

COVERED SINS TO BE BLOTTED OUT.

MANY make the mistake of confounding the "blotting out" of sins with the covering of sins; but the two thoughts are distinctly separate. The covering of sins takes place instantaneously, as soon as the believer has repentantly accepted of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. This covering of sin, and of all the blemishes of the believer is symbolically represented as accomplished by his putting on the "wedding garment," the pure robe of Christ's righteousness imputed to true believers. This constitutes the justification by faith of which the Apostle speaks, saying, "David describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works [righteousness which he had not worked out] saying, 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.'" – Rom. 4:6-8.

While it brings to the believer joy and peace to realize that his imperfections are covered, and not permitted to hinder his approach to the Heavenly Father, he nevertheless properly battles against those imperfections, a continual warfare – the newly-begotten and renewed or transformed mind being resisted by the natural, depraved will of the flesh. But, nevertheless, every true child of God, rightly instructed from the Father's Word, is distinctly looking forward to the end of his warfare-probation, when his "covered" sins and weaknesses shall all be "blotted out."

This blotting out of sins, so far as the overcoming [R2194 : page 227] Church is concerned, will not be completed until the first resurrection has been completed; for, as the work of grace began by the covering of the imperfections of the flesh for believers, it will end with the complete destruction of the flesh in death, and the raising of the elect Church spiritual bodies, free from all the blemishes and imperfections which belong to these present, mortal bodies. Now the consecrated "have this treasure [the new nature] in earthen vessels:" and all know

how seriously marred is every one of these vessels, so that our very best intentions and desires are liable to have more or less of blemish or imperfection, when viewed from the Divine standpoint. But by-and-by this treasure, the new will, the new creature in Christ Jesus, will be delivered into the perfect condition, the new spiritual bodies, described by the Apostle (1 Cor. 15:42-44,48-50), saying: "Thus also is the resurrection of the dead [the first or chief resurrection of the overcoming class amongst the dead]...It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption" – all the marks and blemishes of sin which belong to the earthen vessel will be destroyed, "blotted out." When buried in death, the Church is actually imperfect, dishonorable and weak, except as her Lord's robe of righteousness is her covering, and his strength is made perfect in her weakness. But all these dishonorable, weak and imperfect conditions now covered are to be completely and everlastingly blotted out with the passing of the present life; for the promise to the overcomers is, "It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body" – the image of the heavenly one, our Lord.

It was in harmony with this view of matters that the Apostle wrote "We [the newly begotten spirit beings, the Church] while in this tabernacle [earthly body] do groan; not that we desire to be unclothed [that we should lose our imperfect human bodies in death, and be obliged to wait or 'sleep in Jesus' until his second coming]; but that we might be clothed upon with our heavenly house [or spiritual bodies]" – experience the blessings of a participation in Christ's resurrection – the first resurrection. – Phil. 3:10-12; Rev. 20:6.

The Apostle had in mind the same earnest desire of the spirit-begotten ones for the completion of the work of grace in them at the resurrection, when he said: "Ourselves, also, which have the first fruits of the spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption – to wit, the deliverance of our body – [the Church – from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of full sonship]." Rom. 8:23. The "wedding garment" of Christ's imputed righteousness, under which are

granted to us all the privileges of sons without removing our weaknesses and frailties, leaves us to wage a warfare with these, thus to prove our love of righteousness and our faithfulness to the commands of "him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," and to become sharers of his sufferings, and of the glories to follow. Through the merit of [R2195 : page 227] our robe we were begotten to the new mind, the new nature; and it will serve every purpose until such times as we shall have proved ourselves faithful as new creatures, and shall be permitted to pass from the probationary sonship to the enjoyment of the full measure of the Father's blessing and complete adoption into his family and nature. But there, at the moment of transition, when being received from the begotten and probationary stage of sonship into the everlasting state, it is eminently proper, and all that we would ask or desire, that every trace of the hitherto covered and forgiven sins and blemishes should be blotted out, and no longer need covering. And all this is a part of the Divine provision for those who love God, "the [faithful] called ones according to his purpose." Then, it will be that that which is perfect having come, "that which is in part [our present standing graciously covered with Christ's imputed righteousness, covering our defects] will be done away."

