

SOME INTERESTING QUESTIONS QUESTIONS RE THE REDEEMER

Question (1). – At what period in Jesus' life was He a perfect man?

Answer. – He was *always perfect*, but did not become the perfect *man* until the 30th year of His life. In the very beginning, "the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev. 3:14), He was sinless, perfect on the spirit plane – next to the Heavenly Father. When He humbled Himself, in harmony with the Divine Plan and in order that He might be man's Redeemer and Restorer, He still maintained His perfection, His sinlessness. When born of the virgin, He was still "Holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." He was the perfect *babe*. As He grew to manhood, His perfection was maintained – He was the perfect *boy*, the perfect *youth* and finally the perfect *man*. Thus we read, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man."

Question (2). – Was Jesus, at the time of attaining the perfection of *manhood*, possessed of everlasting life, or was it necessary for Him to be placed on trial as a perfect man before He would be accounted worthy of everlasting life?

Answer. – According to the Divine Law, under which Jesus was born into the world, His perfection proved His worthiness of everlasting life, just as Adam's perfection meant everlasting life to him. But as Adam, who when created was in covenant relationship with God, by disobedience, by breaking the Covenant, *lost* the right to life which was His by that Divine Covenant, so Jesus, as a perfect man, was in covenant-relationship with God, and as a human being could have *forfeited* His right to life only by *sin* or, *otherwise*, have disposed of it by *sacrifice* – the latter of which He did.

Question (3). – Was Jesus at the age of thirty years qualified to give Himself a Ransom-price for Adam and His race, or was it necessary that first He should have a personal trial, or testing, in respect to His loyalty to God before His sacrifice could be accepted as the Ransom-price for Adam and his race?

Answer. – Jesus was at thirty years of age qualified and competent to present His body a "living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," as man's Ransom-price – and this He did. God accepted the offering and sacrifice and signified His acceptance of it by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, by which He begat Jesus again, this time to the divine nature as a reward for the obedient sacrifice of that which He had consecrated unto death.

Nevertheless, the necessity for a testing of One who would become man's substitute was not overlooked in the Divine arrangement. Two tests, or trials, proceeded at the same time, and both were necessary. As a *man* He must prove loyal to the principles of righteousness represented in the Divine Law, otherwise He could not be a suitable substitute or Ransomer for Adam and his family. On His own account, to prove Himself worthy of the divine nature, Jesus needed to have trials as a New Creature. His begetting of the Holy Spirit could reach the fruition of the divine nature only by His faithfully carrying out His covenant of sacrifice. Hence, if He had failed to perform the sacrifice as He covenanted, He would have failed entirely, and would not have received the great reward of Divine glory, honor and immortality which came to Him in His resurrection.

As St. Paul declares, "Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name." (Phil. 2:9.) The entire test of our Lord Jesus was along the lines of His faithfully sacrificing Himself, in the doing of the Father's will – in submitting to all things "written in the Book" – in the prophecies and in the types of the Law. Had He failed to keep His covenant of sacrifice, not only

would He have failed to gain the exaltation to the divine nature, but He would have lost *everything* – even *life itself*.

But the keeping of His *covenant of sacrifice*, obligatory upon our Lord as a *New Creature*, meant also that He kept the *Law*, obligatory upon Him as a *human being* because the things required of Him under His covenant were in *harmony* with the *Law*. To keep His covenant meant that He should *keep the Law*, and much *more* than that – to sacrifice His rights and interests which the *Law* did not demand should be *sacrificed*.

Question (4). – If Jesus had kept the Law blamelessly, yet had failed in some feature of His covenant of sacrifice, what would have been the status of human redemption? Would the Ransom-price of humanity have been paid by Jesus' keeping the Law perfectly, even though He had failed in obedience to His covenant of sacrifice, and thus failed to attain to glory, honor and immortality – the divine plane? If not, *why* not?

Answer. – Under the circumstances mentioned in the above question, the entire matter of redemption would have failed, so far as *Jesus* was concerned. His death would not have ransomed man from the death penalty. Indeed, the question pre-supposes an entirely wrong view of the Ransom. Jesus' death was a Ransom-*sacrifice*. That is to say it was a *sacrificial death* intended to effect the ransom of Adam and all lost through his disobedience. But a Ransom-*sacrifice* is one thing, and the payment of the Ransom-*price* is quite another thing. For instance: Jesus did His work perfectly; it had the Divine approval; the Ransom-*price* was laid down and was satisfactory to the Father, and Jesus has been rewarded for His loyalty and obedience manifested in that Ransom-sacrifice; but the *value* of that sacrifice, quite sufficient to be the off-set, or satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world, has not yet been applied. **[R5079 : page 251]**

The merit of that sacrifice is in the hands of Divine Justice, subject to application for the sins of the whole world as soon as God's

time shall have arrived. But that time has not yet quite arrived, and the world is still not redeemed, even in a judicial sense. Hence we read, "The whole world lieth in wickedness" and are all "children of wrath." (I John 5:19; Eph. 2:3.) If the Ransom-price had been applied and accepted, the world would not lie in the hands of the Wicked One, and would no longer be "children of wrath."

