

THE RANSOM AND THE CHURCH

*"The Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all."
– 1 Tim. 2:6.*

THE word Ransom is used in the Scriptures in two different senses. The one is represented in the above text. The other reads, "I will Ransom them from the power of the grave." (Hosea 13:14). In the latter, the word Ransom signifies to recover from the grave, to deliver from the grave. As to the word Ransom in the first text, we understand it to refer to a Ransom-price, the Ransom-price of one man, the Ransom-price furnished by "the man Christ Jesus." Our Lord laid down that Ransom-price during the three and a half years between his consecration at Jordan and his death at Calvary; but he did not apply it at that time (but later when "he appeared in the presence of God for us," the Church class), nor has he yet applied it for the whole world. He will, however, apply it for the world "in due time." He is now imputing of his merit to a small class, so that they may be acceptable to the Father and have the privilege of participating in his sufferings – "filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his Body's sake" – that they may have fellowship with him also in his great glory, in his great Office as Mediator between God and men.

Thus the Church will have a share with her Lord in the sufferings of the present time that she may be a part of the Sin-Offering. This does not imply that they will have a share in the Ransom-price, because one man is the Ransom-price, and *not many men*. The Church's share, therefore, as a part of the Sin-Offering is not to be confounded with our Lord's work as a Ransom-price. Even in the Sin-Offering the Church does not offer the Sin-Offering. The High Priest *offered the bullock*, and the High Priest also *offered the goat*. It is not that the High Priest offered the bullock and the under-priests offered the goat – as though we offer or sacrifice ourselves. The utmost that we can do is to consecrate ourselves to be willing sacrifices. It then remains for the

High Priest to come forth and impute of his merit in order to make an acceptable sacrifice of this class represented by the "goat." Thus it is seen that we do not share in the Sin-Offering in the sense as does our Lord. The High Priest's offering was of two parts, the "bullock" and the "goat" – the bullock representing his own person and the goat that of his followers.

OUR PART IN THE SIN-OFFERING A FAVOR

Some one might inquire, Where, then, does the Church appear? We answer that the Church does not appear in the "goat"; but the consecrated human being is represented in the "goat" which was presented. When the sacrifice is made (the offering of the High Priest having been accepted), we become members of the High Priest, his under-priests. From that on, as *his* members, we have a participation with him in everything that is good, sacrificially and otherwise. But we have no *personal* identity in the Holy. It is the New Creature that is represented in the Holy, though not the New Creature as separate and apart from the High Priest, but as coming in under his robe, under his merit, as a member of his Body, according to the Divine arrangement.

Following out this thought: It is nowhere represented that we, the Church, will follow our Lord into the Most Holy as under-priests and there sprinkle our blood as the Lord sprinkled his blood. On the contrary, it was the **[R4747 : page 25]** High Priest who sprinkled the blood of the bullock and who, later, sprinkled the blood of the goat as that of his own Body. So we, as individuals, have nothing to do with that. Our individuality is lost as we become members of the Body of Christ and take his name. We are, therefore, to share his glory and his work.

"WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM"

We do not mean, however, that we will *have no individuality* beyond the veil, because the Scriptures assure us that we shall be *like him*. The thought is that we will have no individuality in

respect to the glorious Office. There is but the one Melchisedec Priest. All others are lost sight of. There will be the Priestly and Kingly Office and we shall share in all of it, in our relationship to him who is "the Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body." As individuals, therefore, we have nothing to do in the sacrificing. Any association that we have in the work of Sin-Offering, from the Divine standpoint, is all accredited to and included in the work of Christ – it is *his work*.

The participation of the Church in the Sin-Offering for the world is not due to any necessity that has arisen; but owing merely to the Divine arrangement, which permits us to come in with Christ and share in his glorious higher nature and work. The matter of suffering is purely a matter of favor for the Church, and entirely unnecessary. Jesus' death alone is all that was necessary for the release of the world from the Divine sentence of death.

It is, as we see, highly important that we keep clearly in mind the difference between our work of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices and our Lord's work, as the great High Priest, in offering us sacrificially. The two matters are distinctly separate, as shown in the type. The goat was brought to the door of the Tabernacle and tied, picturing the Covenant of Sacrifice which we make. But the goat had not yet been offered and no one but the High Priest was qualified to make the sacrifice. The work of the High Priest in sacrificing the goat was the only sacrifice, in the proper sense of the word.

Even after the presentation of ourselves and the Father's acceptance, and after we have become New Creatures and are members of his Body, and, therefore, members of the Royal Priesthood, there is a continuous work – the presenting of ourselves daily. So the Lord Jesus has continued the offering all through this Gospel [R4748 : page 25] Age. He will finally complete this at the end of the Gospel Age, when the offering will all be finished as one sacrifice and the New Creatures will all be admitted as members of the glorified Body.

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