

## **THE SINS BORNE BY THE SCAPE-GOAT**

**"The Scape-Goat shall be presented alive before the Lord to make an atonement with him." – Lev. 16:10.**

NOT fully may we comprehend the method by which the accounts of Justice are kept, but apparently murder, the taking of life, is one of the most serious of crimes from the Divine standpoint, whether this be murder in the actual sense, or only the hatred of another, which the Lord denominates to be murder of the heart. He declares that "precious in his sight is the death of his saints." This means that he takes special note of their death. Throughout the period preceding our Lord's first advent righteous blood was shed, from Abel down to Zachariah.

So far as Cain is concerned, he was guilty of his brother's death, guilty of his brother's blood; others who slew righteous people whom God approved were held guilty of *their* death; and those who slew Jesus were held guilty of the blood of Christ. God's proposition is that through the merit of Christ, he purposes a general forgiveness of all Adamic sin; but there is a measure of sin which is beyond anything that could properly be considered as resulting from Adamic weakness, and for which there is a measure of responsibility.

## **THE CRYING OF JUSTICE FOR VENGEANCE**

According to the Scriptures the blood of Abel "cried" from the ground to the Lord. In other words, Justice cried out for vengeance. The merit of the death of Christ, which will ultimately be applied as the redemption-price for the sins of the world, would apparently not cover such transgression to the full. It would cover such portion as belonged to Adamic weakness or heredity, but a certain portion would be uncovered. We may

presume, therefore, that a certain amount of obligation would continue to attach to those individuals who committed the murders, and that more or less retribution will be due them on account of their wrong-doing and misdeeds. But apparently the Lord has purposed that, since some needed to suffer, he would allow a certain liquidation of this murder account, as we may call it, to be visited upon the Jews in the end of the Jewish Age. Since they would, at the close of their Age, have a great time of trouble anyway, he purposed to allow this added suffering to come upon them, even upon many that were innocent.

It would seem that he permitted this punishment of innocent ones to offset in a measure the account of Justice against those who had committed special murders, etc., and in this light we would understand the statement, "At the hands of this generation will I require all the righteous blood which was shed on the earth from the days of righteous Abel down to the days of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matt. 23:45.) This was the "wrath to the uttermost" which came upon Jerusalem and that seems to have squared up the account so far as the past was concerned. A new beginning was made there, just as a new dispensation began. The Antitypical Priesthood and the Antitypical Levites then came on the scene, and throughout this Gospel Age also the Lord has taken cognizance of the death of all his consecrated people. If anyone is guilty of the death of one of the Lord's saintly, consecrated ones, he brings himself under a special obligation and responsibility. There seems to be a special charge of Justice against whoever is culpable, or responsible for the death or persecution of his saints. There is a suggestion along this line (Rev. 6:9,10), where the souls of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the testimony of the Word of God are said to cry out, "How long! How long! oh Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." This seems to symbolically picture, not the crying of any individual,

for these individuals were dead and had no knowledge, no appreciation of the things at all – "the dead know not any thing" – but it was justice that cried, as in Abel's case, after he was dead. They had nothing to do with the crying of their blood. It was the voice of Justice.

That there has been quite a large class of this kind all through this Gospel Age of more than 1,800 years, will be freely admitted by all. Many suffered for the cause of **[R4652 : page 235]** righteousness, for the namesake of the Lord; and apparently the Lord purposes that in the end of this Age he will do as he did in the end of the Jewish Age – have a summing up or accounting, as it were, and a satisfaction of Justice. This is not the satisfaction of Justice which Jesus will accomplish with the merit of his own blood, satisfying all claims that would come under the head of Adamic condemnation and weakness, but a satisfaction of Justice as respects these special trespasses against "the Body of Christ, which is the Church" – "Whosoever shall offend one of the least of these, my little ones, it were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea."

### **THE KIND OF ATONEMENT THE GREAT COMPANY WILL EFFECT**

In the end of this age, there will be a class, which we term the Great Company, which must needs die, because it was their covenant that they would do so. It is on this condition that they received the begetting of the holy Spirit. Hence, if God will complete this work of grace in them by giving them a spirit nature, the death of the flesh must take place. There is no alternative, no escape from it; and since they have failed to carry out the sacrifice in the full sense, failed to go forward with the zeal and alacrity that would be required of such as would be footstep followers of him, they are disassociated from the Little Flock class; but instead of being cast into the Second Death, they

are allowed to complete their death. And since their death is not applied, as is the death of the members of the Body of Christ – in the sacrificial sense, as it was originally proposed that it should be – the arrangement seems to be that these will go into death in a *kind* of substitutionary way, as an offset to some of the trespasses of those who did violence to the members of the Body of Christ throughout the age. And thus the accounts of Justice will be in part squared by these and to a certain extent, therefore, there will be a corresponding release granted, we may say, to those who have committed murder in the past. [R4652 : page 236]

For instance, the words of the angel to Daniel (Dan. 12:2) imply that when Nero will come forth in the resurrection he will come forth to shame and lasting contempt. All will know about the details of the man's life; it will be an open book to the whole world. People will say, "That is Nero! There he is!" It will be a terrible ordeal to be thus looked upon as the murderer of his own mother and the murderer of hundreds of God's saints; and his shame and contempt will continue until he shall have risen out of that condition of degradation and shall have shown by a reformation of character that he is a thoroughly changed man. But there will be a certain great responsibility against Nero because of the death of all those saints of the Lord; this we might think would almost preclude any possibility of his having mercy from God. If the death of one saint would bring a punishment, the death of many saints would, we think, properly bring much punishment. We may suppose, therefore, that he will have a great deal of shame and contempt; but nevertheless, the merit of Christ's death will apply to Nero as well as to the remainder of mankind.

Possibly many people have lived in the world who had minds and hearts no better than Nero's, but who did not have the same opportunity for manifestation of this wicked propensity. Perhaps there were many they would have liked to kill, but since

they were not emperors, they would themselves have been amenable to the law and to punishment, and were thereby deterred. We are, therefore, not competent to judge how particularly responsible Nero was for all his course or how much more guilty he was than some others of the race.

The suffering and death of the Great Company is, we have seen, necessary, and the application of this suffering and death in a substitutionary manner for the special transgressions against the "Body of Christ" seems to be a particular provision on the Lord's part. In this way the "souls under the altar" and their blood cry for vengeance; and in this way the vengeance will be met. The cry of Justice will be satisfied in connection with the death of these innocent persons of the Great Company class in the time of trouble. The death of Nero's victims will be recompensed, we may suppose, by those who may suffer innocently. The accounts of Justice, in this respect, will be satisfied.

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