

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED CONCERNING BAPTISM OF JEWS.

Question. – Would a Jew coming into Christ today symbolize consecration just as do Gentiles, or would his baptism signify repentance for remission of sins, as per Acts 2:38?

Answer. – The special favor of God toward natural Israel as a nation ended at the time of Christ's rejection when their house was "left desolate." A *personal* favor continued with the true Israelites for a further 3½ years to the end of their covenanted 70 weeks of years. It is possible that some sort of special favor continued with this class until the full end of the Jewish "harvest," A.D., 69, but certainly no longer.

The Apostle Paul refers to this change, saying that [R3356 : page 127] "the middle wall of partition" between Jew and Gentile had been broken down. It follows, therefore, that Jews could not now come into relationship with Christ on any other terms than could Gentiles. As natural branches they are "broken off," and would require re-grafting just the same as would the wild-olive branches. – Rom. 11:19-24.

Question. – Was there any difference between the immersion of John and that mentioned by Peter (Acts 2:38)?

Answer. – Yes; John's preaching of repentance was merely an exhortation to renounce sin and prepare for a coming Messiah. The exhortation of Peter was to repent of sin, because the Messiah had come, and the sin to be repented of included the national sin of rejecting Messiah and crucifying him; hence, of the latter it is said that it is a baptism in the name of Jesus.

Question. – In Eph. 4:5 we read that there is "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." How does this agree with the thought that the Jews were immersed for the remission of sins, whereas the Gentiles were immersed into Christ?

Answer. – The one baptism is not the symbolic one, but the actual one, viz., the burial into Christ. This, in the case of those who are Gentiles, signifies a full consecration and full burial into the will of Christ; but this same baptism to the Jew would mean a transfer from Moses to Christ, from being dead in Moses to being dead in Christ. The sin of violation of the Jewish Law Covenant being repented of and forgiven, the Jew who was under that covenant is thenceforth counted as being under the New Covenant, and to him the outward form or symbol of baptism would mean a repentance from the works of the Law and his failure under the Law Covenant, and his acceptance in Christ, the new Mediator of the New Covenant. To us who are by nature Gentiles there can be no such repentance from the dead works of the Law, for we were never under that Law, and there can be no such transfer from Moses to Christ, because we never were in Moses.

Question. – Does Rom. 10:12 have any bearing on this question? "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him."

Answer. – It has a bearing, but not as contradicting the foregoing. There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek when both have come into Christ – thenceforth they are on the same plane, on the same footing; but there was a difference in the way the Jew and the Greek properly attested their coming to Christ at the opening of this Gospel age.

Question. – Was the re-immersion mentioned in Acts 19:3-5 made necessary because the persons were Gentiles, and had symbolized their baptism in a manner appropriate only to the Jews?

Answer. – We think it was, for the latter reason.

HOW DOES THE ANTITYPICAL SCAPEGOAT CLASS BEAR THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE?

Question. – What is represented in the typical confession of sin by the high priest over the "scapegoat" in the Tabernacle sacrifices, as recorded in Lev. 16:20-22.

Answer. – We understand that this goat represents a consecrated class which fails to perform sacrifice; and that its being sent into the wilderness at the hand of the "fit" man represents that all the consecrated who have not sacrificed their lives according to covenant, but who **[R3357 : page 127]** have, nevertheless, not repudiated the Lord, will be brought, in the time of trouble approaching, into such straits that they will be forced either to deny the Lord or to lay down their lives for the Truth. But since this laying down of life will be in a sense compulsory, it is not reckoned as being a "sacrifice" but a "destruction of the flesh." Here your inquiry comes in, Why does the high priest confess over this class certain sins which have already been atoned for by the blood of the bullock and the blood of the goat? We reply that sin may be considered from two standpoints: First, as the divine condemnation, which cannot be liquidated by the sufferings of the transgressor, but which must be met by the atonement sacrifice of the great High Priest, Head and body. Second, there is a retributive operation of divine law amongst men which brings upon the sinner a measure of suffering for sins. This latter, we believe, is represented in the sufferings of the scapegoat in the wilderness. As the Lord charged up against the living generations of Jews at the first advent, who had the light and knowledge peculiar to their own day, and who sinned against this light and knowledge, and required at the hands of that generation all the blood shed from Abel down, so we understand that, similarly, there is a great responsibility in God's sight resting upon those who today constitute nominal

Christendom, who are nominally children of the Lord and tethered at the door of the tabernacle. At the hands of nominal Christianity today will be required much, for if nominal Christendom entire were consecrated to the Lord there would be no necessity for the time of trouble to come at all, but the Lord might come and set up his Kingdom amongst a willing people without the necessity of overturning present institutions in a day of wrath. Consequently, when the day of wrath comes, it will be but the just recompense, and the divine wrath should be fully manifested upon and toward this nominal class.

RESPECTING DEUTERONOMY 29:29.

Question. – Please make some comment on Deut. 29:29.

Answer. – We understand this to mean that the Lord's people are to be careful to study and obey all that the Lord our God has commanded, searching diligently to appreciate it as it may become due to be understood. There are questions, nevertheless, respecting which the Lord has made no particular revelation, and we are to avoid the waste of time in considering those things, and to realize that had they been important for us to know the Lord would have revealed them in his Word. This is in harmony with the Apostle's statement, "All Scripture that is given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." These assurances of sufficiency of the meat in due season to the household of faith should not only relieve us from anxious thought on outside lines, but should make us suspicious of anything and everything that is being taught that is additional to the Scriptures, as well as contrary to them.

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