"Oh, hail happy day!
That ends our tears and sorrows,
That brings us joy without alloy;
Oh, hail happy day!
No more by doubts and fears distressed,
We now shall gain our promised rest,
And be forever blest,
Oh, hail happy day!"

The tears and sorrows and battlings in strife against the world, the flesh and the devil are all very necessary in the present time; and we should neither hope nor expect to be crowned as victors, without passing through such experiences. In this battle, we learn not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think; we learn of our own

weaknesses and imperfections and our need to walk closely with the Lord, if we would keep our garments unspotted from the world. We learn also to trust his grace, and that "our sufficiency is of God." We learn that "greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us." We learn that the victory that overcometh the world is neither the strength and perfection of our flesh, nor merely the strong resolution of our minds, but the latter helped and strengthened by him who assures us that his strength can be perfected in our weakness. It is here that we learn that all things are working together for good to them that love God.

In this battle with the world, the flesh and the devil [R2195 : page 228] we learn also to appreciate the whole armor of God: the value of the "helmet of salvation," the intellectual appreciation of the Divine plan and promises; the value of the "breastplate of righteousness," Christ's righteousness covering our most vital parts; the value of "the shield of faith," which is able to quench all the fiery darts of the Adversary; and the invincible quality and sharpness of "the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God"; and to put on the preparation of the gospel in a meek, patient and quiet spirit, which, as sandals, permits us to pass over the sharpest difficulties of life successfully. In this conflict we learn to cultivate the graces of the spirit, through many trials and temptations; which though for the time being are not pleasant but grievous, nevertheless work out for all who are rightly exercised thereby, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

The Apostle in our text declares that the blotting out of the Church's sin shall be in connection with "times of refreshing" or spirit outpouring, at the second advent of our Lord. How consistent this is with reason, and with all the facts of the case: it was after our Lord Jesus had bought us with his precious blood that the Heavenly Father granted to his Church a great blessing, a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, at Pentecost, as marking his approval of all covered by the "wedding garment," and as a foretaste of his greater blessing, to be bestowed when her trial would be complete, and the sins actually blotted out. That season of Pentecostal refreshing from the Divine

presence, under the blessed influence of which Peter was preaching when he used the words of our text, was only an earnest or hand-payment of the great perfect refreshment and spirit-energizing that will come to the Lord's people at the farther end of the narrow way, when the Bridegroom shall come to receive to his nature and his throne and to confess her before his Father and the holy angels. As the Apostle intimates in our text, the very first work then will be the complete blotting out of the Church's sins, in the first resurrection.

And immediately following this perfecting of the Church will come a work for the world – "times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." This signifies a similar blessing (blotting out of sins) upon all the world of mankind, who shall then, after being brought to a knowledge of the truth, obediently accept the Divine mercy under the terms of the New Covenant. Since man as originally created was in the moral likeness of his Creator, but has lost that likeness by the blemishes of sin, restitution to the likeness lost, would signify the blotting out of those blemishes wrought by sin. But there will be a great difference between the blotting out of the sins of the obedient, overcoming Church and the blotting out of the sins of the obedient ones of the world. The Church's sins will be instantly blotted out in the moment of the resurrection; the world's sins will be gradually blotted out during the period of Christ's reign – during the Millennium. The terms and conditions will be different also. While the Church has her sins and imperfections covered during the period of her trial, and does not have her efforts to overcome the weaknesses of the flesh rewarded by physical restitution, but is rewarded instantaneously at the end of her race, according to her faith and her endeavors to conquer, the obedient of the world, in the next age, will, on the contrary, have their sins blotted out, not as the reward of faith and effort merely; but as the reward of successful and continuous effort, which will then be possible, and be rewarded step by step with restitution blessings or the gradual blotting out of sins.

Describing the judgment (trial) of the world during the Millennial Age, our Lord shows that all will then be "judged according to their works" – not according to their faith, as the Church is now being judged. (Rev. 20:12,13; 1 Jno. 5:4.) Faith, which is now difficult and therefore highly rewarded, will by and by, when the mists have rolled away, be the most easy and only reasonable thing; and while it will be required, being easy it will not be specially rewarded as now. And perfect works, which under present conditions are impossible with all our efforts, because of our blemished bodies, will then be the standard for which and toward which all who attain to everlasting life will be required to labor, building up character in breaking off evil propensities and in bringing themselves into full accord with righteousness in thought, word and deed. And under the favorable conditions of that time, a restitutionary blessing will be present to reward every effort, not only with an upbuilding of moral character and will-power, but also with proportionate strength and upbuilding of the mental and physical powers.

