

The Atoning Work of Christ

His Sacrifice and Priestly Ministry

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“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum. We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. A Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” Hebrews 8:1 2

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THE SEED OF THE PROMISE

The story of the New Testament begins with the words: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise!" Seventeen verses of its first chapter are occupied with proof of the fact that Jesus was the seed of both David and Abraham. Fourteen generations before the birth of Christ, the sins of the children of Israel had caused them to be carried captive to Babylon. Fourteen generations before that tragic happening, David was ruler in Israel. And still fourteen generations before David came to the throne, God had spoken to Abraham, saying: "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." "Unto thy seed will I give this land. And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee!" Genesis 12:3,7; 17:7.

Later in the New Testament our attention is called to the fact that particular significance attaches to the singular noun in the promise of God to Abraham. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." Galatians 3:16.

It is because of this very important fact that Matthew began his Gospel with proof of Christ's connection with Abraham. In this proof it is clearly evident that in order for God to keep His covenant with Abraham, His divine Son must become human. He then proceeds to show how this is brought about, and reveals that the birth of Christ, the manner of His birth, and the effects to us of His taking our flesh, fulfill the word of prophecy which had been spoken by Isaiah some seven centuries before. The covenant with Abraham was to effect a union of humanity with divinity - God with us.

There are indications "in the New Testament story that Abraham understood the terms of the covenant to require and to promise a great deal more than could be supplied by any natural means or from any natural source. Indeed, the indications are strongly in evidence that Abraham looked for precisely that which is provided only in, Christ, the promised Seed.

It is a fact that he occupied the Land of Promise; but he dwelt in it, not as one having already entered an eternal inheritance, but as one "in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise!" He looked not to the land as it then was for a fulfillment of the promises of the covenant, but instead of that "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God!" Hebrews 11:9, 10.

He understood that when that city is established in the earth, "the tabernacle of God" shall be "with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God!" Revelation 21:1

But all this, Matthew shows, is brought about by the deliverance of man from sin. This is expressed clearly in the words of the angel to Joseph concerning Mary: "She shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins."

When we turn to the Gospel according to Luke, we discover that while it begins with the preparation of the messenger to herald the coming of Jesus, it proceeds to show how the Coming One, while being the Son of God, was born in the house of David. In the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary, he shows how this was made possible. With the clearest of phrasing Gabriel had said: "Fear not, Mary: for thou has found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom, there shall be no end!" Luke 1:30-33.

In this connection, too, Luke has brought to us the prophetic testimony of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist; and it is to be observed that Zacharias, "filled with the Holy Ghost" when he uttered these words, has positively declared that the coming of Jesus, and the deliverance of His people which is consequent to His coming, are in definite performance of God's oath and covenant to Abraham.

"Blessings on the Lord the God of Israel, because He hath turned His, attention to His people, and brought about their deliverance, and He has produced a mighty Savior for us in the house of His servant David. [Goodspeed's translation.] As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began: that, we should be saved from our enemies, and from the band of all that hate us. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant and the oath which He swore to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.

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And thou, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Luke 1:68-79.

Thus Luke shows that the raising up of Jesus in the house of David is in harmony with both the oath of God to Abraham and to David, and the word of the prophets since the world began. This Savior was to bring salvation to His people through the remission of their sins.

Pursuing the gospel story into the book of Acts, we are impressed by the fact that the apostles gave a very large place in their teachings to the same truth. In their first recorded address after Pentecost they emphasized the fact that it was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that had glorified Jesus in raising Him from the dead. On that occasion they based their appeal for repentance and conversion on the testimony of the prophets from Moses to all that followed after Samuel, concerning Jesus the Son of God and the Seed of Abraham. Said Peter on that occasion: "You are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kingdoms of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Acts 3:25, 26.

When Paul was invited to speak in the synagogue at Antioch, he stood up, and beckoning with his hand, said, "Men of Israel, and you that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm brought He them out of it. And about the time of forty years suffered He their manners in the wilderness. And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He divided their land to them by lot. And after that He gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years, until Samuel the prophet. And afterward they desired a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And when He had removed him, He raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also He gave testimony and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, which shall fulfill all My will. Of this man's seed has God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus: when John had first preached before His Coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel!" Acts 13:16-24.

Following this same testimony into the epistles, we find Paul, in addressing the Romans, saying that the gospel of God, unto which he had been separated, had been promised before by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, and concerned itself with the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, who also was the Seed of David. Indeed, he goes further, and establishes the fact that the divinity of Christ has been declared, or determined (margin), or put beyond all doubt, by His resurrection from the dead. Romans 1:14. Of this gospel which declares such things, and which sets forth through this Christ both the righteousness and the wrath of God Paul was not ashamed. Having the witness of all the prophets, having knowledge of the oath of God which confirmed His covenant with Abraham, and with the indubitable evidence of the divinity of Christ, the Seed of David, in His resurrection from the dead, Paul served with his spirit in the gospel, and was ready to preach it even at Rome.

In his epistle to the Galatians, he gives us further revelations of this wonderful gospel of Christ, and of its relation to the promise made to Abraham. It was preached to Abraham, he declares, in the promise that God gave him, "In thee shall all nations be blessed!" It is in this epistle that the largeness of the purpose of God in His promise to Abraham, is brought to view, and the fact made plain that the inheritance is of promise through the Seed. The fulfillment of the promise, therefore, is shown to be through faith in both Him by whom the promise was made, and Him in whom alone it can have its fulfillment. Beginning in the third chapter, he reasons that "even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness," "they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham;" and this is clearly shown to be intended by that promise to Abraham which declared, "In thee shall all nations be blessed!" "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Galatians 3:8, 6, 7, 9.

