

QUESTIONS ON OUR LORD'S LIFE-RIGHTS

SPIRIT LIFE-RIGHTS NOT SACRIFICED

QUESTION. – What rights did our Lord possess when He was a spirit-being, before He became a man, and what became of those rights when He became a man?

Answer. – Our Lord was rich and for our sakes became poor (2 Cor. 8:9) by exchanging the heavenly rights and perfection for the earthly rights and perfection. This exchange was not a sacrifice [not an offering]; for it was the man Christ Jesus who became a ransom. There is no statement in the Scriptures that He sacrificed any pre-human rights. He did, however, resign these for the "joy that was set before Him." – Heb. 12:2.

The rights that man needs are *earthly* rights, *human* rights; and it is *those* rights that Jesus redeems through giving His *earthly* life *sacrificially*. As a spirit being He could not have sacrificed the rights of a spirit being; for there were no *spirit beings* condemned to *death*. It was the *man* Adam whom He was to redeem. "Since by *man* came death, by *man* comes also the resurrection of the dead. For as all in Adam *die*, even so all in Christ shall *be made alive*." – I Cor. 15:21,22.

RANSOM-PRICE FURNISHED AT CALVARY

Question. – What did our Lord accomplish at Calvary?

Answer. – The laying down of life on the part of our Lord *did not ransom the race*, as we have shown, but *it furnished the ransom-price which is to EFFECT THE RELEASE of humanity*, in God's due time

and order; He gave Himself an *antilutron* [a corresponding price]." – I Tim. 2:5,6.

Our Lord's sacrifice, His willing resignation of His life to death, was meritorious in the Divine sight and was rewarded by the Father's giving Him a *new life* on a higher plane. The *new life* was started in His begetting at Jordan and was completed in His resurrection. This *right to earthly life, not having been forfeited by sin, still belongs to our Lord.* This *earthly* life-right He purposed to give to Justice as an offset [counterbalance, or equivalent] for the sin of *one man*, which involved the race. He was put to death a *flesh-soul*. He was rewarded as a *spirit-soul*. He has the *right* to His *flesh-soul* yet, to appropriate for Adam and his race, sealing for them the New Covenant.

THE MERIT AND THE LIFE-RIGHT

Question. – How shall we distinguish between the *merit* of Christ which He will *appropriate* for the sins of the world, and the *life-right* of Christ which He will *give* for the sins of the world? *Answer.* – Our Lord's *righteousness on the human plane* of course appertained to Him *while He was a man*. He has *no righteousness as a man* now. He has merely the *credit of that righteousness* in the Father's sight, in the sight of Justice, constituting a *merit* which is to be *appropriated* to the world in due time, but which is *loaned* to the Church during the Gospel Age.

The human life-rights Jesus had need for up to the moment He died. In dying He committed them to the Father, according to the Father's arrangement. He said, "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11.) When a man, those life-rights were His to use; but He does not need them now; for He has better rights. But He has a *right* to human life, which He does not

need *personally* – but which He *needs* in order to *give for the world of mankind*, that they may have life everlasting if they will.

The Lord is to be viewed from the standpoint of His own personality. First of all, He was a spirit-being; secondly, He was made flesh – holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners; thirdly, for *permitting* the earthly life to be taken from Him, God rewarded Him personally with a high exaltation. – Phil. 2:9.

God has arranged that this glorious Personage shall do certain things for the world of mankind. The *power to do these things* lies in the fact that *He still has a right to earthly life*, which He does not need. He holds it over to *give* to the *world* in the *Millennial Age*, gradually, as they will come into harmony with the terms of the New Covenant. He *imputes now* a share of that value to such as desire to become His members – to cover their blemishes and make their sacrifices acceptable to the Father.

Christ's *merit* was in *doing the will of the Father*. That merit the Father rewarded with the new nature on the other side of the veil. And, of course, *that merit still persists*; and He will always have, in God's sight, a *personal merit, irrespective of anything that He may do for mankind*. Therefore we cannot suppose that He would *give away His merit*; in that case He would be left without merit. But having obtained His reward, He has a right to human life, which is so recognized by God. And this constitutes a thing of merit in God's sight – a value for the redemption of Adam and his children – his *purchase-price*, so to speak. *This* He is to use for the world shortly and *this* He is now imputing to us.

THE IMPUTATION OF CHRIST'S MERIT

Question. – What is meant by the expression, "Christ's imputed merit"?

