

"YE WERE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE"

(I CORINTHIANS 6:20.)

IT WILL BE noticed that the Apostle refers, not to the world, but to the Church in the statement, "Ye were bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ." Other Scriptures tell us that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man" – that He redeemed the world. We are to remember, however, that this work of redemption covers centuries. Promises respecting it were made long centuries before Jesus came. He accomplished a certain portion of the work – the all-important part of giving Himself a Ransom price for all – laying down His life.

But while His life was thus laid down, to be the price of the sins of the whole world, it has not yet been applied for the world's sins. If it were, then the world would no longer be under Divine condemnation, "children of wrath," but would in some sense of the word be back in fellowship with God. The price laid down by the Redeemer at Calvary is eventually to be made applicable to the sins of the whole world, but not yet. It will not be made applicable to the whole world until after the gathering out of the world – of all nations, classes – the Bride of Christ, the "elect."

In harmony with this we read that our Lord Jesus after His resurrection ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God for us – for the household of faith – not for the world. Hence any blessing, and reconciliation with God, any arrangement of Divine favor and everlasting life, is not open to the world, but merely to believers, the "household of faith": "To us who believe He is precious"; "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Righteous." Unbelievers have no Advocate with the Father, and consequently have no forgiveness of sins, no reconciliation, but are

still under the condemnation of death. "We have escaped the condemnation that is on the world."

How fully these different texts of the Divine Word dovetail with each other and with the facts! We have peace; the world has no peace. God is our Father; the world is under condemnation, and are "children of wrath," under sentence of death, and not recognized by the Creator in the present time, although the Scriptures show us that He has very gracious plans and arrangements for mankind in general by and by – during the Messianic reign of Jesus and the Church, His Bride. Then, in this class, the Seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:29), all the families of the earth will be blessed.

THE WORLD IS NOT YET BOUGHT

Would it be right, some one inquires, to say that the world is "bought with a price"? We answer that it would not be strictly right to say, but we need not quarrel with those who fail to state the matter in exactly the proper language. Rather, we might surmise that they are speaking of things that are not yet accomplished as though they were already finished. God assures us that in due time the price which our Lord laid down at Calvary will be made applicable to the world under the gracious terms of the New Covenant, which He will make first with Israel. Nevertheless, the point stands out clearly and distinctly that thus far the Ransom-price has not yet been applied to any members of Adam's race except the household of faith – believers. All things belong to these. Nothing belongs to the world as yet.

The privilege granted to the Church through her great Redeemer and Advocate is that His merit imputed to her permits her to share with Him in His sacrifice of the earthly nature, and to become joint-heirs with Him in His glorious arrangements of glory, honor and immortality on the Divine plane.

When we speak of the Church of the First-born we are to remember that the words carry us back to the typical first-borns, who

were delivered from death on the occasion of the first typical Passover. There the first-borns of Israel were passed over or spared when other first-borns perished. Subsequently, they were all [R4999 : page 107] exchanged for the one tribe of Levi, which thereafter was the tribe of the first-borns, and as such was set apart for Divine service in connection with the Tabernacle, and later the Temple. They were not all priests, though this was the priestly tribe. Only a few out of the whole number were selected for the priesthood. So it is with the Church of the First-borns; they will all be overcomers, they will all be loyal and faithful to God, but only a "little flock" will be found specially saintly, holy, acceptable unto God through Christ, and these will be the antitypical Priests: "Ye are a Royal Priesthood." – I Peter 2:9.

Hence James declared (1:18), "Ye are a kind of First-fruits unto God of His creatures." Of course, our Lord Jesus was primarily the First-fruits of all God's creatures. Secondly, the Bride class will be a part of that First-fruit company. Then there will be a large company of saintly people who will come through "great tribulation," "will wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb," and attain the spirit nature. These [R4999 : page 108] also will be a part of the First-fruits of God to the spirit nature – all on the spirit plane. Then will come God's favor to mankind in general – the after-fruits of His earthly creation – a great company, gathered during the Millennium. All of the evil doers and corrupters of the earth will be destroyed, but those in full perfection will be a glorious fruitage unto God.

St. Paul writes respecting the resurrection of "every man in his own order" – his own band or company. The first of the earthly nature to experience resurrection – that is, a full resurrection, or raising up completely out of death and imperfection – will be the Ancient Worthies, but they will not be part of the First-fruits unto God of His creatures, for they will be, with the remainder of mankind, regenerated by The Christ, the Giver of everlasting human life, secured at the cost

of His own sacrifice. With all the remainder of humanity, they will come under the terms of the New Covenant. Indeed, they will be the first to be blessed by that New Covenant arrangement. But since the Divine Programme deals with the world as a whole, Messiah will not deliver up any portion of the world, even those perfected, until the end of the thousand years of His reign of glory and restitution. Consequently, the Ancient Worthies will belong to the "after-fruits" – the human fruitage of the Divine Plan connected with our earth.

