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JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH AND ACTUALLY

THE Lord through the Prophet declared that his message would be presented "Line upon line and precept upon precept." (Isa. 28:10.) Some questions received imply that the important subject of Justification is not yet fully and clearly grasped by all. Although the all-important matter is the keeping of the heart, nevertheless it is proper for us to utilize every item of knowledge furnished us by the Lord, that we may keep our heads right, that we may be able to view matters from the Divine standpoint.

A narrow or a broad view of justification may be taken and both be true. For instance, we say that "Abraham was justified by faith," and say so truly. Yet this implies three different steps, two of which were Abraham's and one the Lord's. And the latter is not fully accomplished yet. God called Abraham to leave Haran and to come into the land of Canaan, promising that then he would make a Covenant with him. Abraham believed when he started from Haran and continued to believe after he had come into Canaan. In due time God made the Covenant as promised, assuring him that "in his Seed all the families of the earth would be blessed." The making of this Covenant [R4574 : page 86] implied a fellowship between God and Abraham on the basis of his faith-justification. But Abraham at that time was not justified to human perfection and life everlasting – but to fellowship merely. He needed to go on, to demonstrate that he had a strong faith. After many years of faith-testing Isaac was born. Abraham had thus an evidence of the Lord's favor and that the promise would be fulfilled. But still he was not justified to life and human perfection. Long years after Isaac's birth God put a final test upon Abraham's faith, saying, "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the

land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." – Gen. 22:2.

Not until Abraham had shown his absolute heart-loyalty could he be counted of God as *worthy* of a "better resurrection" than the remainder of mankind – resurrection to human perfection – actual justification, actual rightness or righteousness. Even when Abraham's tests were all passed satisfactorily he could not still be actually justified or made actually perfect; because he needed to be redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. As a member of Adam's family he was under a death sentence which must be annulled before he could be actually justified to the perfection of human life. Abraham had done his part to the Divine pleasement, but he must wait for his perfecting until the great Mediator, the Second Adam, Head and Body, would be complete and the New Covenant be sealed with Abraham and his natural seed, giving them earthly restitution and perfection at the hands of their Mediator. – Heb. 11:38-40.

When our Lord Jesus at his First Advent died some one might have said, Now Abraham and all the Ancient Worthies are justified. But that would not have been strictly true. It would have been true only in the sense that an unconscious, half-drowned child had been caught by its rescuer. An on-looker might shout, Hurrah, the child is saved! Yet really the rescuer must get the child into the boat and the work of resuscitation must be accomplished before the child would be fully saved.

Even when our Lord Jesus "ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God *for us*," and made satisfaction for our sins, as did the typical priest, sprinkling the blood of Atonement on the Mercy-Seat – even then Abraham and the other Ancient Worthies were not saved – not actually justified or made actually right – nor legally right. Why not? Because the

precious blood was not then applied on behalf of Abraham and the other Ancient Worthies, nor on behalf of the world in general. The Apostle declares, "He appeared in the presence of God *for us*." We are not finding fault with those who lump matters and in a general way say, "Christ died for the whole world." We heartily assent to that. He did die *for* the whole world in the sense that in God's "due time" the whole world will have the full benefit of the merit of his sacrificial death. Thus again, "He is a propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." His death had as its ultimate object not only the cancellation of the Church's sins, but also ultimately the cancellation of the sins of the whole world. But when he ascended up on high he made application "*for us*" and not for the world. As already shown he will make a fresh application of his own blood for the sins of the whole world at the close of this Gospel Age – this antitypical Day of Atonement.

Notice how distinctly the Scriptures differentiate between the Church class (the "Little Flock" of Under-Priests, and the "Great Company" of antitypical Levites) and the remainder of mankind. "Ye," "we" and "us" are terms Scripturally applied to those "called" during this Gospel Age to be sharers with Christ in the high or heavenly calling – on the spirit plane like unto the angels. These are "not of the world," nor are they styled the children of Christ, but "his brethren," of whom he is the Elder Brother – Christ's members over whom he is the Head – the Bride class, of whom he is the Head or Bridegroom. On the contrary, Israel and the whole world must get their *life*, and *restitution rights* and perfection from The Christ, the Mediator. Thus our Lord will be the Father or Life-Giver to the world. He is not the life-giver to the Church, his Bride, his members. Although we were "justified through faith in his blood" we never received earthly life and human perfection from him actually. We received merely an *imputation* of earthly

life-rights for the purpose of permitting us to *offer ourselves* "living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God," that we might become *members* of the Body of Christ, the Mediator, the Priest, the King of glory. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us." Ours is a spirit-begetting similar to that of our Lord Jesus and from the same source and for the same reason – because of *our obedience, even unto sacrifice* – made acceptable through our great Redeemer's merit.

Of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob it is written that they shall be the children of The Christ; they will receive the earthly life and its full restitution privileges directly *from the Redeemer* – "in due time." The world has not received life in any sense as yet. Hence the Apostle says, "The whole world lieth in the Wicked One." Jesus, the appointed Mediator between God and the world of mankind, has not yet taken up his work for them. They must wait until he shall have finished a preceding work "*for us*" – the gathering of the elect little flock from the world as his "members," "his Body," his Church.

