

[R4632 : page 199]

DOES OUR LORD NOW OWN THE HUMAN RACE?

IF A MAN were purchasing a building, had entered into negotiations for it, had signed a contract and were making arrangements to secure the money to apply it in payment for the building, it would be very appropriate, as soon as he had signed the contract, to say, this is the owner of the building. In the strict sense of the word, however, he would not be the owner until he had paid the price and all the receipts were properly given, and, instead of the contract, he had the deed. A contract is an agreement for the carrying out of a project; the deed witnesses the transaction actually accomplished.

As far as the contract was concerned, our Lord Jesus entered into it with the Father; and in view of his having given to the Father the ransom-price – "Even as the Son of Man came to give his life a ransom for many" – he already has a claim to being Lord of all, in a prospective sense, not in the actual sense, as there are millions of people on earth today of whom he is not Lord; their knees have not bowed; their tongues have not confessed. So he is not their Lord in the absolute sense, but his work is progressing, and, in view of the authority which will yet be exercised by him and of the work which he will yet do, the Father speaks of him prophetically as "Lord of all." [R4633 : page 200]

THE WORLD ASLEEP IN JESUS

We will here consider certain Scriptures as having a bearing upon the matter. We mention first the Scripture which says that the world "sleep in Jesus." (I Thess. 4:14.) How can they sleep in Jesus, unless Jesus owns the world, may be asked? We answer that they sleep in Jesus in exactly the same way that Abraham and all Israel sleep and all the kings and prophets are said to be asleep. Not that Jesus at the time of their death had paid a ransom-price

for mankind, nor had come into the world to do so, but because, in the Divine Plan, God had made arrangements for the entire transaction and had guaranteed that a Redeemer would be found, that a ransom-price would be given, and that all mankind would be recovered from the tomb. Further, God himself spoke from that standpoint when he said that he was the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, speaking as though they were really not dead at all, but merely asleep, waiting for him.

Similarly, all who believed God could speak of and think of all who were dead as merely asleep for the time and awaiting the resurrection, even though Jesus had not yet come. The same is true since Jesus came and died. It is now still more reasonable and proper for *us* to say that all "sleep in Jesus," because now he is identified as the one who has given himself a ransom-price for all. It is not that the price has been applied for all, but merely that he has placed in the Father's hands his sacrificed life, which is his to appropriate and which is sufficient "for the sins of the whole world." (John 3:16.) It has not as yet been appropriated for the world, but merely for the Church, for the price is first a satisfaction for our sins, the Church's sins, and afterwards for the sins of the whole world. – I John 2:2.

THE CHURCH ALONE REDEEMED THUS FAR

We will next consider the text, *Ye* were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. (I Pet. 1:18,19.) The reference here is to *us*, the Church, and does not extend beyond the Church to the world. It does not imply that the *world* is redeemed as yet. Jesus' merit, of course, is all-sufficient for the whole world, but he has not yet appropriated it for all men.

We will consider another text, "*Ye* are bought with a price." (I Cor. 6:20.) This text, similarly, speaks not of the world, but of the Church. It is the "*Ye*" class that were bought, and even they were not bought when Jesus died at Calvary. There, indeed, he

committed to the Father's hands a price (Luke 23:46) sufficient for all; but it was not then appropriated for anybody – not even for us, not until his resurrection and ascension, when "he appeared in the presence of God for us." (Heb. 9:24.) Then *we* were bought. "*Ye* were bought with the precious blood of Christ." His blood was made the offset so far as believers are concerned.

Another text: "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." (I John 2:2.) We answer that he was a propitiation, satisfaction, for our sins, in one sense of the word, when he died, but the satisfaction *had not then* been applied for our sins. When he died the merit of his death was a satisfaction-price for the sins of the whole world, also, but it was not applied for the sins of the whole world. When he ascended up on high he appeared for *us*, the Church class, and made satisfaction for our sins. Therefore, as we believe and make consecration, our sins are remitted. His merit is additionally the satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; but he has not yet applied it for the world, hence the world is not free from the penalty of sin; it is still under condemnation. Concerning us, however, the Apostle says, "We *have escaped* the condemnation that is on the world." And again he says, "We *were* children of wrath even as others." The others, we see, are still children of wrath. Why? Because the satisfaction for their sins has not yet been made. The great Redeemer has the satisfaction price; it merely awaits the due time for application.

Notice another passage, "Christ died and rose and revived that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." (Rom. 14:9.) This text very appropriately states the valuable transaction accomplished by our Lord. His death was a necessary feature of the redemptive work. His raising and revival were also necessary features. And further, he could not have been Lord in any other way than by the Father's proclaiming him "Lord of all," and "Let

all the angels of God worship him." But while he is proclaimed to be Lord of all, it will take time to bring about the recognition of it. In harmony with this, the Apostle says, "In the fullness of time God will gather together under him (Jesus) all things in heaven and earth." But it will take the fullness of time, the fullness of the Millennial Age, to accomplish this gathering together under him and making him Lord of all. So we see that prophetically and by Divine appointment he already has that office, but now he waits until his enemies shall be brought under him or made his foot-stool, and all things shall be subjected to him.

