

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS

IT IS AN INDIVIDUAL MATTER

Question. – "If any man be in Christ, he is a New Creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17.) Are we to understand from this Scripture that The Christ, Head and Body, is the New Creature, or should we understand that this term, New Creature, applies to the individual members of the Church?

Answer. – Undoubtedly this is an individual matter. Individually we make consecration of our human nature in likeness to our Lord's consecration of His flesh. Individually we are begotten of the Holy Spirit. Individually we are on trial for everlasting life or everlasting death. Individually we must make our calling and election sure, or fail. Individually we must be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Individually, as we have borne the image of the earthy one, we shall bear the image of the heavenly.

Moreover, this New Creation includes not only our Lord, its Head, and the Church, His Bride, but also the "great company," the virgin companions of the Bride, equally spirit-begotten. They, too, will belong to this New Creation because they will no longer be members of the human family. This New Creation embraces all who belong to "the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in heaven." (Heb. 12:23.) The chiefest in this glorious Church will be the Royal Priesthood. The lesser brethren on the spirit plane will be the antitypical Levites, the Great Company class.

WE DIE DAILY BY LAYING DOWN OUR LIVES

Question. – What is the Apostle's thought in the statement, "*So, then, death worketh in us, but life in you*"? – 2 Cor. 4:12.

Answer. – We understand St. Paul to refer to the tribulations which he and his companions were experiencing as they journeyed about in the interests of the Truth. These persecutions, difficulties, trials by the way, were evidences that God was accepting their sacrifice. Thus their death was going on, as elsewhere he says, "We die daily." In this statement he expressed the object, or motive, that prompted him and his companions to act. What they did was done, not in a perfunctory manner, because they had a general mission, but from a heart motive and in harmony with the Divine will, that they might bring spiritual blessings to the Church. [R5022 : page 152]

The early Church perceived that the Apostles were very active in the service of the Truth; and St. Paul explained that their motive was an unselfish one. He exhorted the Church not to please themselves, but to lay down their lives for one another, as he and his companions were doing, as ensamples to the flock. All who are members of the Royal Priesthood are laying down their lives in the service. We are thus "building one another up in the most holy faith," until we are come to the New Jerusalem! – the glorious Kingdom of the great Anointed One, the great Prophet, Priest and King, of whose profession Jesus is the great High Priest!

Our Lord declared, "I come to do Thy will, O God"; "I delight to do Thy will." (Heb. 10:9; Psa. 40:8.) This was a part of the Divine will, that He should lay down His life, finish His sacrifice, that He might ultimately give it on behalf of Adam and all of his race.

HE WILL HAVE COMPLETED HIS WORK

Question. – In I Cor. 15:28 we read that when Christ shall have accomplished the work appointed for Him – the work of His Millennial Kingdom and reign – and shall have put down all enemies (the last enemy to be destroyed being *death*), the Son also will be

subject unto the Father, who put all things under Him. In what sense will He be "subject" then more than during the Millennium?

Answer. – The special thought very evidently is that during Messiah's reign the Lord Jesus will be given full power and authority to control the world. That is the particular business appointed to Him. You will remember that the Father, speaking of that time, says, "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance"; and He declares that they shall be ruled with a rod of iron. – Psa. 2:8,9.

This thousand-year period, known as the Millennium, is set apart for this work. Suppose that you were given a position by the Government, or the State, with commission to do a certain thing for a certain period of time, [R5023 : page 152] with the understanding that when it is accomplished you will be given a reward for doing it. You are instructed: "Everything is in your hands. Do the work, and you may have all of 1912 in which to do it. Attend to the matter." Then what? After having completed the work, you resign this special commission, this special office conferred upon you for the year. You will no longer hold it.

So at the end of the Millennium our Lord Jesus will no longer hold office as Mediator between God and men, as He will have done for the one thousand years. Why not? There will be nothing more to be accomplished. During the thousand years He will have done His work as Mediator so thoroughly that there will be nothing more to do. That special work will have been fully accomplished.

THEIRS WILL BE A HEAVENLY INHERITANCE

Question. – If the antitypical Levites have no inheritance in the land, as shown in the type, what will be their reward?

Answer. – The typical Levites were the whole tribe of Levi, a part of which was selected for a little company of priests. In the wilderness of Sinai, the Lord set the Levites apart for His service. (Num. 3:11-16.) Thenceforth, that one tribe represented the first-borns of Israel, who, the Apostle says, were typical of the Church of the First-born (Heb. 12:23) – typical of the spiritual class.

In the type, the entire tribe of Levi was cut off from having any possession in the land. No title to land was given them; no field was given them. The land was divided amongst the other tribes, but not amongst the Levites. God thus typified the fact that the antitypical Levites would not have an earthly inheritance, but rather the spiritual or heavenly inheritance. All the Gospel Church are called to heavenly conditions; and therefore they are cut off from their earthly rights as men, that they may have the heavenly rights as New Creatures. The Apostle says God has "called us with a holy calling," a "heavenly calling," a "high calling." – 2 Tim. 1:9; Heb. 3:1; Phil. 3:14.

The tribe of Levi was divided into two classes, a priestly class and a Levitical or servant class. In the antitype are two classes on the spirit plane – the Royal Priesthood, composed of Christ and the Church, His Bride; and also the servant class, "the virgins, her companions, who follow her," and who are to enter into the King's Palace with rejoicing. As these do not come up to the high standard required for admission into the Bride class, they are not counted worthy of being in this class who are presented unto the King "in raiment of needlework." Nevertheless, they must all be grand characters, worthy to receive palm branches, indicating their victory over sin and all evil. – Psa. 45:13-15; Rev. 7:9-17.

