

RETRIBUTIVE DISCIPLINE OF THE MILLENNIUM

But there have been other sins, flagrant wrongs, for which Justice would demand retribution, sins against the Holy Spirit, against light. All of these are sins against God, against righteousness. To illustrate, consider the Lord's experience: It may be that the rabble were not responsible for the crucifixion of our Lord; but there were *individuals* who had sufficiency of light to have done better. So from the days of Abel to the present time some have suffered gross injustice, and the cries of these violations of Justice appeal to God, just as the blood of Abel cried out. The Scriptures show us how satisfaction will be made also for these before the opening of the great Day of blessing, before the world is turned over fully into the hands of the Mediator of the Kingdom.

The satisfaction for these wilful sins is shown in the picture of the scapegoat. There we see in type how the "great company" will be caused to pass through tribulation, which will have a good effect upon themselves and which will, at the same time, be the means of squaring up accounts for gross violations of Justice outside of Adamic sin. The putting of the hands of the high priest upon the head of the scapegoat pictures the placing of these sins upon the "great company" class and the sending of them into tribulation. These will pass through an experience similar to that which our Lord foretold would come upon the Jewish nation, and which was literally fulfilled. Our Lord states that those horrible sufferings at the end of the Jewish Age were to be a squaring up for sins against Divine Justice – for various misdeeds of previous times. (Luke 11:49-51.) This will leave the world at the opening of the Millennium without anything against them on the books of Justice.

THE DISCIPLINES ACCORDING TO PREVIOUS CHARACTER-DEVELOPMENT

Then Justice will transfer the whole world of mankind into the hands of Messiah, who will take them *just as they are*. They will be in various conditions. Some will be more depraved, others less depraved; some will be more seared in their consciences and some less; and these deficiencies of character will depend upon the way in which each one accepted or rejected light and opportunity in the present time. Those who *knew not* His will and *did it not* will receive few stripes; those who *knew His will* and *did it not* will receive many stripes, because of previous hardening of character. Everybody will be required, eventually, to come up to the full standard of Divine requirements. Those more depraved will have greater difficulty and those less depraved will have less difficulty and receive fewer stripes, in the coming up to Divine requirements. [R4856 : page 220]

In other words, every wrong deed, every wrong principle acted upon, has an evil effect upon character, as all right doing brings blessing. So mankind, in proportion as they have in this life obeyed or disobeyed privilege or knowledge, enjoyed and understood, will be elevated or degraded in character when they enter the next Age.

The Apostle says that God is not slack (slow) as men count slackness, but is long-suffering and patient (2 Pet. 3:9); and "He knows how to reserve the ungodly until the Day of Judgment to be punished." (2 Pet. 2:9.) Again we read, "Some men's sins are open, going beforehand to judgment, and others they follow after. (I Tim. 5:24.) That is to say, there are people who do wrong and receive promptly the punishment for their wrong course. Thus they have opportunity of improving upon the past.

There are others who seem to do well, seem to prosper in earthly things; their eyes stand out with fatness; they seem to go unheeded in their wrong course, down to the very tomb. (Psa. 73:3-12.) Will these escape? We answer, "No." In the Day of Judgment they will get their lesson. In that Day of trial they will have much more difficulty than will those who have learned lessons from the tribulations of the present

life. A man who has practised evil will require severe discipline before he will learn that the customs of the past will not be allowed. Since this New Order will be such that nothing will be allowed to hinder it, his course in this life, therefore, will then receive retribution, in the sense that it will be the result of his wrong condition.

We all have noticed that some children have been born with a mark that is very humiliating to them; and many of these, by reason of having the lip of scorn turned toward them, have thereby been made humble-minded and beautiful characters. On the other hand, spoiled children who have had their own way have constituted saws and files in the world and have made trouble for others. These, not having learned lessons of self-control in the present life, will be proportionately disadvantaged in the future, and must then learn these lessons.

The question has been asked, will the Decalogue be revived in the Messianic Kingdom? We see no reason why it should not be made the Law of the Kingdom. There was no fault to be found with the *Law*, but with the *weakness, the inability of those who were under the Law*. The Ten Commandments were not given to the *Church*, but the spirit of them is comprehended in the word *Love*, which is the Law of the New Creation. (Rom. 13:8-10.) It would be rather incongruous for the Lord to say to the Church, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not kill; for they would have passed from every such condition of mind before they could become His.

With the world, at the beginning of the New Age, it would be a Law quite over their heads to say, You shall love everybody. They would need to have some simple statements such as, Thou shalt have no other gods but Me; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not murder; thou shalt not bear false witness. The Decalogue is the very best Law for the world of mankind. We cannot improve on the wisdom of the Law-Giver who gave this Law to Moses in the beginning. It will not surprise us, therefore, if the Ten Commandments will be put upon the whole

world, just as they were upon the Jews; and that mankind will be shown that the spirit of the Law is Love; but that they will come gradually to the understanding of this principle; for at the beginning they would not have the proper appreciation of the matter.