Before the merit of Jesus' sacrifice can be applied as a Ransom-price for the world's sins – to secure the world's release from Divine condemnation, and the turning over of the world to Jesus and the establishment of His Kingdom for its blessing – before all these things, or any of them, can take place, another matter must, according to the Divine Program, be attended to. That other matter is the calling and acceptance and begetting to the divine nature of an elect "Church of the First-Borns, which are written in Heaven." (Heb. 12:23.) This is the work which has been in progress for nearly nineteen centuries. As soon as it shall have been completed the glorious Redeemer with His exalted Bride class will inaugurate His glorious reign of a thousand years, by binding Satan and ushering in the New Dispensation, for which the whole groaning creation has so long waited. – Rom. 8:22,19.

Thus it will be seen that our Lord's testing, which began at Jordan at the time of His consecration and which ended at Calvary, was *two-fold*, and the two trials progressed simultaneously, and to have failed in either particular would have lost all. As a man from the human standpoint, born under the Law, He was obligated to keep the Law in *every particular*. To have failed would have been *death*. As a New Creature, who had entered into a covenant of sacrifice, our Lord was obligated to sacrifice willingly and obediently, His life, His rights, everything that He possessed, in harmony with the overrulings of Divine providence. "The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11.) To have failed of the full, complete sacrifice would have cost Him everything, and He would have accomplished *nothing* by all of His previous experiences and loyalty.

Our Lord's faithfulness in sacrificing during the three and a half years of His ministry added nothing whatever to the perfection which He had at Jordan. He was perfect and an acceptable sacrifice to *begin with*, and He merely *maintained* that perfection and that acceptance with the Father "faithful unto death." Wherefore He has attained His present exaltation and is in readiness to be the world's merciful and faithful High Priest, and He has also the merit of His sacrifice in the hands of Justice ready at the appropriate time in the end of this Age to be applied for the cancelation of the sins of the whole world.

The Church shares in the benefits of our Lord's death in a different way from that of the world. She has her Redeemer's merit *imputed* to her by (because of) *faith* – to cover the weaknesses and blemishes of her flesh, so that her flesh may be presented holy and acceptable to the Father by the Redeemer, who imputes the merit of His sacrifice to it and makes it acceptable as a part of His own sacrifice. "For if we suffer [with Him] we shall also reign with Him"; "If so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together"; "Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, your reasonable service"; "Fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." (2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 8:17; 12:1; Col. 1:24.) These are some of the invitations offered to the Church who are now qualifying to be members of the Royal Priesthood in the great work of blessing and uplifting mankind as God has foreordained and promised.

AN INTERPOLATED TEXT

Question. – Kindly explain Rev. 20:5: "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."

Answer. – Scholars are agreed that this text is an interpolation. We must remember, however, that it is *one thing* to be *legally*, or *officially* dead, and *another thing* to be *actually* dead. But as Jesus

said to some, He recognized as alive only those who accepted Him. Those who had not the Son had not life in any sense or degree; those who have the Son, have the beginning of life reckoned to them. The world, however, during the thousand years will have the opportunity, not only of being awakened, but of having fulness of life. If, therefore, after they are awakened, they will go on and render obedience to the laws of the Kingdom, they will be lifted up, up, up out of death to perfection and life.

BIBLE QUESTIONS A MINISTER'S GREATEST TROUBLES

Question. – If the Bible has been misinterpreted on many vital points, how are we to understand the Bible, if we are not educated enough to know these things?

Answer. – Ministers are less able to interpret the Bible than any other class of people in the world. The Theological Seminaries do not teach Bible interpretation, but instruct the student how to defend the various creeds, and how to choke off investigation, and to make the investigator feel foolish. Nothing troubles a minister more than Bible questions.

Our advice to those who want to know the Truth is to search the Scriptures and use Concordances and every Bible help that will assist them in a proper and rational understanding of the Scriptures. But be sure that the subject is approached honestly and prayerfully, with a desire to know the Truth and without sectarian prejudices. Remember the words of the Master, "Sanctify them through Thy Truth; Thy Word is Truth."

THE GREAT TEACHER EXPOSED SADDUCEES' IGNORANCE

Question. – "Whose wife shall she be in the resurrection," who had several husbands?

Answer. – The Sadducees, the agnostics who did not believe in the resurrection, tried to entrap the great Teacher by asking one of their stock questions. Seven different brothers in turn married the same woman and all died before she did. "To which of them shall she be wife in the resurrection?" They did not ask, "To which of these will she be wife in heaven or purgatory or eternal torture?" for neither Jesus nor the Jews held any such teaching. The Pharisees and Jesus taught the resurrection of the dead; and it was against this teaching that the Sadducees aimed their sarcastic question.

Note the majesty of the Master's answer: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, neither the power of God!" (Matt. 22:23-33.) You do not understand the Scripture teaching respecting such questions, and you ignore in your question the great Divine power which, at the resurrection time, will be exercised to straighten out all the difficulties of the situation. Then the great Teacher proceeded to inform them that such as would (gradually) attain to the resurrection – such as would get a complete raising up out of sin and death, would "neither marry nor be given in marriage," but would be sexless, as are the angels. Thus the supposedly unanswerable question of the Sadducees fell flat, and their ignorance was exposed.

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