

"I COME TO DO THY WILL"

"Then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all."
"A body hast Thou prepared Me." – Heb. 10:9,10,5.

IN THE CONTEXT from which our text is taken the Apostle speaks of the "better sacrifices" – plural – and the "one offering" – singular. From his statement we feel justified in saying that St. Paul is contrasting the antitypical Day of Atonement with the typical Atonement day, on which was made one sin-offering on behalf of all the people, but consisting of two sacrifices – first, the bullock for the priestly tribe of Levi, and then the goat for the other tribes of Israel.

In those offerings which were made year by year continually, God had no pleasure, for they did not satisfy or please Him in making *satisfaction for sin*. They were not the Divine expression of what was pleasing to God in the *fullest sense*. "A body hast Thou prepared Me" "for the suffering of death." This "body" was the human body of Jesus, which, through immaculate conception, was holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners and, therefore, capable of being the ransom-price for the sins of the whole world. But it is also true that God has provided a *larger Body*.

"JESUS, WHOM THOU PERSECUTEST"

This larger Body that God has provided is composed of human beings, whom He drew and called to be members of this Body of Christ, which is the Church. This drawing and calling was to the *natural man* and not to the *New Creature*. When Jesus accepted these members of His Body He accepted them as New Creatures. The *invitation* to them was before they became New Creatures. When, therefore, He accepted those whom the Father drew and called, He accepted them as *members*, or representatives, so that they might be

His representatives throughout this Age. From this standpoint He spoke when upbraiding Saul of Tarsus, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me?*" (Acts 9:4.) So Jesus in the flesh (represented by His followers) was still in the world long after Jesus, as the Head of the Church, had ascended up on high. Thus we see that the sufferings of the Church all down the Age have, in this sense, been the sufferings of Jesus.

The Apostle speaks of himself as "always bearing about in the body the *dying of the Lord Jesus.*" (2 Cor. 4:10.) *All* of the followers of the Lord Jesus bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. As Jesus had experiences in sufferings, so have all of His disciples experience with Him in the suffering of this time, and communion with Him in spirit. "Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." – 2 Cor. 4:16.

OBEDIENCE TO THE EXTENT OF SACRIFICE

We refer to our text again, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God" – everything written in the Book. Because born under the Law, Jesus was obligated to keep the Law. There was no sacrifice in keeping the Law. To do whatever is commanded is not sacrifice, but *obedience*. The Law did not say that one should love his neighbor *better* than himself. But Jesus went beyond this Law of Justice and laid down *His life* in behalf of the Church and of the world. Because He was thus obedient to the Father to the extent of keeping, not only everything in the *Law*, but everything written in the Book, in the Bible – on this **[R5054 : page 210]** account He was a sacrifice, and was afterward raised up to the Divine Majesty on High.

The things written in the Book were written in types and shadows, in allegories. To illustrate: Moses lifted up the brazen serpent. This is a picture illustrating how our Lord Jesus would be lifted up. The lamb slain at the Passover season is also a type of Jesus, the slain Lamb. The Day of Atonement sacrifices are also pictures. And as the Lamb was led to the slaughter, so He did not resist.

"THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED"

We are not informed how much our Lord knew, at the time of His consecration, respecting the Divine purpose. In His boyhood days our Lord knew that He had come into the world to do the will of the Father. But just what that will was He did not fully know. It was all written in the *Book*, but the Book was *sealed*; and until that will was revealed it could not be comprehended. He could not know until after He had received the Holy Spirit; and His *consecration* must be made before He could receive that Holy Spirit. Hence at the time He offered Himself at baptism He could not understand the "deep things." As St. Paul says, no natural man can perceive the things of God: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14.) Jesus could not know the depths and importance of all the symbols which God had written in that very form for the special purpose of keeping them secret, until He had been begotten of the Spirit.