"A RANSOM FOR ALL"

We next consider the text, "He gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:6.) The giving of himself as the man Christ Jesus was when he presented himself at Jordan and surrendered all to the Father's will. This work of surrendering his earthly life and all his earthly rights was fully accomplished at Calvary when he cried, "It is finished." He had finished the work the Father had given him to do. He had given himself to be "a ransom for all," and his death-merit is sufficient to constitute a ransom for all, as soon as it shall be so appropriated. Thus far, we see, it has been applied only for us who believe, and the time for its application for the remainder of the world will be at the beginning of the Millennial Age; but it will not *reach all* of the human family at the beginning.

While our Lord's merit is fully appropriated during the Gospel Age for all who come unto him, it will be fully set free when the last of the consecrated ones shall have passed beyond the vail. His merit has been imputed to them for the very purpose of enabling them to be sacrificers and when it shall have been released by the death of the last of the consecrated, it will be again at his disposal for appropriation. Then the great High Priest will

make the second sprinkling of the blood – not on *our* behalf, because we shall have no further need of it, having by that time become perfect as New Creatures beyond the veil, members of his Body. The second sprinkling will be on behalf of "all the people" – all who will come under the New Covenant arrangement – "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile"; all who will desire, when they come to sufficient knowledge, under that New Covenant, to come under the merit of our Lord's ransom-price; and those who will fail to thus come, will reject the ransom-price and hence the blessings of restitution.

All these blessings will come gradually, not instantaneously, not by faith, but actually, by restitution processes. All through the Millennial Age The Christ will [R4633 : page 201] be giving men the benefit of our Lord's ransom or "corresponding price," and the full benefit of this price will not have been given until the work of the Millennial Age shall have been finished and shall have brought to perfection all who desire to be God's people, upon God's terms, as God never intended to give his blessings to any but those who desire to be in harmony with him on his terms. God never intended to do anything for those who are willingly and intentionally contrary, such as Satan.

It may be asked how the foregoing will conform with the text, "That he [Jesus], by the grace of God, should taste *death* for *every man*." (Heb. 2:9.) We answer that this is God's great work which he purposed in himself before the foundation of the world – that the ransoming of Adam and all his race should be accomplished through the death of Christ. Thus he tasted death for every man, whether the benefit of it was received on the Day of Pentecost, or later, during the Age, or whether they will get it at the beginning of the Millennial Age. It is for *every* man that he "tasted death," that he might give them the blessings that will come to the world of mankind down to the completion of the Millennial Age, and, if obedient, to all eternity.

"He ascended up on high and led captivity captive" – or, as another translation gives it, and we think more correctly, "He ascended up on high leading forth a multitude of captives." This passage shows that he was the leader of all the captive race. We, the Church, follow first; the "Great Company" follow next; the Ancient Worthies will follow soon afterward, and at the end of the Millennial Age he will bring in the remainder of the race. They will all be led forth, all delivered from the power of sin and death.

THE PRICE ONE THING – THE APPLICATION OF IT ANOTHER THING

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." This passage does not state that Christ made an application of his merit for the ungodly; it merely states that God arranged his plan so that it was necessary for Christ to die for the ungodly. Why did God so arrange it? He arranged it on behalf of, or in the interest of, the ungodly – not merely the Jews and those who were, as some of us may have been, desirous of harmony with God, but for all the ungodly. The merit of his death was intended by the Father to be applicable to every member of the race, the ungodly race of Adam, all of them sinners and more or less depraved and degraded and out of the way.

Now, then, the object for which the price was given is one thing and the application of it is another. The purpose of Christ's death was to redeem the world, to be the world's ransom-price, that he might be the restorer of all. But in this Plan there are time and order; the work progresses step by step. The first **[R4634 : page 201]** step was for Christ himself to secure eternal glory by his own obedience to death and to have as an asset something that he could give away – his earthly life, which he had not forfeited.

The next step was that he should ascend up on high and apply this price. He appeared as advocate for a special class of

humanity. What special class? We answer, he appeared for all those from among men who should desire to come into harmony with God, who should desire to accept God's favor and to become members of the Body of Christ under an invitation or programme that God had arranged. When he appeared for these he imputed the merit of his sacrifice on their behalf, and thus all this merit is absorbed, so to speak, in this one work first undertaken, this work of justifying and assisting this special class who desire to walk in Jesus' steps, desire to suffer with him that they may also share with him the heavenly glory. He does this, not by first giving them earthly restitution, but by simply *imputing* his merit to them.

