

[R1589 : page 312]

A QUESTION CONCERNING THE RANSOM.

"SUPPOSE that some one held, as a doctrine, that Christ during the Gospel age is giving the *ransom* for the Church and expiating her sins; and that during the Millennial age he will give a ransom for the world and expiate its sins: Would it be right or truthful if I, in speaking of such a teaching, were to say of it – 'It claims that our Lord is now making the ransom, that ever since his ascension he has been expiating the sins of the world in heaven, and that the work of ransoming will not be finished until the end of the Millennial age?' – Please answer in the TOWER, as it is claimed that I *thus* misrepresented this latest *no-ransom* theory."

In reply: It is our judgment that you stated the matter most fairly: more reasonably than the party you mention stated himself. What nonsense it is to talk about *ransoming* the [R1590 : page 312] Church and expiating her sins during the Gospel age. After we are accepted of God, in Christ, to be his Church, we need no *ransoming*, having no sins to *expiate*. It was while we were yet sinners [children of wrath, even as others, – parts of the world] that Christ died for us, and by the one sacrifice of himself once for all, expiated the sins of all the ungodly. (Rom. 5:6,8; Heb. 10:12.) He *is* a propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. – 1 John 2:2.

The suggestion that Christ *will be* a satisfaction for the sins of the Church during this age, and *will be* such for the world during the Millennial age is a portion of outer darkness, so thick and dense that it is not likely to mislead any who give ear to the voice of the Shepherd in the Word. He *is* our propitiation, and the propitiation for all the world besides, ever since the great sacrifice was ended and the Ransomer cried, "IT IS FINISHED."

To this the Apostle also attests, saying: By *one sacrifice* he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, – *all*; and this will include all [R1590 : page 313] that ever will come unto God by him, – whether they come during this age or during the next age. – Heb. 10:14.

But such nonsense is not worthy of the name of "teaching:" it violates logic, contradicts reason, and wrests the Scriptures. Reason and logic would ask, What is Christ *doing*, during the Gospel age or what will he *do* throughout the Millennial age to *expiate* sin? What is he now *giving* and what *will he give* during the Millennial age as a *ransom* for mankind? The Bible answers that *it* knows of nothing that remains to *do*, or to be *given*, to meet man's penalty; – that all has been done; – that the *man* Christ Jesus [more than eighteen centuries ago] *gave* himself a RANSOM [*a corresponding price*, a substitute] for ALL. – 1 Tim. 2:6.

But this correct reasoning will not convince those to whom you refer; because, to suit a theory, they have attached a new meaning to the words *ransom* and *expiate*. They use these words, improperly, to mean *deliver* or *release*. But only those thoroughly blinded to the commonest kind of common sense, or thoroughly ignorant of the common words of the English language could make such a blunder.

That neither *ransom* nor *expiate* means *release* or *deliver* can be easily proved. We quote from Webster's Dictionary:

"Ransom. To redeem from captivity, punishment or forfeit, *by paying an equivalent*; to *buy out of* servitude or penalty; to rescue [by giving a ransom]; to deliver [by giving a ransom] as, to *ransom* prisoners from an enemy.

"Expiation. The act of making satisfaction for an offence; atonement; satisfaction."

The party to whose teachings you refer claims to be a believer in the **ransom**; but from this you see he does not believe in it. He is therefore not a Christian Brother – not one of the sheep, in any sense, because it is this faith in Christ's death as our **ransom sacrifice**, and naught else, that justifies sinners, renders them, at consecration, acceptable as the Lord's sheep. To believe a **stone** to be **bread** will not render it nutritious and life-giving: neither will believing **deliverance** to be the **ransom**, the **expiation** of our guilt justify such a believer. God will not be mocked by any such miserable twisting of language; neither will any of the sheep who heed the Shepherd's words and **prove** all that they receive as truth and hold fast only that which stands the proof. And this subject of the **ransom** is most important of all, because it is the standard by which all faith and all doctrines are to be proved **true** or **false**.

The grand **results** or **effects** of the ransom given, once for all, eighteen centuries ago, will be DELIVERANCE: partial deliverance to God's saints, now, from Sin, the great enslaver, – full deliverance to the faithful of the same class at the end of this Gospel age. Its grand results or effects will ultimately be extended to **all the families of the earth**, in that it will secure to all a full opportunity for deliverance from Sin and Death, upon similar conditions to ours (faith and obedience), but under the more favorable circumstances of the Millennial age. But to have faith in a **deliverance** and to call it the **ransom** is not a proper or saving faith: it proves on the contrary that those who so hold do not believe in the real **ransom sacrifice** finished at Calvary.

Our advice to all readers is that when once they have **proved** any teacher (or journal, or book) to be **wrong** on this important doctrine, the foundation of all Christian faith, they need

do no more *proving there*; for if the foundation is bad, the entire structure built thereupon must be pernicious, – dangerous. Have nothing more to do with such teacher (or book or journal). You may be sure that God did not send him to you as his mouth-piece, else he would have seen to it, first, that he had the correct foundation.