Thus, item by item and step by step, throughout the Millennial Age, the worthy ones of the world will be helped out of their weakness and imperfections, back to the perfection originally lost by the disobedience of father Adam, the right to return to which (by the cancellation of Adam's sentence) was secured by the ransom-price given by our Redeemer. And since every victory over self and sin and imperfection will be promptly rewarded, it will be rightly seen that the blotting out of the world's sins will gradually progress little by little, until at the close of the Millennial Age, all who have been willing to hear and obey the voice of the Great Prophet (Head and Body), will have attained to an unblemished perfection, mental, **[R2195 : page 229]** physical and moral, with none of the blemishes of sin remaining.

Mankind, as originally created, as represented in father Adam before his transgression, was in the image of God: the mind, the will, the judgment were true copies of the Lord's; and thus it might properly be said that Adam had the law of God written in his heart, in his head,

in his very organization. But, this Divine likeness has been marred, ruined by the fall. Man's organization, mental and moral, can no longer be said to be in the image of God. The selfish qualities have grown at the expense of the moral and intellectual qualities, so that he is very unlike his Creator, and his own original, as represented in Adam. But God's promise is that when he begins to deal with the world under the New Covenant in the hands of the Great Mediator, a great work will be accomplished for all the families of the earth who will obey him through the then exalted seed of Abraham; until all shall be blessed and be permitted to become God's people – "Israelites indeed," children of Abraham through faith – multitudinous as the sands of the sea.

Then will be fulfilled the promise of the Lord (Jer. 31:29-34), that they who die will die for their own iniquity, and not as now, for Adam's iniquity. And under the conditions of the new covenant, the Great Mediator of that covenant will re-write the law of God in the hearts of the repentant ones, as it originally was in the heart and very organism of Adam before his transgression: as it is written, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people." This promise does not apply to the present time, but indicates the completed results of the Millennial work, when the willing and obedient of mankind shall have been brought to perfection; all their iniquities and sins being blotted out. This is shown by the context, which says, "They shall teach no more every man his **[R2196 : page 229]** neighbor and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord'; for they shall all know him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more."

This blotting out of sins for the world during the Millennial Age will begin with Israel according to the flesh; "to the Jew, first." So the Apostle informs us in so many words. Read Romans 11:25-29. As spiritual Israel is the first-fruits of all God's creatures, the first to enter into the fullness of his blessing and be recovered from death, so natural Israel is to constitute the first-fruits of the nations to be saved from the

blinding influences of the Adversary, and to be granted a blessing under the New Covenant.

But, the blessing which begins with the return of fleshly Israel to Divine favor, will not end with them; for as the casting away of Israel under Divine providence resulted in the bringing in of some from amongst the Gentiles to be joint-heirs in the Abrahamic promise and covenant, so the blessing of Israel under the New Covenant means, not only an opportunity of life from the dead to them, but also a similar blessing of opportunity for all the families of the earth; because it is through the seed of Abraham (first the spiritual, secondly, the natural) that all the families of the earth are to be blessed with an opportunity of becoming children of Abraham, who is the "father" of all who are faithful to God. Thus, eventually, there shall none remain except the seed of Abraham, first the spiritual seed as the stars of heaven, and secondly, the earthly seed, as the sands of the seashore, all partakers of father Abraham's faith and obedience. See Romans 11:12,15.

The original perfection of mankind (father Adam) and the fall were symbolically represented in the first tables of the Law which God himself prepared and wrote, but which were broken, because of sin; they also represented the Law Covenant, and how it was a failure, broken so far as the people of Israel were concerned. The hewing out of the new tables of stone, whereon to rewrite the Law of God, symbolized the preparation of mankind, through the justification accomplished by the sacrifice of Christ. And not only was the preparation of the second tablets the work of Moses (type of Christ, Head and Body), but also the second writing of the law on those tables was the work of Moses and typified the work of Christ (Head and Body) during the Millennial Age – the engraving of the Law of God in the very hearts and constitutions of all of mankind, willing to submit to his gracious hands.