JUSTIFICATION COMPLETED AT CONSECRATION

Question. – Are we grafted into the olive tree when *justified* or when *consecrated*?

Answer. – Both. That is to say, the *completion* of justification is at *consecration*. No one has his justification complete, or full, unless he has consecrated himself. Our justification begins when we turn toward that which is just or right, and away from that which is unjust; and we get more justification, more nearly right (for justification means *being right*, as we proceed toward consecration. When our justification has progressed to the point of full consecration, only then are we recognized as begotten of the Spirit, and as branches in the Vine, pictured by the Lord in the 15th chapter of John. In the picture of the olive tree the same is true. Only *spiritual* branches are grafted into this "olive tree."

The question is doubtless based upon Romans 11:17, where the Apostle tells us that the Jewish nation represented the olive tree which had the good root. The root of the olive tree was the definite promise made to Abraham – "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3.) The promise then began to produce branches. Every individual Jew claimed to be connected with this Abrahamic Covenant. The Apostle tells us that because of unfaithfulness many of these branches were broken off. The time that they were broken off was during that forty-year period which began with our Lord's ministry and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem.

During that time all the branches that were not fit to be kept in were broken off, and those that were fit to stay in were "cleansed by the washing of water through the Word," and transferred from Moses into Christ, and begotten of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle proceeds to say that ever since the Jewish branches were broken off God has been gathering branches out of the Gentiles, and that *we* are being grafted in instead of those *broken off* branches. Thus you and I may get into the olive tree. We who were by nature children of wrath, aliens, are now grafted into the real tree through which the blessing is to come. [R5023 : page 153]

If we can get into that olive tree, into that Vine, into Christ, the next thing to do is to *abide* in Him. There are certain tests applied; and those who do not conform to those tests will not be permitted to abide, but will be cut off. Respecting the Vine the Great Teacher said, "Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He [the Father] taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." (John 15:2.) So, if we have the trimmings and prunings that He gives to the *fruit-bearing branches*, let us rejoice that we are in the good Husbandman's care and are in good condition. If we abide in the true Vine the time is not very far distant when we, with the remainder of the Church, will be glorified and constitute the Kingdom of Messiah, which in turn shall bless natural Israel and, through natural Israel, all the nations of the earth.

IT IS NOT SCRIPTURAL

Question. – Is it scriptural to say that the glorified members of the Church have reigned at any time up to the present?

Answer. – No! They have *not* reigned at any time. At least, if they have reigned, we have not found it out, and they have made a poor reign of it so far. All the reigning we have seen in the world thus far has been a rather poor kind. We would say, however, that the kings of the earth are doing the best they can do; they are doing just as wisely as they know how to do under the circumstances and conditions. We are not specially faulting them.

Take the Czar of Russia, for instance: the poor man does not know how to do better than he is doing. Probably the same is true of the Emperor of Austria, the President of France, King George of Great Britain, Emperor William of Germany, etc. These would all rather see their people happy; but they are imperfect men with imperfect subjects and are surrounded by such conditions as are almost impossible to overcome. Therefore we are not to fault them that their reign is not

perfect. If they had perfect subjects, doubtless the world's condition would be very much better.

The reign of Christ did not in any sense begin in the past. Our Catholic friends claim that Christ began His reign some time ago; and that for over a thousand years the Pope has been the representative of Christ as King of Earth; that it is not Christ Himself who is to reign, but His vicegerent, a title which they give to the Pope, meaning the one who rules instead of Christ.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM STILL FUTURE

We think that our Catholic friends are laboring under a misapprehension. They do not get the proper thought. You remember the Apostle says of some, Ye have reigned as kings in the earth; you are getting along very prosperously; you have had no trouble or persecution at all. Then, after making fun of them a little, he says, I would to God that ye did reign; for if you did, we would reign with you. – I Cor. 4:8.

We hold that this is still true. When the reign of Christ begins, you will find it such a thorough reign that all the members of His Body will have some part in it. So we assume that when our Lord's Kingdom shall begin its reign conditions for the whole world will be very much changed. If the reign of Christ should begin today, the saints would be with Him; for He is to be the great Judge, the saints the under-judges; He is to be the great King, the saints the under-kings; He is to be the great Priest, the saints the under-priests – "A Royal Priesthood," "Kings and priests unto God," who "shall reign with Christ a thousand years."

With His reign will begin the reign of righteousness, for the Scriptures intimate that sin will be suppressed promptly. Nothing shall hurt, or offend, or destroy, in all God's holy Kingdom. (Isa. 11:9.) Nothing will be allowed to do so. The Great Judge will know how to inflict such punishments and so promptly as to prevent the reign of

evil; and then the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness; for instance, if some one wished to speak evil of his neighbor and a punishment, such as paralysis of the tongue, should come upon him merely for the *intention*, before he *spoke the evil*, do you not suppose that he would learn the lesson that he must not *think evil*? He would not *speak* the evil, for his tongue would be paralyzed before he even spoke the word. The Bible says that he will learn the lesson. "When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9.) It will not take them long to learn. They will not need to have calamity overtake them many times before they will learn that it would be better for them not to do wrong.

This will not, of course, affect the *heart*; but it will enable them to learn to *do right*, to see the effect of righteousness in the world. Thus they will have the opportunity of either loving or hating that condition. If they learn to love that condition they will get into the right attitude of heart, pleasing and acceptable to God; and so at the end of Christ's Millennial reign they will be ready to have the full blessing of eternal life; but, even though not permitted to *do* the wrong thing, if at heart they still love iniquity, with all the knowledge before them and experience behind them, if they will not learn to love righteousness and hate iniquity, they will be of those worthy of cutting off in the Second Death, from which there will be no recovery.

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