Answer. – When speaking of Christ's imputed merit we should keep distinctly in mind that He has a *personal merit*, a *righteousness of His own*, which He has never given away. *He needs His own righteousness.* In this sense of the word He could not give us His righteousness, without being bereft of righteousness. The same would be true of His life-right. He has a right to life; but it is not *that* right to life which He imputes to us; for *He needs it Himself.* *He needs His own personal merit.*

In what sense, then, do we say that He will *give* to mankind during the Millennial Age and *impute* to the Church during the Gospel Age, a life-right and righteousness respectively. In this way: He will give to mankind His human life-right, the merit that was His as the reward for His obedience as the *man* Christ Jesus, namely the privilege, or right, to live as a human being. That right was secured to Him by *obedience to the Law.* (Rom. 10:5; Gal. 3:12.) Now He is highly exalted, a partaker of the divine nature, and no longer needs that right to human life and the righteousness *which goes with that right.* He is quite satisfied and complete in His present condition. He has, to give to the world, by and by, the right to human life and the righteousness which goes with that right, the merit of that earthly sacrifice. Of this, He imputes to the Church at the present time a sufficiency to make good for their imperfection. We are complete in Him, so that our offering of ourselves may be, through Him, an acceptable sacrifice to God and reckoned holy.

ACTUALLY NO LIFE-RIGHTS TO SACRIFICE

Question. – Do the under-priests sacrifice their earthly life-rights?

Answer. – Since God purposes to give eternal life only to those who are perfect, and since we of Adam's race are all imperfect, therefore, we had no life-rights to sacrifice. But Jesus appeared as our

Advocate and purposes to help us if we are desirous of becoming followers in His steps, and thus of being sharers with Him in His [R4905 : page 399] sacrifice, and afterwards in the glories of His Kingdom.

To enable us to do this, He purposes to make up for us a sufficiency of His merit to compensate for all of our blemishes and defects. But we do not present this merit imputed to us by our Lord. Our whole part is faith that our great Advocate is able to make up for our shortcomings. He makes up that which is imperfect, and then offers us in sacrifice; and the Father accepts the sacrifice. *Really*, we never had any life-rights to sacrifice.

FAILURE RELEASES IMPUTED MERIT

Question. – In the case of one who makes utter failure and who dies the Second Death, is the imputed merit released at the time his failure is determined or at the time when he actually dies?

Answer. – The merit of Christ is imputed to those who come unto the Father through Him. Those who repudiate this earthly merit of Christ have it no longer from the moment of their repudiation; from the moment of their rejection of the Lord; all the merit that they had is released, forfeited, gone. This does not mean that they must die actually at that moment. But they fall into the hands of the living God; that is *out* of the hands of *Mercy*, *into* those of *Justice*. And we know that no one can stand in the presence of the living God and Justice without perfection. Those who repudiate the Ransom seem to have no longer a sense of sin. This is illustrated by the parable of the man who takes off the "wedding garment"; from the moment of his repudiation, no longer is it his in any sense of the word.

LIFE-RIGHTS REPRESENTED IN NEW COVENANT

Question. – During the Millennial Age where will be the life-rights that Jesus laid down at Calvary?

Answer. – That which we speak of as the life-right of the great Redeemer is, we understand, that which is typified by the blood of Atonement. According to the type, in the end of this antitypical Day of Atonement, that blood of Atonement will be applied to Justice on behalf of the whole world of mankind and will be accepted on their behalf – that is to say, as the Apostle expresses it, "to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Heb. 2:17.) As soon as the people shall have been released from their death-condemnation they will be in a position to begin to receive blessings, but not before. As the great High Priest, our Lord undertakes, at the close of the Gospel Age, to seal with the Blood of Atonement a New Covenant between God and the seed of Abraham, natural Israel; and He, together with the "Church, which is His Body," undertakes to stand as the Mediator of that Covenant. All who come into full accord with that Law will have eternal life. Through all those years the Mediator will merely carry out the provisions of that Covenant, [R4906 : page 399] which promises that they shall have the privileges of Restitution. If they avail themselves of the opportunity they shall have eternal life.

At that time, the right to human life will have passed out of the hands of our Lord as Redeemer, and will all, thenceforth, be represented in the Covenant itself, which guarantees all the things that God declared man should have. The stony heart of mankind will give place to a heart of flesh; and all who will live up to the terms of this Covenant shall have eternal life. During the Millennial Age the New Covenant will represent the life-rights laid down by our Lord. Whoever fails to observe that Law will receive chastisements. By this arrangement Christ, as Mediator of the New Covenant, will for a thousand years dispense the blessings. During this Gospel Age our Lord keeps the right to life under His own control in order to give it to Justice as the ransom-price for the world's sins, for the redemption of

the world. As soon as He gives up this right at the end of this Age, Justice relinquishes it, and mankind receives it, as shown foregoing.

