

## QUESTIONS OF INTEREST

### THE GRADUAL END OF GOSPEL FAVOR

QUESTION. – Do you understand the Scriptures to teach, either directly or indirectly, through the Parallels of the Jewish Dispensation, that it was necessary that all who would eventually constitute the "little flock" must have been in a justified condition previous to October, 1881? Answer. – No, we do not so understand the matter.

Question. – Was it necessary that all who would be of the "little flock" should have made their consecration by or before October, 1881?

Answer. – *No, we do not so understand the matter.*

The chapter in SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. II, showing the parallels between the Jewish and Christian Dispensations, makes prominent four dates, viz., (1) October, 1874; (2) April, 1878; (3) October, 1881, and (4) October, 1914; these dates being parallel to four in the Jewish harvest, viz., (1) The beginning of our Lord's ministry; the beginning of the trial or harvest time of the Jewish nation, October, 29; (2) The end of our Lord's ministry, His crucifixion, and the rejection of the Jewish nation as a nation, April, 33 (See SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. 2, chapter 7); (3) The close of the "seventy weeks" (Dan. 9:24-26) of favor upon the Jewish nation – October, 36 – after which the Gospel privileges were open to the Gentiles, Cornelius being the first convert; (4) The full end of trouble and destruction which came upon Israel's polity, October, 69.

It should be clearly noticed that the parallels between the Jewish and Gospel Ages all belong to the *nominal systems then and now*, and if this is borne in mind, it will prevent our applying these parallels either to the gathering out of the Gospel Church or to the gathering of the Lord's people out of Babylon now.

Noting these parallels, we find **1874** as the beginning of this "harvest" and the gathering together of the "elect" from the four winds of heaven; **1878** as the time when Babylon was *formally rejected*, Laodicea spewed out – the time from which it is stated, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" – fallen from Divine favor. The parallel in **1881** would seem to indicate that *certain favors were still* continued to those in Babylon up to that date, notwithstanding the rejection of the system; and since that date we would understand that that relationship has been in no sense an advantageous one, but has been in many senses of the word a *distinct disadvantage*, from which only with *difficulty* could any free themselves, the Lord's grace and truth assisting. And in harmony with this parallelism, October, **1914**, will witness the full end of Babylon, "as a great millstone cast into the sea," utterly destroyed as a system.

Coming back: We concede it reasonable to infer that the close of the favors upon fleshly Israel represent the close of the *special favor* of this *Gospel* Age, viz., the invitation to the High Calling; accordingly, our understanding is that the *open* or *general* "call" of this Age to Kingdom honors ceased in October, 1881. However, as already shown in SCRIPTURE STUDIES, we make a distinction between the end of the "call" and the closing of the "door"; and believe that the door into the Kingdom class is *not yet closed*; that it *stands ajar* for a time, to permit those who had already accepted the "call" and who *fail* to use its privileges and opportunities in self-sacrifice to be *thrust* out, and to permit *others to enter* to take their crowns, in harmony with Rev. 3:11. *The present time*, therefore, from 1881 until the door of opportunity for sacrifice in the Lord's service shall fully close, is a period of "*sifting*" as respects all who are already in Divine favor, in covenant relationship with God.

And since those who have gone into the "Feast" through the "door" represent all who are called (except those who have afterward been rejected and expelled), it follows that the places of those thus expelled must be taken by some who were *not* previously amongst the

called, amongst the consecrated. This, we trust, makes plain the answer to your question, proving that some not previously consecrated will, in the *eleventh hour*, be admitted to the vineyard labors and to the rewards of the faithful, *after the open call ceased*, and before the "door" closes.

Indeed, we are to distinctly remember that in speaking of the gathering to take place *during this harvest time*, our Lord mentions amongst others those who have been *in the field* (in *the world*), apparently referring to a class who *previously had been neither justified nor sanctified* through the Truth. See SCRIPTURE STUDIES, Vol. III, Chap. 6.

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### **THE NEW CREATURE GIVEN THE ROBE**

*Question.* – Can the New Creature's body sin?

*Answer.* – The New Creature's proper body is the Spirit body of the First Resurrection. But before getting it he is placed on probation and given his old human body to practice with. The New Creature cannot make the old body obey him *perfectly*. But he can develop strength in his endeavors to bring words, actions and thoughts into perfect accord with the perfect Law of God – Love.

Unable to conquer, he must show the Captain of his salvation his loyalty to the core by "fighting a *good* fight."

The imperfections of the flesh to which the new mind does not consent are all of heredity – all from Adamic weakness – all, therefore, *forgivable* by the Redeemer, who merely needs to be appealed to as the great Advocate. But every transgression of the flesh is charged to the New Creature, who owns the flesh and is using it. This obligates repentance, prayer, etc., and means the greater blessing to the New Creature. To whatever extent the New Creature gives consent or sympathy to the sin of his flesh he is worthy of "stripes,"

which correctively will assist in his character development. "What son is he whom his Father chasteneth not?"

The New Creature *only* is given the wedding robe, the robe of Christ's righteousness, as a covering for his imperfect flesh. It represents his justification as a New Creature. It shows him as in Divine sight, holy, harmless, undefiled, through the merit of Jesus his Advocate and Redeemer.

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### **THE NEW CREATURE AND SIN**

*Question.* – Can the New Creature sin?

*Answer.* – Yes! and No! The Apostle says, "He cannot sin, for his seed remaineth in him." (I John 3:9.) That is to say, so long as any New Creature continues to possess the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit, he *cannot consent wilfully* to do sin. If one Spirit-begotten does *sin wilfully* it implies that prior to that *wilful sin* he parted with his spirit of holiness (lost the seed of his begetting) and got instead a spirit of sin, the spirit of the Adversary. In other words, a holy person, possessing God's Spirit of begetting, cannot *wilfully* and *intentionally* do that which he knows to be unholy and displeasing to God. He cannot take pleasure in sin. He once died to it, and to have it revive means a return to wallowing in the mire – "twice dead, plucked up by the roots"; ready to be taken and destroyed as a brute beast. – Jude 12; 2 Peter 2:12.

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