

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question. In discussing "Feet Washing" in your issue of March 15, you made no reference to 1 Tim. 5:10. Please give us your thought on that scripture.

Answer. It would appear that a "poor relief" had been started which afforded occasional relief to some, and permanent relief to others. The Apostle is here urging that these general charities should not discourage the care of their own afflicted and unfortunate ones by each family: that professing Christians who would not provide for their own relatives and families so far as possible, were denying the faith – denying their share in Christianity in most practical form (vss. 8 and 16). The Church help was specially for the real widows – those bereft, and particularly the aged.

Accordingly no widow was to be *enrolled* as a regular, habitual beneficiary of the church's bounty under sixty years of age; and certain other qualifications were to be demanded also – Had she reared a family which took her attention? Or had she, without a family, shown herself willing, kind, hospitable in the entertainment of strangers? Or had she in any manner shown a desire to relieve affliction and generally to do good? Had she manifested an interest in the Lord's people and a helpfulness toward their comfort and entertainment, as for instance, by washing their feet?

These, and not *doctrinal* questions, were the questions to consider when application was made to put some one on the rolls as a permanent pensioner; for, these recipients of bounty might not have come to the place of full consecration or saintship themselves, but might be the sisters or mothers of the consecrated. The tests, therefore, were along lines of *good disposition*, meekness, helpfulness, kindness. Anyone who could not answer some of the above questions

affirmatively, should be esteemed unworthy of enrollment as a permanent or life pensioner.

With this view before the mind, and remembering that the foot-washing mentioned was one of the necessities of that time and country, it will be seen that its performance would merely signify kindness, hospitality, good feeling and appreciation toward the Lord's people.

Question. In Isa. 53:2,3, the statement is made of our Lord Jesus that, "He hath no form nor comeliness that we should desire him." Would it not, on the contrary, be reasonable to suppose that, as among the imperfect members of our race we see some very handsome persons, our Lord, who was perfect, was transcendently beautiful, both in form and feature?

Answer. Yes. The Jews saw no comeliness in Jesus, such as they looked for and desired; because they expected to find in Messiah a mighty warrior to free them from the Roman yoke; whereas he came as a Nazarene and humbly companied and ate with publicans and sinners.

Question. Since we are to be baptized in the likeness of Christ's death, should we not be immersed three times, face-forward, since he bowed his head thrice; [R2294 : page 122] and since Jesus died before he was buried, is it not improper to speak of baptism as a burial?

Answer. We do not understand Paul's words, "baptized into his death" and "buried with him by baptism into death," to refer to immersion in the likeness of the Lord's physical movements in his dying hours. That would be to be immersed in the likeness of his *dying*, whereas we are to be immersed in the likeness of his *death*.

You say that he died before he was buried; but on the contrary, we believe it proper to say that he was buried before he died; that is to say, his will was buried or immersed into the will of God at the time of his consecration, and he was reckoned dead from that time [R2294

: page 123] onward, the expiration on the cross being the completion of that death. So he said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!"

When we are baptized in water it is the *symbol* of the burial of our wills into the will of Christ; and when we are raised out of the water it is the *symbol* of our resurrection in his likeness.

The claims of triune immersionists as to the apostolic methods, based upon early historians, are not reliable. The "early fathers" are not to be depended on in such matters, the Word of God being the only reliable standard. Many vagaries, including triune immersion, were introduced after accessions began to be made from the ranks of the non-consecrated, and were a part of the falling away which began in the second century and culminated in Papacy.

Question. The statement of John 2:19 is perplexing to some of us: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." John says "He spake of the temple of his body;" but other scriptures declare that the Father raised our Lord Jesus from death by his own power. Can you throw any light on the matter?

Answer. The Scriptures repeatedly tell us that the Church is "the *body* of Christ." The Apostle Peter declares that each of the Lord's saints is a living stone prepared for and being placed in the glorious "*temple*" which God is building – whose chief cornerstone and cap stone is Christ Jesus our Lord. While this "temple" is a temple not yet existent in its spiritual condition, it already has an existence in the flesh – even now we are reckoned as the "members in particular of the body of Christ." In harmony with this we understand our Lord's words of John 2:19, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" – "he spake of the temple of his body" – the Church, of which he is the Head.

The three days we understand to be the days of the larger week, one thousand years to each day. In this larger week the seventh day

will be the seventh-thousand-year period – the Millennium or Sabbath of rest from sin and Satan. Recognizing time from this standpoint and applying to each thousand years the parallel day of the week, we find that, as over four thousand years had passed and the fifth thousand had begun when our Lord made this statement, it was therefore at a time corresponding to the fifth day of the lesser week, namely, Thursday, the first day of the three mentioned; Friday the second day, and Saturday (the seventh-day Sabbath) the third, in which the temple is to be "raised up." It is to be early in the morning of this third day – the Millennium – that the body of Christ, the temple of God, is to be brought together as a spiritual temple and filled with the glory of God, to the end that from it may flow the blessing of reconciliation to all the families of the earth.

Another statement, similar to this and interpretable, we believe, in the same manner, was the Lord's answer to Herod – "I do cures today, and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." (Luke 13:32.) This last statement could not be interpreted in any other way than that above suggested. The cures and blessings of divine grace have prevailed during the fifth, the day in which our Lord and the apostles lived, and also during the sixth thousand-year day; and on the seventh, the grand Millennial Sabbath, Christ and his Church will be perfected and the cures correspondingly increased.

Are not these *three days* the same that are mentioned by the Prophet Hosea (6:2)? Referring to Israel's judgments and their final repentance and reconciliation, he says, representing Israel, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us [see preceding verses]: he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."