The blessing, however, is reachable both by Abraham and by his children of faith, only in the Seed of the promise. This Seed is Christ. "He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ!" "That the blessing of Abraham might come on" us who are not the natural children of Abraham, and that we might thereby "receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," it was necessary that Christ redeem "us from the curse!" This He has done by "being made a curse for us." There was no other way whereby this could have been accomplished. Could life and righteousness have been brought to us by a law, then such a law would have been given. But since sinful man cannot be justified by law, and "the scripture hath concluded an under sin," then the promise that we might receive the blessing of Abraham "by

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faith of Jesus Christ” was given, and the way revealed whereby we might be justified by faith. After this justifying “faith is come,” those who exercise this faith “are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Then “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female,” for we “are all one in Christ Jesus.” Being Christ’s, then are we “Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Being children of faith, we “are blessed with faithful Abraham!” Galatians 3:6-29.

But it is when we follow the Scriptures into the epistle to the Hebrews that we find the most conclusive reasoning that the whole work of atoning for man’s sins is possible only through the promised Seed.

In the first chapter it is made very clear that He who “had by Himself purged our sins” was the Son of God. It is distinctly said that by Him the Father made the worlds; that He was the brightness of His Father’s glory, and the express image of His person. That it is by the power of His word that all things are upheld; that by Him the foundations of the earth were laid. That the heavens are the work of His hand; and that His years shall not fail. It is also declared that when He had by Himself purged our sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

In the second chapter it is shown that in order to bring about the- purging of our sins, it was necessary that this Jesus who, was so exalted should be made lower than the angels, for the suffering of death. “It became Him in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same. That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death-were all their, lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore [because of this] in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining, to God, to make reconciliation for the sin of the people.” Hebrews 2:10-17.

In his epistle to the Romans, Paul has made plain the truth that it was by the death of Christ that God has reconciled us to Himself. He also has clearly stated that this was in order that we might be saved by His life. Thus the act of reconciling us to God by His death, preparatory to our being saved by His life, and the work of atonement for our sins by the shedding of His blood on the cross and by the ministration of that shed blood in priestly service before God in heaven, are both possible only through the promised Seed, and could not take place before Jesus was born of Mary in fulfillment of the promise of the Seed.

This vital truth, while prominent in all the teaching of the New Testament (as shown in this chapter), is, given a remarkable setting in Hebrews 2:14-17. In verses 14 and 15, the writer of the epistle plainly teaches that Jesus took our flesh which is subject to tin, to make it possible for Him to die for us, in order to bring about the death of Satan, and our deliverance. In verse 17 he declares that it behooved Christ to take our flesh, and in all things to be made like us, that He might be (literally, become) a merciful and faithful High Priest to make reconciliation for our sins. Between these two most important statements he has declared that, in order to accomplish both of these, Jesus took on Him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham.

As the seed-of Abraham, Christ glorified not Himself to be made a high priest but He glorified Him who had said unto Him, “Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee!” Hebrews 5:5. The Scripture then proceeds to show that Christ’s preparation for this priesthood was His sufferings in the flesh, and, His qualification, for this priesthood, was His obedience in the flesh, notwithstanding His suffering. Thus being made perfect by His obedient suffering, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.

He was, as will be shown in a later chapter, the Author, of life from the very beginning. This He was, then, as the One who was with God and was God. This, too, He has been from eternity, and will be to all eternity. But man, having lost life through sin, could not be restored to life by Jesus as God alone, for that could be done only through the suffering of death by Him who was “the Author of life.” Consequently, in order to taste death for every man, Christ, the Lord of life, took our flesh and became the Seed of Abraham. Making “Himself of no reputation and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Philippians 2:7, 8. Thus it was necessary for Him who is the Author of life to become the Seed of the promise in order that He might be the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him. The great work of atoning for man’s sin, and of saying man from sin, from sin’s power, and from sin’s results, is thus seen to be possible only through the promised Seed.

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Through all the Scriptures this promise of the Seed is held prominently before God's children. It first finds expression in the words of the Lord to the serpent in Genesis 3:15. There it is that we first discover that the ruin wrought by sin would be restored by Christ. As the Seed of the woman, He was foreordained to bruise the serpent's head. The promise there was dim and shadowy in its outline, and though quite evidently, it aroused in Eve expectations of deliverance from bondage and of restoration to the lost dominion and glory, she just as evidently had but a vague idea of how, when, and through whom this deliverance was to be brought about. The promise was without focus upon any particular personality. . Since Eve was "the mother of all living," it might have been understood to refer to any or all of Eve's children. There are indications in the inspired story that Eve expected that the promise would be fulfilled in her first-born son. This expectation led her to call him Cain, saying as she gave him the name, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." Bitter indeed must have been her disappointment when she discovered she had given birth, not to the Deliverer, but to a rebel murderer.

It was to Abraham that the promise of the Seed was next given. "The angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By Myself have I sworn, said the Lord, for because thou has done this thing, and has not withheld thy son, your only son. That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. And thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou has obeyed My voice." Genesis 22:15-18.

In this instance, too, the terms of the promise are seen to be very broad. For, turning back to Genesis 17:4,5 we discover that in the purpose of God Abraham was to be the father of many nations. Thus, as far as the book of Genesis takes us, the promise of deliverance through the seed remains unfocused upon any particular personality. With the passage of years Abraham had come to hope that through Ishmael fulfillment of the promise would be given. Even at the moment when God was assuring him that His covenant with him would be established through a son yet to be born, Isaac, Abraham urged strongly upon God this hope of his soul in words that came from his heart, "O that Ishmael might live before Thee!" Genesis 17:18.

Thirteen years after Abraham had thus planned for Ishmael, the Lord made known to him that this line of promise would, continue through Isaac, saying, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." Now Isaac was the father of two nations. Thus while the terms of the promise were being narrowed in its repetition to succeeding generations, it still was unfocused upon any particular personality.

It was next given to Jacob, who was the father of one nation. "God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called, any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and He called his name Israel, And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful, and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins. And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee, I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will give the, land." Genesis 35:10-12.

The nation of which Jacob was father consisted of twelve tribes. Of these, selection was made of one through which the promise would continue, and thus we read: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him shall the gathering of the people be." Genesis 49:10.

