

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS APPLIES TO THE BEGOTTEN ONES

Question. – To whom do the words in Heb. 6:4-6 apply – *"It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world [Age] to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance"?*

Answer. – The conditions mentioned in the passage above quoted are all more or less intertwined. That is to say, the one who has been made partaker of the heavenly gift of justification is sanctified, begotten of the Holy Spirit; for only in that way can he get **God's evidence** respecting his justification. No one is justified by merely believing that Jesus lived or that Jesus died. In order to come to the point of **justification** and **have the merit of Christ imputed**, he must previously have presented his body a living sacrifice; and faith in the Lord Jesus must accompany this presentation.

Anyone having done all in his power – having turned from sin, having believed in Jesus as the Redeemer, and having presented his body a living sacrifice – must next receive the imputation of Jesus' merit to make up his shortcomings, to cover his blemishes, in order that the Heavenly Father may be able to accept the sacrifice; for **no imperfect thing can come upon the altar of the Lord**. It requires the merit of Christ to make good what is lacking in the one who presents himself in sacrifice; and only those who thus believe and present their bodies in sacrifice are the recipients of Christ's merit by imputation; and only such are begotten of the Holy Spirit. God's arrangement is that no one can be justified unless he has made a full consecration, after having already turned from sin. Christ would not impute His merit to any except such as make this full consecration; and the Father would

not accept by begetting with the Holy Spirit any others than those who have done so.

Those who have received justification have at the [R5041 : page 185] same time received the begetting of the Holy Spirit, which is "the power of the Age to come." The falling away of such, the Apostle says, would mean that they could never be renewed again. Why? Because they have had their share of the blessing of Christ. Christ's death was to bring a blessing – and only one – to every member of Adam's race – *one full blessing, a complete* blessing, such a blessing as will enable every member of the race – if he *will*, when he understands it – to come fully and completely into harmony with God and thus to have eternal life. But after he has received his full blessing and then has rejected it, there is *no hope* in his case. *He can never justify himself*. He *has had* the merit of Christ and has *repudiated* it. There is no hope of renewing such a one, says the Apostle. The fate of such would not, of course, be eternal torment, but *destruction* – the Second Death.

THE DICTIONARY DEFINITION

Question. – Is there any difference between "Death" and "Annihilation"?

Answer. – The *Standard Dictionary*, our best authority on such matters, gives the following definition of Annihilate: (1) To *put out of existence; destroy absolutely; reduce to nothing*. (2) To *destroy the identity of*. Its synonym is, *Exterminate, i.e., destroy entirely*. Words are only vehicles for conveying thought, and much depends upon the vehicle which best expresses your meaning in the question. The spark of animal energy which God supplied to Adam and which he, in turn, dispensed to his offspring, but which was forfeited for him and for his posterity by his act of disobedience, passes at death from the individual as absolutely as it does from a brute beast. The word "life," however,

as used in a large number of instances, does not stand merely for the spark of animal energy, but is a synonym for *soul* or *being*.

In God's purpose or arrangement this *being* has not in death become *extinct*, exterminated, annihilated; for he has provided for it a future. There is, however, no sentient being in the sense of consciousness, or knowledge, or appreciation of pain or of joy, or any other experience. But the Divine Creator, who first gave being, has declared that in the case of Adam and his children it is His purpose to provide a Redeemer, through whom all may be restored as completely as before they came under the death sentence.

The world, who do not recognize God or His power, and who have no knowledge of the promise of resurrection through the merit of Christ's redemptive work, might properly enough speak of one in death as being extinct, as a dead animal. This is the standpoint of the agnostic. But by believers, instructed of God respecting His purpose in Christ and in the resurrection of the dead eventually, and in the opportunity of eternal life to every one, this matter is to be viewed from the same standpoint from which our Lord viewed it when He said, "He is not a God of the *dead*, but of the *living*; for all live [or are alive] unto Him" (Luke 20:38); or as the Apostle Paul stated when he spoke of "God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which *be not* as though *they were*" (Rom. 4:17); that is, God purposes their awakening, and speaks of the present condition of Adamic death as merely a suspension of life, and *not* as *annihilation*, extermination, extinction.

You probably have already in your library a little volume entitled THE DIVINE PLAN OF THE AGES – fourth million now on the press. This will give you a much fuller answer to your question than our limited space will allow in this column.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO LIVE WITHOUT SIN?

