

## INTERESTING QUESTIONS

### HOW DID SAUL OF TARSUS SEE JESUS?

*QUESTION.* – "And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of [before the] due time." (1 Cor. 15:8.) How could Saul of Tarsus have seen Jesus, if He was personally in Heaven, and was to remain there until the end of the Age?

*Answer.* – The Lord evidently designed that Saul should have the opportunity of being the twelfth Apostle, to take the place of Judas. In order to be an Apostle, it was necessary that he should be a witness to our Lord's resurrection. And so Saul of Tarsus was given a demonstration which made him an eye witness to the fact of the Lord's resurrection from the dead. He tells of it in this way: after detailing how Jesus had been seen of above five hundred brethren at one time, St. Paul says, "And last of all, He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

The miracle that was performed to enable Saul to see Jesus was not sufficient to save his eyes. If Jesus had been a flesh being, Saul's eyes would have been spared. But the fact that he was permitted to see, and with unveiled eyes (for it is not the natural order of things for a natural eye to see a spirit being), is a proof that some power was miraculously exercised which enabled him to see the Lord.

As to how this comports with the thought that Jesus went away, and that the Heavens were to retain Him until the end of the Age, we have this to say: He left the world, telling His disciples that in the end of the Age He would come in great glory to establish His Kingdom. But nothing in this statement indicates that He might not be present at some time previous to this. This may be illustrated in the typical Atonement Day sacrifices. The High Priest went into the Most Holy and offered the blood of the bullock; then *he came*

*out* again and offered his second sacrifice, the goat. He then returned to the Most Holy.

## **"SITTING ON THE RIGHT HAND" A FIGURE**

The Lord came to earth and was present among men. He finished the work that He had to do here. Then He ascended and appeared in the presence of God (the antitypical Most Holy) to make an appropriation of His merit (the blood of the antitypical bullock) on our behalf. We read that, having finished this work, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on High, until the time should come when the Kingdom would be delivered over to Him, and His enemies would be made His footstool. But the words *sat down* do not mean that He sat down on a literal seat, and has remained inactive during this Age. The thought is that He was seated at the Father's right hand in the sense of being given this permanent position of honor, dignity.

The Scriptures declare that at His Second Coming, our Lord will be seen "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of Heaven." (Matt. 26:64.) We understand, then, that it was in the official sense that He left the earth for the entire Gospel Age, giving up all work as a man – and all work directly for mankind, until the close of the Age. But He appeared to Saul, to enable him (as before stated) to be the twelfth Apostle, in order to fulfil the Scripture statements concerning Judas. (Psa. 109:7,8; Acts 1:15-20.) This seems to have been an exceptional matter; for the power of the Holy Spirit was to operate in the world during this Gospel Age. We understand that Saul of Tarsus had only a momentary glimpse of our Lord. **[R5409 : page 61]**

## **GIVING COUNSEL TO ONE IN TROUBLE**

*Question.* – If a person in deep distress of mind should appeal to us for counsel, should we refuse to listen lest we thereby be hearing evil or evil speaking of another?

*Answer.* – We should not refuse to hear one who is in deep distress of mind and who comes to us for counsel. But we should suggest to the one in trouble, Now perhaps there is something about this matter which might be a reflection upon another. Perhaps you can state the trouble in such a way as not to tell me the name, and without even describing the person, so that I would be able to recognize him from the description. Thus, too, I might be able to give unbiased advice. If we found that another was involved, we would inquire, Have you fulfilled the requirements of Matt. 18:15? Have you spoken to the person?

If he answers in the affirmative, we should ask, And it makes no impression? And is he [or she] still continuing the wrong-doing? If he says that the party is not now continuing the wrong, but that he has made no apologies, then we would say, But we cannot require one to apologize. We can merely require him to cease from doing injury. You may be very thankful to the Lord that you have been relieved from the pressure of the trial.

Or the person might tell us that he had taken the Scriptural step, and that the party still continues to do injury. Then we would say, Have you taken the next step – to take two witnesses and go to Him? If he says Yes, we would advise, Then just continue to the conclusion. You have done well thus far. If he said that he had taken the two witnesses and they had followed the course laid down in Matt. 18:15 very carefully, and that the injury had been stopped, we would say, Well, then, I would stop also. You have no authority to punish him. That belongs to God.