When the time shall come for our Lord to make application of his merit on behalf of the world of mankind in general – for all not included in the household of faith, "us" – Abraham and all the Ancient Worthies will constitute the first-fruits on the earthly plane. Their justification will be made actual, *vital*, by a "better resurrection" than the remainder of mankind will enjoy. Having been approved of the Lord in the past they will be granted restitution instantly; whereas the world will come up to that plane of actual justification or human perfection by the slower processes of the Millennial Age. But the Ancient Worthies, like the remainder of mankind, reaching human perfection (actual justification) will be the children of Messiah. "Instead of *thy fathers* shall be *thy children*, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." (Psa. 45:16.) Harken to the Apostle, They without us cannot be made perfect (actually

justified to life), God having provided a superior thing for us first. – Heb. 11:38-40.

OUR JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

As there are three steps to Abraham's actual justification – two of these his own and one the Lord's – so also in our justification we may see three steps. As Abraham heard the call of God to leave his father's house, so the household of faith during this Gospel Age is called of God to leave the world, to turn aside, to become his people under such experiences of joy and sorrow as he may see best for them. From the time we took the first step (or even as children of those who had taken the step of obedience), we were counted justified by faith, as Abraham was when he left Haran and entered Canaan. **[R4574 : page 87]** But as he was not yet justified *to life*, neither were we, until after we had come to the point of test and had proven faithful. As Abraham's faith was tested in the demand that he offer up Isaac as a sacrifice, our faith and loyalty were tested when we heard the message, "Present your bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, and your reasonable service."

Our justification by faith holds thus far, but, after reasonable time, if we decline to make the sacrifice, it demonstrates that our faith was insufficient, that our loyalty was insufficient, that we could not attain the glorious things to which we had been invited – that we were not worthy. Such, the Apostle implies, receive the grace of God in vain. After a reasonable time their justification to fellowship with God lapses and their peace and joy correspondingly diminish. They had an opportunity of attaining the great favor or high calling of this Gospel Age, but they failed to improve it. Their relationship to God thereafter will be the same as that of the remainder of mankind. They will be held over to be dealt with by the

Redeemer under the New Covenant, to be blessed by its Mediator under his Mediatorial Kingdom.

But some who, during the time of the call of this Gospel Age, left the world behind and came into relationship with God through faith and were "justified by faith," were courageous to the degree of presenting their bodies living sacrifices, after the Redeemer's example. These, [R4575 : page 87] during "the acceptable time," were accepted and got Divine evidence in their begetting by the holy Spirit to membership in the New Creation – sons of God on the spirit plane, as members of Messiah's Body, the Church. These did not receive actual justification – they were not made actually perfect, yet their rights to human perfection all terminated when God accepted their sacrifice. Their *reckoned* justification was vitalized at the moment of consecration. By this we mean that at that moment God treated them exactly as he would have done had they been like Jesus, actually "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners."

Let us illustrate this matter. Suppose that A_____, as a reward, gave to B_____ a note calling for a New York draft for \$1,000 at any time before January 1, 1910. Let that note represent the justification by faith which becomes ours upon believing in Christ and turning from the world and from sin. The New York draft in the illustration would represent the begetting of the holy Spirit to spiritual sonship. As the draft could be secured only by the surrender of the note, so the spirit nature will become ours only through the surrender of all earthly rights – our own and those *imputed* (not given) to us by the Lord. As the note is good *only* for exchange for New York draft, so our justification is good *only* for the purposes designated – to enable us to "present our bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God." As the note would lose all value if not used before January 1st, so our faith-justification will lose all value if not

used in time. As the note presented in time would secure to the holder the New York draft, it signifies that that moment it ceased to be a *promisory matter of faith* and became an actuality. The New York draft would represent the begetting of the holy Spirit. The later cashing of the draft "in due time" at the bank would illustrate the making of our calling and election sure by faithfulness even unto death, when the coin value of the draft would come fully into our possession.

Whoever, after receiving the New York draft, should lose it or destroy it could not go back to the bank and claim the original note. So those who have received the begetting of the holy Spirit, if they misuse it or lose it entirely in the Second Death, can have no claim upon the Lord for human restitution. Their full share of Christ's merit has already been granted such, and "Christ dieth no more."

We have shown the different features of faith-justification and the necessity of a full test of obedience before the justified could be acceptable to God, either for the "better resurrection" to human perfection of the Ancient Worthies, or as the ground or basis of the Church's acceptance to the new nature. Next let us notice that if our Lord, when he ascended on high, had appeared in the presence of God for the whole world instead of merely "*for us*," then the whole world would have been brought into relationship to God just as we have been – at once, and not at the close of a thousand years of uplifting. Would such a cancellation of the world's sins that are past and such an introduction of them to the Father as imperfect beings have been to their advantage? We answer, No. No more would have been advantaged than are advantaged now – the comparatively few.

