

WHAT SINS THE SCAPE-GOAT BORE

FOLLOWING the account of the Day of Atonement in Leviticus 16 – after the account of the first sacrifice of the bullock for the sins of the High Priest's body and house and the sacrifice of the Lord's goat for the sins of all the remainder of the people – we read that the High Priest took the Scape-goat and laid his hands upon its head and confessed over it "all the iniquities of the children of Israel and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send it away." We have interpreted this Scape-goat to be a type of the "Great Company" of Rev. 7:9-15. We have pointed out that the Lord's goat and the Scape-goat, both tethered at the door of the Tabernacle, represented the two classes who during this Gospel Age make full consecration to the Lord and are accepted of him and begotten of the holy Spirit. The one class goes on in harmony with its consecration, following the example of Christ, who is in type represented by the bullock. The other class, equally consecrated and begotten of the Spirit, fails to avail itself of the privilege of "suffering with Christ." It is allowed to escape the sufferings implied in the covenant of sacrifice. The question arises, What were those sins that were laid upon the head of the Scape-goat and what do they represent in the antitype of the Great Company? We answer that they do not represent the same sins which were laid upon the bullock, which made atonement for the household of faith; neither could they represent the sins that were previously atoned for with the blood of the Lord's goat. The sprinkling of the blood for those sins entirely cancelled them for "all the people."

The explanation of this seeming incongruity of first making an atonement in the Most Holy "for the sins of all the people," and then "laying the iniquities of the people upon the head of the

Scape-goat" is explained by the fact that there are two kinds of sins and that the sacrifice of Christ and the Church, typified by the sacrifice of the bullock and the Lord's goat, atoned for one kind of sin and not for the other. Thus of our Lord it is written, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and this Lamb has associated with himself the Church, whose sacrifice is represented in the Lord's goat. The sin of the world is the Adamic sin, to which the Apostle refers, saying, "By one man's disobedience sin entered into the world, and death as a result of sin, and so death passed upon all;" that sin and its penalty was upon everybody alike regardless of his wishes, for all were born in sin, shapen in iniquity – blemished, incapable of righteousness in the absolute sense. It was for that one sin, and that only, that Christ, the Head and Body, pays the penalty.

Aside from this general sin, however, there are "iniquities of the people" in which some share more and others less and others not at all. These are the more or less wilful wrong-doings which prevail throughout the world – violations of justice and love beyond the degree of inherited weakness. In these things, therefore, there is a measure of responsibility proportionate to the knowledge and ability to resist. These are the sins of the world that will be confessed on the head of the Scape-goat class and for which they will be permitted to suffer. An illustration of this is found in our Lord's words respecting typical Israel and the awful trouble which came upon those of the Jewish nation found unworthy, who had enjoyed the great privileges and were still found unworthy of the high calling.

Of that time of trouble our Lord spoke freely in Matt. 24, and the Apostle, speaking of it, says that "God poured upon that nation his wrath to the uttermost, that all things written in the Law and the prophecies concerning them should be fulfilled." Why should such great severity come upon them more than had come upon their forefathers? Why should so great tribulation as the Scriptures

foretell come upon the Great Company in the end of this age more than came upon others of previous times? Our Lord dropped a word which gives us the key to the situation: "Of this generation shall be required all the righteous blood." (Luke 11:50,51.) And similarly respecting the end of this age the Scriptures imply that there is a great back-account of retribution owing to the rest of the world which will be fully squared in the awful trouble with which this age will end. For instance, those who suffered earlier in the age are represented as beheaded souls under the altar crying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:10.) The answer given them implies that their blood, the wrong and **[R4273 : page 332]** injustice done to them as well as the wrong and injustice done to others since their day, is kept strict account of and will all need to be settled in the end of this age.

Those who made a covenant to sacrifice their lives in the service of the Lord, the Truth and the brethren, and who on the strength of this were begotten of the Spirit to a spirit nature, and who subsequently neglected to fulfil their covenant or vow, would be liable to the Second Death on this account; but in great mercy the Lord purposes to pass them through a "great tribulation" and to accept as "conquerors" those who will stand the tests of that time of trouble loyally. But their sufferings will not be on their own account. They will suffer for the sins of others – the accumulated sins of this age against light and knowledge will be required of those who in this day of the "bright shining" of the light of Truth have still held back from the voluntary sacrifice to which they devoted themselves in consecration.

However, eventually this Great Company, passing their tests, proving themselves loyal to the Lord, at last will receive a great blessing, even though it will not be so grandly glorious as that which the Lord will give to the Little Flock, who willingly, gladly, lay down their lives in harmony with the privileges and

instructions of the Word. They will be invited to participate in the marriage festival of the Lamb. – Rev. 19:9.

Some have written us lately the assurance that they know that the Great Company will be blessed on the earthly plane. We reply that it is true that a great multitude will be blessed during the Millennium under the restitution blessings and privileges – "all the families of the earth." But the Great Company of Revelation 7:9-15 is specially identified with the Church and separate from the world. They will come up to their station through "great tribulation," while the world will be led upward along the grand highway of holiness, on which there shall be no lion or ravenous beast, and in a time when nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all that holy Kingdom.

If there were no references to the Great Company in the Bible we should be inclined to look for one, or else know with sorrow that many shall go into the Second Death. Surely of all that consecrate fully and are begotten of the holy Spirit to new nature only a "little flock" make their election sure by compliance with the terms. The remainder, unfit for the glories to which they were called, must, it would seem, either die the Second Death or have their new natures developed in fiery trials and great tribulations "for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

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