

"TO BE TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME."

A correspondent sends us a published answer to the question, – "Since Christ gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time (1 Tim. 2:6), and since the great majority of mankind has not had the privilege of this testimony, how and when will it be given?" as follows:

"Christ has already been 'testified' as a ransom for all, by his incarnation, in which he lived in our nature in this world; by the voice of God acknowledging him as his only begotten Son; and by the manifestation of his power in his behalf in raising him from the dead.

"The point involved in the question, as we understand it, is, How far is God under obligation (if we may so speak) to bring these facts before every individual [R2127 : page 100] of mankind? In answer to this let us ask further, Has not God done all that is necessary on his part, to give the world sufficient knowledge of the gospel in every age? It is his plan to work through men; and thus every one who receives light and truth becomes a debtor to his fellow men, to make known that light and truth to them. If he does not do this, and those within his reach live and die in darkness, who is responsible? Is not God's throne so far clear?...

"Again: it will doubtless be admitted that God has in mind just the requisite number to people this earth, and when this number have embraced the gospel, the call will cease, and the eternal state begin. But if all who have not heard the gospel are to have another chance, and have the gospel pressed upon them till they do receive it, there would be in the end a sufficient number to people several such worlds as this. Thus the whole course of events shows the plan of God's providence to be this: to gather out from each generation those whom the gospel reaches, till the requisite number of people are gathered out for his name, then establish the promised kingdom. And that the time

has been so far prolonged is owing to the dilatoriness of men, not to any limitations of the provisions of the grace of God.

URIAH SMITH."

Our correspondent wishes to know what we think of this interpretation of the text in question.

We think it very illogical and unsatisfactory. [R2127 : page 101] Really three answers are given, or three parts to the one answer, and we will review these in order, separately.

(1) It is *manifestly* untrue and unreasonable to claim that Christ was or could be "*testified as a ransom*" BEFORE HE HAD PAID THE RANSOM PRICE, as this writer claims. Our Lord's own testimony is that he came into the world *to give his life a ransom*. The ransom was not *given* before Calvary, and could not be testified to *truthfully* until after that event. Indeed, while the *laying down* of our Lord's life, finished at Calvary, was the ransom-*price*, it was not *presented* to the Father or formally paid over "*for us,*" until after our Lord's ascension. He ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God *on our behalf*. In the typical sin-offering for Israel, this presentation of his sacrifice as man's ransom-price to God was typified by the sprinkling of the blood upon the Mercyseat and before the Mercyseat. – See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*.

Besides, this wrong view excludes from testimony of any kind all except the Israelites; for the remainder of mankind were without God and had no hope. (Eph. 2:12.) Furthermore, the Apostle does not say that the ransom *had been* testified, but on the contrary he puts it future – *to be* testified in due time.

The *testimony* referred to in verse 6 is the explanation of the *knowledge of the truth* of verse 4, just as Christ a *ransom for all* is the explanation of the statement that God will have *all to be saved* (verse 4). The testimony must extend to *all*, in order that *all* may

have the promised knowledge. Verse 7 agrees, also, declaring that the Apostle himself was even then engaged in giving this testimony. How unreasonable the claim, therefore, that Christ gave this testimony in full. The Apostle declares that this testimony "*began* to be preached by our Lord" – but it has continued by the apostles and all the faithful Church since and must continue until it has reached *all* and brought *all* to a knowledge of the truth.

(2) Respecting God's "obligation" to save few or many, or to testify the terms of salvation to few or many: He had no obligation originally; nor has he any obligations now except such as he has voluntarily assumed. But he has voluntarily, of his "grace," assumed some obligations; – toward Israel, toward the Church of Christ, and toward "all the families of the earth." As shown in our last issue, all of these obligations are set forth in the great Abrahamic Covenant. As shown, that Covenant is *unconditional*. It is therefore a first-class *obligation*. Moreover, it was sworn to by the Almighty. God wished us to know positively that he *obligated* himself; so that when the Law Covenant was *added* and still later the New Covenant was *added* (both added, as we have seen, for necessary and useful purposes) we might still know that neither of these could render void or "of none effect" the original, wide promise. (Gal. 3:17.) Hence God assured us of the *blessing of all* through the Seed, by two immutable (unchangeable) things – his *word* and his *oath*. – Heb. 6:18.

All men are to be "blessed" by being brought to a knowledge of God's gracious arrangements in Christ. *All* must be blessed with sufficient "light" to see Christ as the "*way*," the "*truth*," the "*life*" and the "*door*" to divine favor everlasting. The *testifying* of this to all "in due time" will be the *blessing* of all as provided for in God's oath-bound Covenant.

(3) The third answer is no less unreasonable than the others. In MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., page 170, we give figures to prove that several times the entire population of the world for the past six

thousand years could be comfortably provided for on this planet. Anyone can figure it out for himself; there is no need for anyone to be deluded by the oft repeated nonsense that the earth is one vast cemetery, and that if the dead from Adam until now were all restored to being they would be unable to find even standing room.

Mr. Smith is the foremost teacher amongst "Seventh-Day Adventists," who hold that no one but Seventh-Day keepers will be saved; explaining that they are God's "*little* flock." Now put this claim (and the total known numbers of Seventh-day keepers, of the past and the present) alongside the claim above that – "God has in mind just the requisite number to people this earth; and when this number have embraced the gospel the call will cease and the eternal state begin."

How do those propositions harmonize? The present population of the world is estimated at above fifteen hundred millions, and yet these do not begin to populate this planet – there are millions of acres without an inhabitant. Mr. Smith teaches that the end of all hope is nigh, even at the doors, yet, according to his reasoning above, it will require Seventh-Day Adventists nearly a million years to convert enough people to their view of matters in order to properly let the gospel call "cease and the eternal state begin." Nor does he leave himself a loophole by claiming that God will exercise miraculous power to increase the number of Seventh-Day keepers, for he says again, "God has done all that is necessary on his part;" "it is his plan to work through men."

O! if Brother Smith and his zealous colaborers could only see clearly the full meaning of this one Scripture, – "The man Christ Jesus – gave himself a *ransom for all* – to be testified in due time," – it would straighten out all their difficulties and introduce them to the antitypical Sabbath. **[R2127 : page 102]**

How else could the oath-bound Covenant be fulfilled, – than by the Millennial reign of Christ and his "little flock," the "royal priesthood?" How else could the benefits of the ransom be made

applicable to "*all*" to "every man" and "for the sins of the whole world?" How else could our Lord ever be "the true Light which *lighteth every man that cometh into the world?* (John 1:9.) How else will he ever "*draw* all men unto [or toward] himself" than by the presentation to all of the same truths which now constrain or draw us? How many will so make use of the blessing – the *light*, the *drawing* and the *knowledge* – as to conform to the requirements of the New Covenant is another question entirely. But there is no question that the work of the glorified Church in the Millennial Kingdom will be the fulfilment of God's oath-bound Covenant. (Gal. 3:29.) But first the "little flock," the Christ (head and body), must suffer many things and enter into glory. All the "members of his body" must be "lifted up" to shame, and share their Lord's ignominy and all must also be "lifted up" to glory, to share his honor. Then, the Seed complete, its work will be glorious.