We understand that our Lord was the *slain Lamb* in the Divine purpose just as soon as He consecrated His life *at Jordan* and had bestowed upon Him the begetting of the Holy Spirit. We read that immediately after He had gone up out of the water the heavenly things were opened unto Him. Under the influence of that enlightenment He went into the wilderness and remained there fasting for forty days, that He might understand the will of God. But His consecration was to fulfill everything written in the Book. He was to be the great Messiah, the great Mediator between God and men. He made the full consecration of His life to this end. That consecration was accepted. It meant the fulfillment of all the details of the whole plan.

CONSECRATION MUST PRECEDE UNDERSTANDING OF TYPES

As before suggested, all these things written in the Book concerning our Lord were not understood by Him until the *due time*,

which began when the Holy Spirit came to Him. Then, while He was in the wilderness, He began to see and to apply the various lessons to Himself. He had *contracted* to do everything written in the Book before He understood the meaning of these types. Evidently this was the Divine intention and there was a *reason* behind it.

Here was God's will, not written in commands, but in types and shadows, that the One who was to fulfill these things might see in them, not a Divine *command*, but the Divine will. "Lo, I come to do *Thy will!*" I am ready to do Thy will *at any cost!* Now the Apostle says that when our Lord thus came and presented Himself to God, "He taketh away the first (that is, He setteth aside the *type*), that He might establish the second," the *antitype*. The type was the *serpent* lifted up; the antitype was *Himself* "lifted up." The type was the *lamb* slain; the antitype was *Himself* slain. The type was the *sacrifice* of the Day of Atonement; *Himself* and the adopted *Body*, the Church, constitute the "*better sacrifices.*"

After His return from the wilderness, our Lord began the work of taking away the first (the types). *Part* of the work was completed in the three years and a half of His earthly ministry. But the work is not yet *finished*. Coming down to our time, the Apostle says, "By the which will *we* are sanctified." (Heb. 10:10.) What will is this? The *same* will that our Lord had. He said, "I come to do Thy will" – not merely Thy Law. Now we who are the Church say that we are glad to follow Him. We are *glad* to be living sacrifices. God does not *command* us to be sacrifices.

THE CHURCH SET APART FOR SERVICE

The Apostle says, "I beseech you, brethren" – I put before you the fact that it is well worthy of your attention to present yourselves living sacrifices. Thus, by having the same will, the same mind, this same disposition that is in Christ, we are sanctified, we are *set* apart. We do not set *ourselves* apart. The Lord Jesus sets us apart. He it is who imputes to us His merit in order that the Father may accept the sacrifice

and beget us to the new nature as members of His Body. The Apostle says, "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (*for all* being supplied). (Heb. 10:10.) What does this signify? We answer that the statement is true. The *literal* body of Jesus was the *basis* of our acceptance with God. The Church is the *mystical* Body of Jesus: "Why persecutest Thou *Me?*" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

The offering of *this* Body of Jesus has progressed throughout the eighteen hundred years; and it is only as we are offered and only by being offered that we can become members and attain to joint-heirship with our Lord in the Kingdom – "So many of us as were baptized into Christ." (Rom. 6:3.) We are not merely baptized into the glorious Body of the future, the Messiah, but we are baptized into Jesus that we might share in the *death* of Jesus, the sacrifice, and share in the *glory* of Jesus, the Messiah.

THE BLOOD OF BULLS AND GOATS CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY SINS

"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice, which can never take away sins." (Heb. 10:11.) This refers to the fact that the Jewish priest offered the sacrifice continually and yet never accomplished anything with it. "But this Man, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12.) "This Man" is the glorious High Priest, Jesus, the Head, who, after He had offered one sacrifice for sin forever, sat down at the right hand of God.

But His offering was in *two parts*; the first of which was at Jordan, when He offered up Himself; and the second was at Pentecost, when He "appeared in the presence of God for us" – for us living today, as well as for those living then. At that time He accepted the Church as joint-sacrificers and offered them; and in offering them He offered the one antitypical goat. So His offerings were really completed at the time of Pentecost. What is He waiting for? The

Scriptures say He has sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High, waiting for the time to come when His enemies shall be made His footstool. – Heb. 10:13.