After this, almost seven hundred years elapsed before any further repetition of the promise of the Seed appears in the record. Then it is given to David, the head of one of the families of the tribe of Judah. In this renewal of the promise there is assurance of the continuance of the Seed forever.

Hence from its broadest terms, including all living in Eve, the promise of the Seed has been reduced to many nations in Abraham, to two nations in Isaac, to one nation in Jacob, to one tribe in Judah, and to one family of that one tribe in David. Many of the prophets after David foretold the coming of the Deliverer, but always they spoke of Him as Ruler and King. Even Isaiah, who prophesied of Christ as the Seed of the virgin, saying "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given," thus bringing the promise down to an individual, spoke of Him as the Prince upon whose shoulders the government would be. Isaiah 9:4. Micah, who in prophecy located the place where this Son would be born, revealed Him as ruler in Israel: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me, that is to be ruler in Israel. Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah 5:2.

But while all these thought of the Deliverer as a ruler of the people, a restorer of the kingdom, and not withstanding the fact that some, of them had foretold His humiliation, they failed to understand clearly that Christ must first suffer before entering into His glory. That while He was to bruise the serpent's head, He was Himself also to be bruised.

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As the prophets of old had prefigured Him a ruler delivering His people by the might of His arm, so the disciples, who lived with Him and heard His teachings through the years of His ministry, also expected that as a ruler He would have redeemed Israel. Even after His death upon the cross and His resurrection from the dead, they failed to understand the place of the cross in Christ's work of deliverance. His death upon the cross threw them into despair. Tidings of His resurrection from the dead confused some of them. With information concerning His resurrection in their minds, two of them walked in the way to Emmaus, and as they walked "they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were held that they should not know Him. And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that you have one to another, as you walk, and are sad? And one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and has not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And He said unto them. What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said: but Him they saw not. Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself!" Luke 24:14-27.

But there was one who, with clearer vision than the disciples, realized that the government never could be upon the shoulders of Christ, that He never could be ruler in Israel, and never could he the gatherer of His people, until He had suffered for their sins and entered into His glory. This one was John the Baptist. Standing, as it were, on a pinnacle of vantage from which he obtained a fuller view of what was intended by the promise of the Seed, he saw in that clearer revelation of the promise, that the cross was in the foreground.

John saw also that Christ was to be a ruler, such a ruler indeed as would restore again the dominion to man. But as he traced the pathway along which the Redeemer would pass to the throne, he saw clearly that it led unavoidably by the way of Calvary. Therefore on seeing Jesus he exclaimed, "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

It was a momentous hour in the world's affairs when John the Baptist, in Bethabara beyond Jordan, pointed out Jesus. That which angels and Prophets had long foretold was about to take place. Sin, that terrible thing which had come through man a disobedience, was about to be taken away. Its prisoners were about to be loosed. Its power was about to be canceled. Its sorrows and its sufferings were about to be exchanged for joy, and its long, dark, terrible reign was about to be ended forever. "The Lamb of God", had come, and He it was who would bear away the sin of the world. The Word that was with God at the beginning and by whom all things had been made, had become flesh and was among men. His mission was to seek and to save that which through sin was lost. As the Seed of the woman, He was to bruise the serpent's head. As the Seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He was to bring blessing to all families of the earth. As the Seed of David, He was to establish a ruler ship in righteousness which would endure to all eternity.

The age in which John lived was a most interesting one. In point of time he touched with one hand the dispensations that stretched back through the ages to the beginning. With the other he reached out to a new era that would fulfill all prophecy and finish the work of saving sinful men, which type and prophecy alike had foreshadowed. There it was, between the dispensations, and of equal import to both dispensations, that John pointed out Jesus with the words, "Behold the Lamb of God."

This description of Jesus is unique. Only once in the Old Testament is He directly referred to as a lamb. That reference occurs in Isaiah 53:7, where the prophet, foretelling the death of Christ, says, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." Bask to all that the promise of the Seed intended, was the death of the Redeemer. He must die for all, that in Him all might die to sin. He must live again, in order that those who thus die in Him may live again in Him and reign in righteousness through Him.

But we must not fail to observe the idea of ministry in this promise of the Seed. In Eden the assurance was that the Seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head. That promise, vague and unfocused as it appears to be when read apart from the rest of the Bible, involved all that the plan of

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salvation embraces, and included the full ministry of Christ from Bethlehem to eternity. To Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the promise was that in them through the Seed all families of the earth should be blessed. This, too, involved the full ministry of Christ, and embraced all that the plan to save sinners means and demands. To Judah through Shiloh, the Seed, the gathering of the people was promised; but the gathering of the people could take place only through the death and priestly ministry of the Savior. To David the promise of the Seed brought, in the resurrection, assurance of life after death, and the keeping Of the covenant that God had made with Abraham.

But it must be borne in mind that these succeeding Promises refer to but one Seed. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ!" There can be no atonement for sin but through the Seed. He it is who is the propitiation for the sins of all Eve's children. He it is through whom is raised up a spiritual nation as the heirs of Abraham. "If you be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:29. He it is in whom by faith we are made to be Israelites indeed. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed!" Romans 9:6-8.

The regenerate man is a Jew inwardly. "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Romans 2:29. He it is who in building again the tabernacle of David is making of us a spiritual house of which we delight to proclaim Him Lord.

THE UNCHANGEABLE COVENANTS

IN the beginning it was God's purpose that there should be uninterrupted communion between man and his Creator. He therefore made man in His own image, after His own likeness. Genesis 1:26. The one requirement that God made for uninterrupted continuance of this relationship, was obedience. But by one act of disobedience toward God, communion with Jehovah was lost, and we were made the bond slaves of Satan. At once God set Himself to free us from the bondage of sin. The fact that we had by our own choice become disobedient, did not affect God's purpose for us. He undertook to rescue us from the enslavement of the enemy, and to glorify Himself in our recovery from the power of disobedience. The story of His efforts on our behalf reveals that His purpose to do this has not only remained unchanged from the very beginning, but is also unchangeable.