All of Adam's children are weak, imperfect, and only such of these as turn to the Lord with all their hearts and exercise faith and obedience could possibly be acceptable to him – even

through Christ. Consequently, all the remainder, thousands of millions, would have been unacceptable and their justification through Christ's merit from the original sins would merely have put them on trial afresh for *everlasting life* or *everlasting death*. They would have been condemned as enemies of God and of righteousness – not merely enemies through wicked works of the flesh, which they could not control, but enemies at heart, "carnally minded – not subject to the will of God." What the world needs is something entirely different from what is now, by God's grace, accorded to the Church, the household of faith. Blessed are our eyes, for they see, and our ears, for they hear, and our hearts, for they are desirous of fellowship with God; otherwise he would not accept us as living sacrifices and justify us through the precious blood and sanctify us through our covenant of death. What the world needs is just what God has provided for them.

(1) A strong Kingdom to crush the power of Satan and set mankind free from his blinding and enslaving influences.

(2) It needs further the establishment of a Kingdom of righteousness to mete out rewards and punishments promptly.

(3) It needs also a merciful high priest, not only sympathetic, but backed by a merit then applied on their behalf, giving them fully into his control to be uplifted mentally, morally and physically.

(4) In order to comply with the Lord's promise to natural Israel, all these blessings of the New Covenant must reach the world through Israel as the channel.

(5) This Mediatorial Kingdom will begin at the close of this Gospel Age, when the members of the Body of Christ shall all have been found, and all have been glorified. The New Covenant will then be inaugurated with Israel through the

Ancient Worthies. Their sins will then be atoned for by the same precious blood which now atones for ours. As a result, the Ancient Worthies will come forth perfect and to them will gather, not only their own Israelitish kindred, but all nations. "This is my Covenant with them when I shall take away their sins." (Romans 11:27; Jer. 31:33.) Sodom and Samaria and all the nations shall be given unto them for daughters, but not by their old Law Covenant, but by a New Law Covenant. – Ezek. 16:60-63.

Under the new regime of the New Covenant and its **[R4575 : page 88]** Millennial Kingdom (in the hands of the antitypical Moses, the Mediator of the New Covenant), the Law will go forth from Mt. Zion (Spiritual Israel) and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Natural Israel). The result will be wonderful blessings – mental, moral and physical uplift, freedom from pests, the elimination of disease, etc. The start on the highway of holiness will there be made and the blessings of the Lord will fill the whole earth. Many nations will perceive and take note and desire to share those earthly good things with Israel. But the New Covenant will be made only with Israel. And the only way in which the other nations can receive a share of those restitution favors will be by becoming Israelites – coming under the laws, regulations and disciplines of the New Covenant. The restitution blessings will be so attractive that we read, "Many nations shall go and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord's house; he will teach us (as well as the Jews) of his ways; and we (like them) will walk in his paths." – Isa. 2:3.

Thus the highway of holiness will be opened up through Israel, through the Ancient Worthies, through the New Covenant made with them. That highway of holiness will lead from imperfection to perfection, justification, restitution of all that was lost in Adam and redeemed at Calvary. Thus gradually, as the famine drew the Egyptians to Joseph for the bread of life,

so those Millennial conditions will draw all nations to Israel to obtain perfection and everlasting life.

The justification of the Millennial Age will not be a faith-justification, but an actual-justification, gradually attained under the New Covenant conditions, "Do and live;" but also under the merciful provision arranged through the Mediator of that New Covenant. During that Mediatorial Reign all refusing to come into harmony with the Kingdom arrangements will first of all fail to receive the special blessings that will then be given to the willing and obedient; and, persisting in their wrong course, they will ultimately be cut off in the Second Death without hope of recovery. With the conclusion of the Millennium all mankind will have reached the condition of actual justification, or perfection through the merit of Christ applied as Mediator of the New Covenant through Israel. And all the world of mankind then perfected will be Israelites, just as all nationalities come to the United States and here become citizens. Thus all nations during the Millennium will gradually flow to Israel and come under obedience to the New Covenant regulations and thus become Israelites indeed on the earthly plane.

When our Lord at the close of his Mediatorial Kingdom will deliver over the control to God the Father, he will deliver only *Israelites* – the seed of Abraham; as it is written, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations"; "Thy seed shall be as the sand of the seashore" for multitude. (Hosea 1:10.) Later on that great host of Abraham's seed, after having been delivered over to the Father perfect and thoroughly able to keep the Divine Law (without any allowances), will be tested by the liberation of Satan for a little season. The Adversary will go up on the breadth of the earth to deceive all – the number of all being "as the sand of the seashore." How many will prove unfaithful and fall into the snare he will be permitted to lay for them is not

indicated; but God will not fully and completely receive any into eternal life without first testing them as respects their loyalty to himself and the principles of his righteousness. One of the very tests which he puts to the Church in the present time – testing us, however, not according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, according to the intents of the heart – is our obedience to his Word and Providences. Only the submissive will pass the inspection. All the heady and high-minded and self-willed will surely be rejected. "Let us, therefore, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt us in due time." – I Pet. 5:6.

