice which death (extinction), meant, he cried to God in agony saying (John 12:27) "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save [spare] me from this hour" [from death]! Then remembering the Father's infinite Power, Wisdom, Love, Justice and exceeding great and precious promises made to him of a resurrection to a nature much higher than the one he was sacrificing, his FAITH in God triumphs and he adds: "But for this cause [or purpose] *came* I unto this hour: Father glorify thy name."

To Jesus, undeluded by Satan's sophistries, death was a bitter cup, he did not think of death as some of his deceived followers to-day think

of it – as "the angel God hath sent." No, Jesus knew of DEATH as the great *enemy* of the race, which had laid low Adam and all his posterity, because permitted on account of sin. He knew that none *thus far* had ever gotten free entirely from death who ever passed under its dominion. Now he was here, a man to die for men, to give his life a ransom price for all who died through Adam's sin. The question then in Jesus' mind was, Can I become man's substitute and ransom price and then be given existence on a higher plane of being than that I surrender for men? Is God indeed able to do this greatest of all things? Is He able to do this which has never yet been done and bring back the same conscious existence which became extinct in death?

Faith questioned but for a moment, when his knowledge and past experience triumphed and he answers, Father, do as seemeth to Thee best. I will drink the cup. I will be obedient to thy will and plan, even unto *death* – "Father, glorify thy name" and carry out thy great plan I am ready to do the part assigned to me. For Jesus to have gone so far as he had gone and then to draw back and refuse to complete the covenant of *sacrifice* symbolized in his immersion, would have been sin and would have been forfeiting every right and promise. Jesus so expresses the matter in the succeeding verse (25). "He that loveth his life [that loves to *keep* it after having consecrated it to sacrifice] shall lose it; and he that hateth [is willing to sacrifice] his life in this world shall keep [have] it unto life eternal." And is not this doctrine as applicable to all the members of the consecrated priesthood as to the chief priest? The covenant of sacrifice *must* be actually fulfilled or all is lost.

The grain of wheat *dies*; it is no longer a grain of wheat. The other grains which partaking of its life become perfect grains, are none of them the grain which died. It is gone – gone forever as a grain of wheat. So Jesus was *made* FLESH in order that by God's favor he might taste *death* for mankind – that through or by means of His death the Adamic race might live. This teaches two things clearly and forcibly. First: as the grain that will grow up will be of the *same kind* as that

which is planted and *dies*, so the being or existence secured to mankind by Jesus' sacrifice must be of the *same kind* as that which Jesus GAVE UP. He *gave up* himself – a man; all his previous work had been preparatory to this, "For this cause [or purpose – sacrifice] *came I unto* this hour." Not only so, but as he was a PERFECT MAN the seeds which come as a result of his death, will, if they reach maturity be PERFECT also.

Secondly: as the grain which *dies* becomes forever extinct and never again has an existence as a grain, having *wholly* given itself to produce others of the same kind, *so* with Jesus whom the grain of wheat is used to illustrate: The *man* Christ Jesus – having become flesh for that very purpose, gave himself wholly – "gave *all* that he had" (Matt. 13:44) in order to produce others – in order to *re*-produce the human race lost in death through Adam. Thus he becomes the Father [life-giver] of humanity, as it is written; "He shall be called the everlasting *Father*." But he becomes FATHER at a great cost – He died that they might live as is taught by many Scriptures and here illustrated by the grain of wheat which gives itself wholly to produce others.

Here a little and there a little, is God's method of teaching. So Jesus would not only lead his disciples to study and search for truth, but he would thus hide for the present from the careless and worldly reader the riches of his favor and the beauty of his plan. So this statement relative to the grain of wheat touches only one side of the question – the *necessity* of Jesus' death in order that he might become the source of life to others, that as by *a man* came death by *a man* also came the resurrection of the dead, (1 Cor. 15:21.) The Lord does not indicate in this statement his hope of a resurrection as a *new creature*; that is all omitted here though plainly taught elsewhere.

How clear and plain this is; how it shows just *what* was given and how *completely* given and the *results* to be expected. Great was the Teacher and wonderful the simplicity of His doctrine.