Seven times God has entered into covenant relationship with man. A study of these covenants shows that the heart of God is set upon redeeming us from the hand of the enemy.

The story of these covenants is intensely interesting. It reveals limitless mercy and grace and long-suffering and changeless constancy on the part of God, and shameful failure and constantly recurring ingratitude on the part of man. Outstanding in this revelation is the glorious fact that notwithstanding man's unreliability nothing will be permitted to overthrow God's purpose to save us, or to change His attitude toward those who will accept His salvation.

To give us assurance both of the unchangeableness of His purpose toward us, and of the un failing certainty of its fulfillment, He has made His covenants with us, placing Himself under oath to perform His covenanted promises to the very letter. In order to make this possible, He has given His only begotten Son to die at the hands of those He came to save; He has accepted Christ's obedient life as our life, that we in the Savior might be accepted of Him; and He has sent into our hearts the Holy Spirit to make us partakers of His own divine nature, and thus to bring us to Himself as sons.

The Scriptures clearly teach that there was a covenant between God and Christ relating to fallen man, for in Luke 22:29 (Witsius's translation) we read: "I engage by covenant to You a kingdom, as My Father hath engaged by covenant unto Me!" This covenant is understood to have been made from the foundation of the world. It embodied a purpose that would be performed through the Son of God. Of this the apostle Paul has said: "God hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Timothy 1:8,9.

In that covenant provision was made whereby man might receive eternal life. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began!" Titus 1:2. It also predestined us through

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Jesus Christ to become children of God. (See Ephesians 1:4.) It also foreordained the cleansing of man's guilt by the precious blood of Jesus. "Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world!" 1 Peter 1:18-20.

It was on the terms of this covenant that God "gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life!" John 3:16. This covenant was the undertaking of God and Christ to deliver man by the plan of salvation. It established itself in the love of God for man, and in the love of Christ for His Father and for us His creatures. It provided for the Son of God to become the Son of man. It made a way whereby man, who had forfeited his right to life, who had sold himself for naught, and who had alienated himself completely from the life of God, might be made alive, redeemed from the enslavement of sin, brought again into the family of God, and made an heir of God and joint heir with Christ. But though it was made before the world began, it was ratified by the blood of the Son of God that was shed for us on Calvary. Because of it, and in harmony with its purpose, atonement is made for man's sins by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Passing by the covenants which God made with Adam and with Noah, we stop to notice the covenant that God made with Abraham. A good deal has been said about this covenant in the previous chapter. Therefore we should remind ourselves of its character and its provisions. It is the undertaking of God to perform, through the Seed of Abraham, what He had covenanted with the eternal Son to do for all the children of Adam. It followed acts in the life of Abraham that gave evidence of faith in God as the Redeemer of His people. It was unconditional in its character, being dependent upon nothing that man could do, but looking toward and resting entirely upon the promised Seed.

Abraham's first recorded act of faith was his obedience to the call of God to leave his country, his kindred, and his father's house, to go to a strange and distant land. His second act of faith was when, without child, and without the possibility of children, as far as he could see, God led him forth and commanded him to look to heaven and see if he could number the stars, and assured him that as the number of the stars, so would his seed be; and Abraham believed God. Genesis 15:5, 6. The third and great act of faith in the life of Abraham was when he offered up Isaac. This was immediately followed by the Lord's definitely promising, and confirming that promise with an oath, that through his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed. This promise was not made to be dependent upon Abraham's future obedience, but was confirmed with the oath of God because Abraham had already obeyed God. Genesis 22:18. Thus the fulfillment of the covenant depended not upon man's works, but upon obedient faith in the promise and oath of God. Immediately after the promise of the seed was given, the promise of an inheritance followed. "He said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it!" "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates!" Genesis 15:7, 18.

Upon Abraham's desiring assurance that he would indeed inherit the land, the Lord commanded him to take for God "a heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him." "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces!" Genesis 15:9-12, 17.

The passing of Jehovah between the parts of this sacrifice confirmed the covenant with the most solemn form of oath known to the human mind. Authorities tell us that he who employed this form of oath to give confirmation to an agreement, passed between the divided carcass with hand uplifted, saying as he did so, "If I keep not this agreement, then let my life be as this creature between whose divided parts pass!" This is indeed a solemn form of oath.

The importance and the greatness of this covenant are indicated by the means that God employed in thus giving assurance to Abraham. After this the Lord was able to say to Abraham, "By Myself have I sworn." Because of this, Paul was able to write to the Hebrews: "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, interposed Himself by an oath [margin]. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us!" Hebrews 6:17, 18.

By this covenant Abraham was to be "the father of all them that believe." He was to be blessed

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through the Seed. With him “they which be of faith” are also to be blessed. God was binding Himself by the covenant to perform through the Seed of Abraham-Christ-that which, before the world began, He had covenanted with the eternal Son to perform by Him for the deliverance of man. The fulfillment of its promises depends, not upon Abraham or his children of faith, but upon the immutable things of God. It embraces the whole plan of salvation, and assures us of all that Grace has purposed for us in Christ Jesus. Paul in his words to the Galatians has reminded us that the covenant with Abraham was “confirmed of God in Christ,” and cannot be disannulled. It assures us of righteousness which is received, not by works, but by faith in Him with whom the Father has, from the beginning, covenanted for our redemption.

It was in fulfillment of His covenant with Abraham that God chose David from the sons of Jesse to be king over Israel, and determined that from the family of David the Seed should come. In recognition of this, David was able to say to the people of Israel: “The Lord God of Israel chose me before all the house of my father to be king over Israel forever.” 1 Chronicles 28:4. And again: “Now these be the last words of David: The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me, He that rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: this is all my salvation, and all my desire.” 2 Samuel 23:1-5.

As the promise was given to Abraham and confirmed by the oath of God, so was it also to David. “The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it: Of the fruit of, thy body will I set upon thy throne.” Psalm 132:11. “Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven.” Psalm 89:35-37.