At the close of the thousand years, when Messiah shall have completed the work of restitution for all the willing and obedient, and shall destroy in the Second Death all refusing to make progress toward righteousness, then the Mediator steps out from between God and men and leaves the world exposed to the full demands of Divine Justice in letter and in spirit. This will not mean their injury, because in perfection humanity is quite capable of being and doing all that Divine Justice requires. The whole world then being perfect there will be no excuse necessary for any of them, and hence no mediation on behalf of any will thereafter take place.

It will be at that time, after the Mediatorial Kingdom shall have passed, and Jesus shall have delivered up the Kingdom to the Father (I Cor. 15:27), that Satan, the personification of evil, will be loosed from his prisonhouse for a little season – to tempt, to test, to try, to prove all those that dwell upon the face of the whole earth.

In the thousand years of Messiah's Kingdom they will be shielded from all outside temptations and will be helped over and forgiven the imperfections of the flesh, while attaining the fleshly perfection. But at the close of the thousand-year period, having attained the perfection of the flesh, and having had large experience with sin and righteousness, good and evil, it is as proper that they should be tested as that Adam was tested in the beginning – tested to see whether or not the lessons, blessings, experiences and opportunities have fully committed them as lovers of righteousness and haters of iniquity. If

these have then the trials that will come upon them through the permission of sin and temptation will be met accordingly, with loyalty to God, to the truth and to righteousness. All such will gain the victory over the temptations.

But such as really at heart still love sin will be entrapped and ensnared and manifested. Then the trials or judgments from Heaven will destroy them and Satan, that the world may be cleansed of all who love sin, and be enjoyed thereafter only by such as love righteousness and hate iniquity.

True, God knowing the heart, could judge all of those people without any testing by Satan, but many of His creatures, unable to read the heart, might wonder respecting the Divine Justice which would smite down some of their fellows who outwardly were righteous, and they might consequently be continually in fear and trepidation lest they should thus be smitten down; hence the Almighty has adopted the method of making this temptation open and above board, to be witnessed by angels and men. Thus it was with Adam in his trial, in his sentence, and in the execution of the penalty. Thus it will be at the close of the Mediatorial reign of Christ. Those who then sin wilfully will be violators of the New Covenant and will die accordingly, just as Adam violated the Covenant under which he was placed, perfect, holy and with the promise of everlasting life.

The fact that this testing of mankind will be after the end of the thousand years of the Mediator's reign, when He shall have delivered up the Kingdom to the Father, does not prove that the glorified Jesus will have nothing to do with the destruction that will come upon Satan and those obedient to Him. Quite to the contrary. As Jesus was the Divine Agent, Instrument, Word, Mouthpiece, *Logos*, in all the work of creation, and prior to undertaking the Mediatorial work, so, highly exalted now in honor, next to the Father, and at His right Hand of Power, He will undoubtedly be the Father's Representative in that

judgment upon the wilful sinners, who with Satan will be consigned to the Second Death.

Here the question may arise in the minds of some, What did the Apostle mean when he said in I Corinthians 15:25,26, "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"?

The Apostle is speaking of those things which are against or contrary to mankind – those things which hinder men from keeping the Divine Law, and thus being in full harmony with their Creator. Every such thing is an enemy, and is to be destroyed and be put out of the way – ignorance, superstition, vice, human weaknesses, are some of the enemies of righteousness, and, therefore, enemies to the best interests of humanity. Death is such an enemy, because it is death working in us that causes all of our difficulties.

All the imperfections, whether moral, or physical, or mental, are the workings of death. Because death is thus working in humanity, therefore the righteously intentioned cannot do the things that they would. The work of Messiah's reign will be to put down, to put away, not only other oppositions, but this opposition of the workings of death. Gradually mankind will be lifted up, up, up, out of all that weakness, out of death, to the full perfection of his being. Then death will be destroyed – the Adamic death, which came upon all men through one man's disobedience, and which is to be canceled, done away completely, because of Christ's obedience, even unto death.

Only toward the close of that thousand years of the reign of the great Mediator will this work of completely overthrowing death be accomplished. Then all mankind will have been delivered, not only from the tomb, but from every shade and degree of death – the whole world will be alive in the same sense that Adam was alive before death passed upon him, or he was affected by the sting of sin.

Then the Kingdom will be turned over to the Father. Those who will die during the thousand years, as wilful evil doers, will die the Second Death. It is not an enemy of man; it is the righteous sentence of a righteous God in the interest of His creatures – those who wilfully prefer sin shall be destroyed from amongst the people, because their influence will be to corrupt the earth. The Second Death, therefore, is not included amongst the enemies, and is not the death that Jesus will destroy. **[R4999 : page 109]**

Neither is Satan one of the enemies whom Jesus will then destroy. He was an enemy before man sinned, and his rebellion was not brought about by man's sin. He was subject to Divine authority before man was created, and will be a subject of Divine authority after man shall have been redeemed and restored. It will not be for the Mediator to deal with him, but for Divine Justice to determine his deserts. Besides, it is said that he will be destroyed in the Second Death, in the death from which there will be no redemption, no resurrection, no recovery.

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