Now suppose there were but one sound perfect grain of wheat in the world, and we plant it. It dies, it is *gone forever*, but it bears a hundred fold of the same kind. Now we plant these one hundred grains, and suppose they also yield a hundred fold, then though they are *gone*, gone forever, and could never be found, yet their product – the result of that death, is ten thousand grains, of the same kind and we may truly say that the original *one grain* yielded ten thousand.

Let this illustrate God's dealings through Jesus. Jesus was the only perfect grain – the only perfect man; He gave himself – He died, giving up human rights and privileges, all that perfect human existence includes that thereby he might *impart these* rights to men.

During the Gospel age, the fruit of Jesus sacrifice has been, those who believed, who accepted of the life provided through his death. These have not *actually* partaken of his human perfection sacrificed on their behalf; they have not become *actually* perfect men and women, but they have become perfect human beings *reckonedly*. God reckons them *as though* they were perfect beings (and they should so *reckon* themselves), the perfection of the "grain of wheat" being counted to or imputed to all those who *by faith* accept and appropriate the rights and blessings which Jesus laid down for us.

These "grains" (believers) *reckoned perfect* through Jesus sacrifice are invited by him to do as he did – to follow his example – to die as grains of wheat [as men *reckoned* perfect], to lay down or sacrifice all their human rights and privileges, to suffer now with him, to become joint-sacrificers, and *thus* become joint-heirs with Him. Like Jesus, these will be gone forever as *human beings*, but instead, they shall have the great prize held out during this Gospel age; for not only shall they be made conformable unto *His death*, but they shall have share also in *His resurrection* [a resurrection to spiritual being]. Phil. 3:10,11.

Jesus addressed this class (believers) and explains the conditions on which the high calling may be obtained, when after telling of

himself as the grain (vs. 24,25) he adds: "If any man will serve me, let him *follow me*;" [let him sacrifice the human nature to which he is justified by my sacrifice] "and" [I promise such followers a share of all that the Father shall give me.] "where I am there shall also my servant be [who follows my example]: If any man serve me [share with me in this service] him will my Father honor" (John 12:26).

These *grains*, (reckonedly perfect) following the example of the first grain are consecrated, and their death is *reckoned* as a PART of His death, and not of the Adamic death, (they having been justified out of and reckoned out of that.) And "if *we* be dead *with Christ* we believe that *we* shall also live with him" by a resurrection like his, to spiritual existence as "members of his body."

What will the harvest be – what the result of this planting in death of the man Christ Jesus and then of those justified through him? Great will be the harvest, all springing from the one grain – the one perfect man who *gave himself*; for "since by man came death by man came also the resurrection of the dead." And "as [through] Adam [and Eve indirectly – God "called *their* name Adam] all die, even so, in [the] Christ shall all be made alive. 1 Cor. 15:21-22.

The same thought is expressed by Paul when he speaks of *filling up* that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ. (Col. 1:24). And as seen in the "TABERNACLE TYPES, "the sacrifices of the "Day of Atonement" teach the same lesson – the bullock for the Priests and Levites (typical of believers *now*) and [R730 : page 8] the goats representing the justified priests sacrificed for all "the people." Soon the day of Atonement (the Gospel Age) will be entirely past; the planting and dying will soon be at an end, and the glorious day of Millennial blessing, perfecting, ripening and harvesting of its fruits, will commence.

To us the grandest feature of our Father's plan is this election or selection of the "Body of Christ" through obedience to *sacrifice*, now in progress. The grand benevolence which thus offers to some of the

fallen race not only redemption from sin and deliverance from its curse – death, but in addition holds out divine nature and honor as a reward for obedience, stamps the plan as divine, for who could have thought of such honor and glory had God not proposed it.

Thus seen the *privileges* of this Gospel Age – the privilege of sacrificing with Christ and thus becoming members of his body and sharers of his coming glory and work of *restoring* mankind to human perfection lost through Adam, is a wonderful privilege. Should we then shrink from it? Should we not with Jesus say: Amen, "Father glorify thy name" – Thy will be done. With Paul should we not count all these things but as loss and dross, IF BY ANY MEANS, we might win a place in the Anointed one?

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