This imputation of his merit, coming to those who have turned from sin, who are believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have consecrated themselves to God, covers their Adamic sin and makes up for all deficiencies of their flesh, so that they can "present their bodies living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, their reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1.) In other words, he becomes endorser for these. They are not sufficient of themselves, but he guarantees for them that if they will faithfully perform this laying down of their lives, his merit will continue to be applied for all their imperfections. These are the Royal Priests, whom he in one picture represents as his Bride, and in another as members of his Body. These are "more than conquerors."

Then comes the secondary class, not up to this standard – a class that does not voluntarily, heartily and cheerfully lay down their lives in the desire to please the Father and do his will. These, nevertheless, are loyal at heart and are restrained from full sacrifice only through "fear of death," through fear of what it will cost them. They will be tested to the point that they will be obliged ultimately to lay down their lives, and to do so with a willing mind. They fail of coming off more than conquerors because of permitting experiences designed to test them to retard

their progress in the matter of gaining the high position offered them, thus they become the Second Company. There is, also, a third class, those who die the "Second Death," who "draw back unto perdition."

By the time that these three classes shall have finished their course, all the merit that Christ imputed will be available again as at first; all will be at his disposal afresh. Then it will be applied in the sealing of the New Covenant which will be made with Israel, but which will be broad enough to include every individual of all the nations of the earth who will be willing to come under the same terms and to become the children of Abraham through faith and obedience.

"THE REDEMPTION OF THE PURCHASED POSSESSION"

In this connection let us consider the text, "In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed ye were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the *purchased possession*." – Eph. 1:14.

The holy Spirit now granted to the Church is the earnest or foretaste of our inheritance. What are we to inherit? We are to "inherit all things." First of all we are to inherit the Divine nature, and secondly, we are to inherit the great Abrahamic promise that through us, in union with our Lord Jesus, as members of his Body, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. We speak of ourselves as being of the Lord's purchased possession, and when we are changed to receive his glory, this part of his possession will be complete and we shall be perfected with him and be under his direct control.

After this another feature of the same possession, and linked in as part of this same promise, will become **[R4634 : page**

202] operative. The precious blood will then be applied to seal the New Covenant on behalf of the sins of all the people and the work of recovering the still larger possession will progress until the close of the Millennial Age, when the whole possession will have been brought into line and everything subjected to his rule and turned over to the Father.

We will also consider the passage, "For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Christ Jesus, hath abounded unto many." – Rom. 5:15.

In this text the Apostle evidently does not mean to be understood as saying that the full abundance of grace had then *reached* the many, because that would be an untruth. It is now 1,800 years since the Apostle's day, and the abundance of grace has not yet reached the majority of men. So we must understand him to mean that this abundance of grace that is in Christ according to the Father's plan and arrangement and purpose, is *yet* to reach the many. The world is yet in its sins, and Israel is yet in its sins and will not be recovered until after the Church shall have been glorified, as the Apostle says (Romans 11:27), "For this is my Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

Since this grace has not yet gone to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles in general, the only way in which it *has abounded* is *through the promise of God* that the death of Christ will yet be made efficacious for all. Therefore, speaking from this prophetic standpoint, it is plain to be seen how Jesus is the Savior of the world, although he has not yet finished the work of saving the Church and will not do so until the end of this Age. Similarly he will not be the Savior of the world in the full sense until the end of the Millennial Age. Some he will never save, because they

will refuse the grace of God; and yet he is, according to the Scriptures, the Savior of all men – the Savior of the world.

He was the Savior of the world, according to the Scriptures, when he was born. The message of the angels was, "Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." He was a Savior in the prospective sense – not because of what he was then, as a babe, and not merely because of what he has yet accomplished, but because, according to God's promise, of what he will effect up to the time when he shall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father. "He is a Savior and a great one," "able to save unto the uttermost all that will come unto the Father through him." (Isa. 19:20; Heb. 7:25.) He is now saving *us* in a partial sense, by *hope*, because we have come unto the Father through him, according to the arrangement of this Gospel Age. He will yet save us in the fullest sense in the "First Resurrection." The saving of the world will then begin, when he shall awaken them from death; but they will not be fully saved, will not attain full restitution nor gain eternal life, except as they shall exercise faith and obedience. He opens the door. He makes the way. He provides all the arrangements by which they may know and obey.

The whole earth is a part of the purchased possession and shall be filled with the glory of God. And if any knee will then refuse to bow and any tongue refuse to confess and any fail to accept of the favor of God, there will be nothing further for him. He will be doing "despite to the spirit of grace" and will die the "Second Death." – Heb. 10:29; Jude 12.

=====