If the brother should say that he had taken the two parties and had gone to the offender, and that he would not listen to them, and that the wrong still continues, then we would advise that he go to the two and ask them to join him in bringing the matter before the Church – preferably one of the two being an elder – for they should go primarily to the Elders. If the Elders are not such persons that

confidence could be placed in them in such a matter, they are not JESUS sought to impress upon His hearers that it was not sufficient for them to hear that a Kingdom of God was coming, and that it would bring certain blessings to the world. It was not sufficient that they should know that a Kingdom class was being called out of the world to be Messiah's joint-heirs in that Kingdom. Action would be necessary on their part if they would attain to this high privilege which God had granted to them. "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works," wrote St. James. Not that we are to attain the Kingdom by our works; for, imperfect through the fall, we are unable to do perfect works, acceptable to God. It will be our faith in God and in the Lord Jesus that will bring us the victory, if we gain it; but the victory will be accounted only to those who shall, to the best of their ability, work out their salvation with fear and trembling. God will work in such, and through Christ bring them off conquerors, yea, more than conquerors. suitable for Eldership. And the one who was the Elder would be the proper one to bring the matter before the Church. Up to this time the case should not be discussed outside of these two witnesses.

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### **THE LORD LOVETH A CHEERFUL GIVER**

*Question.* – "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come." (1 Cor. 16:2.) Does this injunction apply to all the Lord's people?

*Answer.* – We understand that the principle applies to all. This is not a *law*, however. The Apostle did not make laws for the Church. He would not have had authority to make laws. He taught that all of the Lord's people are put on their own responsibility as to the use of the things they have sacrificed to the Lord.

What God *commands* is to be esteemed, not as a matter of *sacrifice*, but of *obedience*. Under the Jewish Law, each of the Lord's people, each Natural Israelite, was directed to give a tithe, a tenth. If he made a hundred dollars a month and gave one tenth of it, it would be ten dollars; if he made fifty dollars a month and gave a tenth of it, it would be five dollars. But the fifty dollars, or the one hundred dollars would include all that he would earn each month – not the *net* earnings, but the *gross* earnings. [R5409 : page 62]

If out of a hundred dollars the Israelite, after paying his tithe, was obliged to spend forty dollars for rent, ten dollars for gas, thirty dollars for food, ten dollars for himself and ten dollars for his wife, he would be out exactly ten dollars, or he would have to cut off five dollars from his wife's allowance and five from his own.

But Christians are not compelled to give one tenth. There are some in the Bethel family, however, who are giving one tenth. One of the family recently gave one fifth out of the net. We think a principle is here involved – a principle of sacrifice; and that if we follow the Apostle's advice, we would lay by something every week or every month to give to some who are in real need, and thus exercise a spirit of benevolence, like our Heavenly Father, and that we may be able to have at least a small share in the support of the Lord's work. We believe that to whatever extent we have this thought before our minds we are likely to have a special blessing. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." – Prov. 11:25.

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## **"THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF FAITH"**

*Question.* – "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven (that is, to bring Christ down from above), or who shall descend into the deep (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)?" (Romans 10:6,7.) What is meant by one's descending into the deep,

to bring Christ from the dead, and by ascending into Heaven to bring Him down from Above?

*Answer.* – The Apostle here means that some in his time were doubting and did not believe the Message that the Messiah had come. They might have said that Jesus was a wonderful man, and that He did many wonderful works. But they were saying, "We do not believe that He was the Messiah and was put to death and then rose again. If you are willing to say that He was only a good man, we can accept that assertion, and are ready to call ourselves Christians. But harmony with God can be attained only by keeping the Law."

This, the Apostle said, is not the language of faith. The Christian exercises faith in the Gospel Message. He does not ask how any one could go to Heaven to bring Jesus down to earth, or how any could go down to the grave and bring Him up. A Christian will accept the facts as they are. Others are not in the attitude to believe God. The essential features of the Gospel are that Jesus came from above – that He was holy, harmless and undefiled, and gave Himself a Ransom-price for sinners. God recognized the merit of His work and raised Him from the dead, and He ascended on High, there to appear in the presence of God – first for the Church class, later for the world. All this the Christian accepts by faith.

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