This promise of the throne to the seed of David was to embrace two phases of its occupancy, the temporal and the eternal. It is clear that David understood that the temporal occupancy of the throne of the kingdom was conditioned upon the behavior of its earthly occupants. “Thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the Lord searches all hearts, and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee. But if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off forever.” 1 Chronicles 28:9.

The disobedience of David’s descendants upon the throne of the kingdom resulted, as we very well know, in their loss of the temporal occupancy of the throne. But this has not changed the promise of God to David. There was provision for such a contingency in the terms of the covenant. Clearly indicating that this is so, the Lord, through the prophet Isaiah, said: “Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people, Behold, thou shall call a nation that thou knows not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel. For He hath glorified thee.” 55:3-5.

By this it is evident that the promises of God to David were to be made effectual through the gathering of a spiritual people, who of their own volition, because of the Lord and of His Christ, would come to seek acceptance as the people of the Lord. Over these a Prince of the house of David shall reign eternally, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. Of this Prince, Isaiah prophesied: “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Mince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this!” Isaiah 9:6,7.

David himself prophesied that notwithstanding the wickedness of men, and the antagonism of rulers to God’s plan for a continuance of the kingdom through David, the Lord shall “speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure. Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion!” He represents the Lord as indicating who it is in whom the promise of the covenant centers, by saying: “I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I shall give Thee the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for ‘thy possession!’ Psalm 2:5-8.

The covenant with David was unbreakable and unailing. In its temporal aspects it was conditional, but in its eternal aspects it was unconditional. I depended not on David for its fulfillment, but upon God, who could not and would not fail to perform it.

“Behold, the days come, said the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time will I cause the Branch of

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righteousness to grow up and He shall execute judgment and righteousness, in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness. For thus said the Lord: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel. Thus said the Lord: If you can break My covenant of the day, and My covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season. Then may also My covenant be broken with David My servant, that he should not have a son, to reign upon his throne!" Jeremiah 33:14-21.

The Lord's promises to David included the gathering Of God's people from all lands of earth and the bringing of them to the inheritance. In the imagery of a flock with David as shepherd, the prophet Ezekiel has pictured for us the fulfillment of this feature of the covenant. By that prophecy we clearly see that all the work of the gospel that 'is wrought through Christ in seeking and saving the lost of all peoples of the earth, is also in definite fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham.

Thus said the Lord God: Behold, I, even I, will both search My sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeks out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out My sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day, And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be. There shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, said the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment." "Therefore will I save My flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even My servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it!" "And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are My people, said the Lord God. And you My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, said the Lord God." Ezekiel 34:11-16, 22-24, 29-31.

In direct fulfillment of all this, Jesus the Son of God was born of Mary in Bethlehem of Judea. In order that His being born in the house of David should be clearly related to God's promise to Abraham and David, the angel Gabriel made that very fact known in his announcement to Mary: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:32,33.

This important fact, too, is clearly shown by the words of Zacharias, who, when filled with the Holy Ghost, prophesied of Jesus thus: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David; to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant. The oath which He swore to our father Abraham." Luke 1:68-73.

That Christ-was indeed the promised Seed of Abraham and of David, it proved not merely by His birth in the line of descent through Isaac, Jacob, Judah, and David, and not merely by the pronouncement of angels and of God from heaven of that great truth, and not even merely by the wonderful life that He lived in the flesh, demonstrating at every step of His experience that He was indeed the One of whom all the prophets since the world began had spoken; but His being the Seed of the promise was proved beyond an question by His death and His resurrection from the dead. This is revealed in the fact that on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit used especially the facts of Christ's death and resurrection to prove both David's understanding of the covenant, and its fulfillment in Christ, the Seed of David. Observe this in the following verses:

"You men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of You, as, you yourselves also know. Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death. Because it was not possible that He should be held of it. For David speaks concerning Him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad. Moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: because Thou wilt not leave

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my soul in hen, neither wilt Thou suffer Your Holy One to see corruption. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. He seeing this before spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption. This Jesus bath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which you now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he said himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 2:22-36.

‘The covenants with both Abraham and David embodied, too, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in witness to the fact of God’s acceptance of Christ for us. David, from his understanding of what the covenant involved, “spoke of the resurrection of Christ, that His soul was not left in hell, neither His flesh did see corruption.” Having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, having been raised from the dead, and having been “by the right hand of God exalted,” Christ poured forth the Holy Spirit in token of His acceptance by the Father “for us,” and in witness of the fact that His priestly work of atonement had begun in heaven, and that “the blood of the covenant?” was being ministered in behalf of penitent sinners that the promise of the covenant concerning their sins might be fulfilled.

All through the centuries, as word upon word, line upon line, and prophecy after prophecy were added to the Scriptures, they continued, by prediction and promise and service and sacrifice, to point forward to something better, something in which the promises of God would reach their finality through One who in Himself would confirm all that God had covenanted to do, and who would save His people and would reign as Priest and King forever.

As time moved on, a new covenant was promised. This was to be a written covenant, not, however, on stone or brick or paper, but in the hearts of men, with the blood by which it is confirmed, the Holy Spirit being the writer. “Behold, the days come, said the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. Which My covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, said the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, said the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jeremiah 31:31-34.

The great central truth of this covenant is salvation through the blood. This “new covenant” is not so much in the nature of an agreement as of a testament. An agreement is a compact. A testament, or will, is an instrument by which disposal is made of things therein named. If we turn to Hebrews 9:15, we find that the idea of an agreement or compact does not appear in the new covenant, but that the idea of disposition is made prominent. It was not so much in the nature of agreement between two parties but rather a disposition of the works of grace through Christ. It was God’s undertaking by His own free grace to perform for His people that which could be accomplished only by His voluntarily giving all for us. This He did in the gift of Christ. John 3:16. But in making disposition of the things of His grace, He “appointed” Jesus “heir of all things,” and His believing children “joint heirs with Christ!” Hebrews 1:2; Romans 8:17. As Mediator of this new covenant, Christ has undertaken through His own death to transmit to the children of faith, as their, eternal inheritance, the eternal life, the eternal habitation, and the eternal blessings that God had covenanted with Abraham and with David to give to their spiritual seed through Christ, the promised Seed.