Question. – When the Apostle wrote (I John 2:1), "These things I write unto you that ye sin not," was it his thought that it is possible for us to live without sin?

Answer. – In reading this text and many other Scriptures we need continually to keep in mind the fact that those who are accepted of God as His children, as members of the Body of Christ, begotten of the Holy Spirit, are all classed as New Creatures and not as men. The New Creature, therefore, in this text, would be the *ye* – "that *ye* sin not," as though the Apostle said, "The object of my writing is that you might realize the responsibility of abstaining from sin and continuing in God's love." Then he informs us how this is to be accomplished. In this as in other respects he shows that the New Creature is responsible for the body. Anyone who would say that he was perfect and without flaw, would be deceiving himself. Nevertheless, these flaws are not of the New Creature, but chargeable to the flesh. If the New Creature should sin *wilfully* it would cease to be a New Creature, because the New Creature is begotten of the Spirit, has joined in the warfare against sin, and is facing in the very opposite direction from sin.

But if any man sin, let him not cast away his confidence in God, but let him remember that the Father, foreknowing that the New Creature could not control every thought and word and act of the flesh, has made provision for these, and has provided for us an Advocate, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Our Lord has already become our Advocate. He has appeared on our behalf – appeared before the Father and made satisfaction *for us*. – Heb. 9:24.

Remembering this, if we find that through lack of faith, or weakness of the flesh, a step has been taken which is contrary to the Lord's will and our best spiritual interests, no time should be lost in retracing the step and in calling upon the Lord. We have an altar consecrated with the precious blood of Christ, far superior in every way to that altar which Abraham consecrated with the blood of typical

animals, and the Apostle exhorts us, "Let us, therefore, come boldly [courageously – full of faith] unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need." – Heb. 4:16.

APPLIES TO THOSE NOT SPIRIT-BEGOTTEN

Question. – "Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left." (Isa. 24:6.) Who are these few men? And how were the others burned?

Answer. – In the great burning day the "heavens" will be on fire, and "the earth and the works therein shall be burned up." This time of trouble will involve the whole world, practically everybody. The Lord speaks of some who will be preserved in the midst of this trouble. Just as the three Hebrews were preserved in the fiery furnace, so we expect that some will be spared in the time of trouble.

"Seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) This invitation seems to be to others than the spirit-begotten. It would not apply to the Church, for her deliverance will be over before the culmination of the trouble. It would not apply to the "great company" class, for it is incidental to their deliverance that they shall suffer in this time of trouble the destruction of the flesh, and come up to honor out of "great tribulation." This, therefore, would seem to apply to a class of the world who are not spirit-begotten. **[R5042 : page 186]**

PREPARED FOR THE DEVIL AND HIS MESSENGERS

Question. – "For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared. He hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." (Isa. 30:33.) Who is the king for whom Tophet is prepared?

Answer. – Tophet was a name given to the Valley of Hinnom, which is symbolically a representation of the Second Death, and the Lord is intimating that He has plenty of fire and fuel to accomplish all this destruction and that the Spirit of the Lord will set it afire and cause it to burn to the complete destruction. The king for whom it is prepared is the Devil, with his messengers. He is the instigator of evil, whose destruction is already ordained. First, however, in the Divine providence, before he shall be destroyed, the glorious reign of Messiah is arranged for, during which all of mankind shall be brought to a full knowledge of the Truth, and to a full opportunity of coming into harmony with God, and of demonstrating whether they have the disposition of God or the disposition of the Adversary, Satan. When the choice of each shall have been fully determined, the Second Death shall swallow up all for whom it has been prepared. Such as demonstrate their sympathy with evil will be counted as the messengers of Satan, and will have a share with him in the Second Death.

NOTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT URIM AND THUMMIM

Question. – Is there any revelation as to what the Urim and Thummim consisted of, or how the priests were answered?

Answer. – There is nothing specific known on this subject. In some manner or other, it is supposed, the breastplate that was worn by the High Priest was used as the Urim and Thummim – that is, to give definite answer, Yes or No, to the questions that were propounded. For instance, if the question were asked, Shall Israel go out to war with this nation? or, Shall Israel enter into alliance with that nation? the Lord's answer was indicated by the breastplate. How these questions were answered, we are not informed. Nothing in the Scriptures tells us, and we have no tradition even that gives any very clear answer. We know that they had the Urim and Thummim and that the answer was indicated in some way with the precious stones of the breastplate, but just how, nobody knows.

=====