Meantime His Bride shall have been perfected and joined with Him in glory. When that time shall have come, His enemies shall be made His footstool. At the **[R5054 : page 211]** time of His death, we remember, He said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine, and all Mine are Thine." (John 17:9,10.) And the promise of the Father to Him is, "Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." – Psa. 2:8.

The Apostle says that He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High waiting until God would make His enemies His footstool. God is not prepared to give Him these things until the Church is *completed*. In other words, the Church is *not* a *supplemental* and *additional* part of the Divine Plan. This has been the "Mystery hid from ages and generations." – Col. 2:26.

THE MYSTERY UNFOLDING NOW

Now, under the revelation of God, we see the unfolding of the *Mystery*, that the Church are to be fellow-heirs with our Lord in the glories of the Kingdom. Hence, it is the Divine Purpose for Jesus to wait until the time shall come when the Church will have been perfected. This matter of sacrifice is all to be completed during the Gospel Age; and this one great Day of Atonement will also be completed. There will be no repetition of the sacrifice.

We remember that in Revelation 5 it is stated that no one was found worthy to open the scroll written within and on the back, and sealed with seven seals; not a soul was worthy. No; "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the Book, neither to *look* thereon." Jehovah had already said to Abraham that He would *bless* the world, but had not revealed *how* it was to

be *done*. Then we read that John wept, because God had a great Plan, and because no one was to be the recipient of that Plan, to reveal it. The angel said, "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." (Rev. 5:1-6.) By **[R5055 : page 211]** this we understand that He was not *born* with this right, but that He *acquired* it – He "hath *prevailed* to open the Book." Therefore, on account of His obedience, God also highly exalted Him, giving Him dignity, power and honor.

The Lion of the Tribe of Judah was our Lord Jesus, to whom the Book was delivered. It is not due for any believers to understand any of the deep things written in that Book until they have come to the place of consecration. But God does not reveal them to us by His Spirit in the same manner as He revealed them to the Lord Jesus. John said that this is the "Revelation of Jesus Christ, which *God gave* unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John." "All things are *of* the Father, and all things are *by* the Son, and we by Him." – Rev. 1:1; I Cor. 8:6.

"LIGHT SHINING MORE AND MORE UNTO THE PERFECT DAY"

It would not be becoming on our part to speak with positiveness of how much our Lord knew during His earthly ministry. For how could we know except as it was declared? He said that the times and the seasons were not at that time known by any but "the Father only." We cannot doubt that He knows *all* on that subject now. And if our surmises are correct, we know more on that subject *now* than our Lord did *then*.

Doubtless it would be impossible to understand many of the deep things pertaining to the Messianic Age long in advance of that period. Daniel tells us that the prophecies relating to the Time of the End were closed up, sealed until the end. (Dan. 12:4,9.) As these things became

due to be understood they constituted *meat in due season* for the Household of faith. (Matt. 24:45.) For instance, it would be meat in due season in Noah's day to know about the flood; but that information would not be meat in due season today.

So then we are to walk in the light and be guided by the Lord's Word. "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," St. Peter tells us. Again St. Paul says, "These things...were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [ages] are come." (2 Peter 1:21; I Cor. 10:11; John 16:7,13.) And our Lord said of the Holy Spirit which He would send, that it would "show us things to come." (John 16:7,13.) Thus the pathway of the Church all the way down has been one of increasing light.

Our faith does not consist merely in believing in God's personality, God's righteousness. We fully believe in the personality of God, in the power of God. Nevertheless we need to exercise faith in the Divine providence in *our own case*; faith in the fact that God veils things from our mental and spiritual sight at the present time. He allowed things to come to Jesus which might have astonished our Lord if He had not exercised faith. He allowed our Lord to be maligned, slandered – to be *crucified*. It requires knowledge, faith, for everything that we are called upon to do and to undergo. We believe God; but, are we determined to be *loyal to God and to His Plan?* And are we *willing* to endure *hardship* and to *sacrifice earthly* interests in favor of these *heavenly* promises?

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