The whole teaching of Scripture makes it clear that atonement by blood is necessary to the fulfillment of the everlasting covenant, in the provisions of which the sins of the people are remitted. At the last supper our Lord taught His disciples that the blood by which, under the new covenant, sins would be remitted was the blood that He was soon to shed on the cross of Calvary, saying, “This is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Representing, as it did, His life of perfect obedience to the will of the Father, and His death in satisfaction of the claims of the broken law, His blood alone could confirm such a covenant and provide for the remission of sins. In the provisions of that covenant, “the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed!”

The apostle Paul, addressing the Hebrews, has indicated that perfection in every good work under the new covenant is attainable only through “the blood of the everlasting covenant!” He explains that

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because under this covenant our sins are remitted, we have “boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.” “And having a High Priest over the house of God,” we may “draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” Hebrews 10:15-22. The assurance in the new covenant that God will be our God and we shall be His people, is not to be passed by unnoticed. He has undertaken to cleanse us from that which alienated us from Him. Having brought us near through the blood of the covenant, He pledges that He will neither leave us nor permit us again to be separated from Him.

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant; the oath which He swore to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life!” Luke 1:68-75.

The holiness here spoken of is provided in the new covenant. In it, too, we are assured of full deliverance from our enemies. Thank God for the victory that we have in Christ, so complete, indeed, that we may “serve Him without fear all the days of our life.”

Under the new covenant the gospel of God is to be carried to all nations and peoples and kingdoms and tongues, until “it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, You are not My people, there it shall be said unto them, You are, the sons of the living God.” Hosea 1:10.

The day hastens when the covenanted promises of God will have reached their consummation. Then the heaven and the earth as we have known them will have passed away and a new earth and a new heaven will have been established. At that time from out of the throne shall be heard a great voice, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said unto me, write: for these words are true and faithful!” Revelation 21:3-5.

When that glorious consummation is reached, when God’s redeemed children, remembering the oaths of the Lord which He swore unto our fathers, come before the throne of David in the glorious inheritance, they shall testify to the faithfulness of God, saying, “Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto His people Israel, according to all that He promised: there hath not failed one word of all His good promise.” 1 Kings 8:56.

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“WHEREFORE, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned!” “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Romans 5:12,19.

Thus it is recorded that, while the disobedience of Adam made man unrighteous, down at the root of all that God has done and is doing through His Son to make us righteous, is the wonderful life of obedience that the Savior lived in the flesh.

As by Adam’s disobedience death came upon all men, and “death reigned by one,” even so they who receive God’s “gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ!” Romans 5:17. And “as by the offense of one [Adam], judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so by the righteousness of One [Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification.” Verse 18.

These changes could be brought about only by a guiltless Christ, one who in all things was obedient to His Father’s will. That Jesus was thus obedient the New Testament bears witness: “He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him!” 2 Corinthians 5:21. “We have ‘not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like is we are, yet without sin.” Hebrews 4:15. “Hereunto were you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth!” 1 Peter 2:21, 22.

It was this particular characteristic of obedience that was emphasized in the prophecy of Christ by the psalmist: “Then said I, Lo, I come. In the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart!” Psalm 40:7, 8.

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It also was this feature of His life in the flesh that He especially called to the attention of His disciples: "Jesus said unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work!" John 4:34. "The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him." John 8:29.

It was this obedience that made His sacrifice acceptable and gave it efficacy. It was this obedience that made His priesthood possible. "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." "Unto the Son He said:

Thou has loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." "Wherefore, holy brethren consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to Him that appointed Him! Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 5:8; 1:8, 9; 3:1,2; 4:14, 15.

Christ's own obedient life is also the basis upon which -He appeals to His followers. Observe the wonderful instance of this that we have in John 15:1-10:

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman, Every branch in Me that bears not fruit He takes away: and every branch that bears fruit, He purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in him As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches: he that abides in Me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so shall you be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue you in My love. If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

In this scripture we are given the secret of this wonderful obedience: "I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

Thus we see that the basis of Christ's obedience was His love for the Father. Indeed, His obedience was a continual manifestation of His love for His Father. Notice the way in which He has expressed this important fact: "That the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do." John 14:31.

Our obedience, too, must spring from our love of the Savior. It is obedience that has its origin in love for Him, for which He has asked. "If you love Me, keep My commandments," are the words with which He appeals to us in this matter. He thus appeals for no selfish reason, but to make it possible for Him to send us the Comforter as a continual abiding power with us. John 14:10, 11.

The reward of our obedience will be our abiding in the Savior's love, with all that that involves and brings to us. John 15:10.

It is to this obedience that we are called. It was to take away our disobedience that Christ came to earth, and died in our stead on the cross of Calvary. It is to make us obedient that He now ministers the merits of that sacrifice before God in our behalf in the heavenly sanctuary.

In a number of instances in the Bible we read of God's purpose to have for Himself a peculiar people in the earth. To these He refers as His "peculiar treasure." These people are described in several places by the Lord as the people of His inheritance. Quite evidently they are to be peculiar in that they are differently related to God from all other peoples. But it is to be observed that the one way to establish and to maintain that relationship is by obedience. "Now therefore, if you will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people." Exodus 19:5.

At the establishment of the sanctuary, God made known His purpose to dwell among His peculiar people, saying, "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." Exodus 25:8. When the service of the sanctuary had been inaugurated, the Lord elaborated His purpose somewhat in the following words: "I will walk among you, and will be your God, and you shall be MY people." Leviticus 26:12.

Now it is noteworthy that this is the same promise made in the prophecy of the new covenant, as we read in Jeremiah 31:33: "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days, said the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts. And will be their God, and they shall be MY people!"

But into this promise of the new covenant there is only one gateway-obedience. This is so plainly stated in the Inspired Word that there is no reasonable ground for misunderstanding. Therefore any teaching

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that, because of grace, obedience is not required under the new covenant, is inexcusable, and displays a lack of knowledge of both the nature of sin and the intent of the gospel. Sin is disobedience. The gospel is intended to take disobedience out of our lives, and to make us obedient.

The Lord has not spoken to His “peculiar people” with two voices. The one requirement that He made of Adam in Eden was, “Obey MY voice!” That same requirement He made of His people in bringing them out from Egypt: “I spoke not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people: and walk you in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you!” Jeremiah 7:22, 23. The same requirement He makes of His people under the new covenant.

In reality the Scriptures subordinate, as we see by this passage, the offering of sacrifices to obeying God’s voice. It was this important truth that the prophet Samuel sought to impress, on, one occasion, upon the disobedient Saul. Samuel said, “Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” 1 Samuel 15:22.

Had Adam in his innocence recognized this truth, there would never have been need of Christ’s sacrifice. For the one thing for which Christ was needed as sacrifice and priest was to take away mans disobedience, and to make him obedient. In order to qualify for such a work, it was absolutely necessary that He should live a life of perfect obedience to His Father, and thus have life to offer which was unspotted by the guilt of disobedience.

It is to be understood, therefore, that precedent to the sacrifice of Himself was His wonderful life of full obedience. This is the quality in Him without which His sacrifice would have no redeeming merit. This truth is clearly stated in Paul’s epistle to the Philippians:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name!” Philippians 2:5-9.

The apostle Peter also very evidently refers to this great fact, When addressing the elect, God’s peculiar people, he tells them unto what their election is purposed to bring them. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and suffering of the blood of Jesus Christ!” 1 Peter 1:2.

It was this truth, too, that Jesus ever sought to impress upon the hearts of His disciples. Particularly is to be observed in His first and last sermons. The first of His sermons of which we have record is the sermon on the mount. It fills the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of the book of Matthew.. It was preached both to His disciples and to the multitude who had gathered to hear His gracious words. It first states the pure principles of obedience, and tells us that we are many times blessed in their practice. Matthew 5:3-9.

It then assures us that by holding to these principles, even under persecution, we shall be blessed and caused to rejoice. Verses 10-12.

It next tells us what we become and do when our lives and service are grounded in these principles. Verses 13-16.

It then declares that Christ’s own life and work were so grounded. Verse 17.

It next announces the perpetuity of the law that demands obedience. Verse 18.

It states the effect of both obedience and disobedience on the person and on his relationship to the kingdom. Verses 19,20.

In verses 21 to 48 Jesus reveals what obedience really is, and then in chapter 6:14 He proceeds to outline what our attitude to our own obedience should be. We should not parade our own acts of obedience before men.

He next teaches us where and how to go for strength in our efforts to obey (verses 5-13), and in these verses we have the Lord’s prayer.

We should observe that there are seven requests in this prayer, and that the first three of these are: “Hallowed be Thy name;” “Thy kingdom come;” “Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.” The last three are: “Forgive our debts” (our disobedience); “Lead us not into temptation;” “Deliver us from evil!” These all, as we see, are definitely related to our obediently doing the will of God. The first three have to do with our obedience, and the last three with taking disobedience from us and keeping us free from it. While

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the middle one of the seven is, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Verses 14 and 15 have to do with our being forgiving.

Verses 16 to 18 are an appeal to be sincere and to avoid hypocrisy.

Verses 19 to 23 implore us properly to evaluate the things of earth and heaven, and to strive for the worth while.

Verse 24 shows that we cannot be both obedient and disobedient at the same time.

Verses 25 to 34 are an appeal, made in the light of verse 24, to seek first the kingdom of God, and to trust Him for all our needs on earth.

Chapter 7:1-5 is an exhortation not to judge others. In reading these verses we should remember that the apostle James has shown us that judging one another is disobedience of a very blameworthy type. Paul also reveals it to be a self-condemnatory type of sin.

Verses 6 to 12 teach us how to give, to ask, and to receive, and climax in a statement of the golden rule.

Verses 13 and 14 admonish us to strive to enter in at the strait gate, and walk in the narrow way.

Verses 15 to 20 are a warning against false teachers, and how to distinguish them from the true. We should here observe that the fruits of obedience are the requirement in a teacher or prophet.

Verses 21 to 23 climax the whole sermon. Let us read their statement:

"Not every one that said unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you! depart from Me, you that work iniquity."

Thus is it revealed that they who enter the kingdom are they who, do the will of God, the obedient; and they who are bidden to depart, and are disowned by our Lord, are they who work iniquity, the disobedient.

Verses 24 to 27 illustrate the final outcome of both Obedience and disobedience, and close the sermon.

It surely is to be regarded as of unusual significance that Christ thus began His public work with such a clear declaration on the question of obedience. Such a fact should seriously engage our thoughts, and its contemplation should lead us to the discovery of more of the fullness of God's purpose for us in Christ Jesus.

The last address of the Savior was delivered to His disciples. It is recorded in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of the Gospel according to John. The topics of this discourse were of His betrayal, His going away-, His sending the Holy Spirit, and His coming again. This sermon, however, cannot be read without discerning how very much of its teaching has to do with obedience. Note the following statements as they occur in their sequence. "If you know these things, happy are you if you do them."

"A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another." (In reading this we should remember that love is the fulfilling of the law.)

"If you love Me, keep MY commandments!" "He that hath My commandments, and keeps them, He it is that loves Me!"

"If a man love Me, he will keep My words."

"He that loves Me not, keeps not My sayings!"

"As the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do."

"If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love."

"This is My commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you!"

"You are My friends, if you do whatsoever I command you.

"These things I command you, that you love one another."

It is worthy of our observation that in this discourse Jesus has laid down the following important principles, as expressed by another:

"That true obedience is born of love,"

"That true obedience is inspired by love,"

"That true obedience admits us into the love of God,"

"That true obedience is inevitable if we love Christ,"

"That true obedience is not possible if we do not love Him,"

"That true obedience makes possible the gift of the Holy Spirit,"

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“That true obedience makes possible the indwelling of the Savior in us,”

“That true obedience, born of love, is the condition upon which life for us in Christ Jesus is based.” John 14:15, 21, 23, 24, 16; 17:23.

A wonderful illustration of the importance of abiding in Christ is recorded in John 15:1-6. The secret of this victorious experience is there said to be obedience. “If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love.” Verse 10. This is logically and doctrinally true, for the disobedient cannot abide in Christ’s love. Matthew 7:23. The one way to abide in Christ Jesus is to obey His voice. But it should be remembered that this obedience cannot be rendered except as we diligently seek and thankfully receive enabling power from the Spirit of God.

THE OBEDIENCE OF FAITH

IN his introductory words to the Romans the apostle Paul speaks of obedience as “the obedience of faith.” Speaking of Jesus, “the Son of God with power,” he says: “By whom we have received grace and apostle ship, to the obedience of faith among all nations, for His name.” Romans 1:5 margin.

Again in Romans 16:25, 26, we find Paul closing the epistle with the same words. “Now to Him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.”

It is worthy of notice that in these two scriptures Paul ~9 out that our reception of grace and the call to apostle ship have, for their purpose our own obedience and the obedience of those of whom we give the gospel. He recognizes that this obedience is an operation of faith, and that the “Scriptures of the prophets” have as their purpose the giving of the gospel to all nations to make men obedient.

The consistent revelation of the Scriptures is that obedience is the act of faith, and that the righteousness of Christ which faith brings to us is His perfect obedience to the will of His Father.

Of Abraham it is recorded that he “obeyed God!” But Paul tells us that it was by faith that Abraham obeyed. His obedience, therefore, was the obedience of faith.

This, too, was the obedience of Christ. His obedience reached its highest peak at the cross, where He became “obedient unto death.” There, “amid the awful darkness, apparently forsaken of God, Christ had drained the last dregs in the cup of human woe. In those dreadful hours He had relied upon the evidence of His Father’s acceptance here to forgive Him. By faith He rested in Him whom it had ever been His joy to obey. And as in submission He committed Himself to God, the sense of the loss of His Father’s favor was withdrawn. By faith, Christ was victor.” *The Desire of Ages.* p. 756.

In reality, faith is always obedient. This is the truth that the apostle James particularly stresses. Let us observe a few of his statements:

“What does it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?” “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou has faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works,” “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?” James 2:14,17,18,20-22.

Thus the apostle has set forth that faith without the works of obedience is dead, that by obedience faith is made perfect, and that faith without works is disobedience. (See verse 19.)

It was by disobedience that man was ruined. The obedience of Christ, which is at the root of every work of God for man’s salvation, was an obedience of faith, and was born of love that dominated every thought and word and deed of the Savior. Let us observe now the part this obedience has in changing us from enemies to children of God.

RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH

“As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” Romans 5:19.

The topic discussed by Paul in his epistle to the Romans is “righteousness by faith!” In the first

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three chapters of this wonderful epistle, justification by faith is emphasized. In Romans 2:13 Paul shows that justification by faith has its root in obedience: "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified!"

In the third chapter he reveals that there is none who, of himself, unaided by the Holy Spirit, is seeking this justification. Our condition in sin is shown to be deplorable. Because of this, any mere correction of our lives is insufficient and unavailing. Therefore, the righteousness of God which is without the law, but which is witnessed to by the law, is brought to view. This righteousness which is by faith in Jesus Christ is unto an and upon all who believe.

Paul then proceeds to show that ministry, at this time, of this righteousness by Jesus, through His own blood, proves that God is both just in His dealings with sinners, and is the justifier of all them that believe. He also makes clear that a man, upon repentance and faith in Christ, pleading the Savior's blood for the remission of his sins, and before he has wrought a single act of obedience to the law, is justified by his faith. He is justified because the law witnesses to the life of obedience which he by faith has presented, even the obedient life of Christ, which was sacrificed for his sins. But we must not fail to observe that in all this, justification comes through the blood, not by the mere cry of the penitent for justification, but by the ministry of the righteousness of Him whom God has set forth to declare His righteousness as ours for the remission of our Sins that are past. Thus is the service of our great High Priest brought to view in this work of justification by faith. "We who was delivered for our offenses" has been "raised again for our justification." Romans 4:25.

At this point we should notice a seeming contradiction between Romans 2:13 and Romans 3:20. Paul in the first of these two passages declares that the doers of the law shall be justified. In the latter he tells us that by the deeds of the law there shall "no flesh be justified in His Sight!" As we examine these two scriptures, this seeming contradiction disappears. Observe that in the first instance Paul does not tell the means by which the doers of the law shall be justified. In the second he distinctly declares that disobedient man is not justified by his own deeds, even though the law approves many of them. Notice should be taken of the word "therefore" in Romans 3:20. That word as used in this chapter indicates that because of the condition of all men, a condition of disobedience described in verses 9-19, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight by the deeds of the law. It is entirely because of our condition of disobedience that we cannot be justified by our own good deeds.

But while we are following Paul's argument in chapter 3, we must not lose the force of his statement in chapter 2: "Not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified!" That statement is basic to a correct understanding of Christ's work in our behalf. We must present a life that is blameless before we can be justified in the sight of God. But the unsaved man has no such life to present, except as He offers Christ's perfect life in place of his own. Since it is already concluded that we are all under sin, we therefore must have the righteousness of Christ's perfect obedience. When this is imputed to us, we are judged to be doers of the law, and are justified as doers. It is because of the importance of this truth that Paul argues at such length, first to show that man, because of his disobedience, cannot be justified by his own works, and next to reveal that when his disobedience is taken away, and Christ's obedient life has been accepted, man, because of Christ's obedience, can be justified by faith in the atoning blood of Christ, having received righteousness through the ministry of that blood in his behalf before God by our High Priest.

Having made this clear to our minds, Paul then proceeds to set forth the truth that the foundation for the justification of our sinful lives is the blood of the atonement; that the condition on which this justification is wrought is by faith, by which the grace of God operates. That this justification is dependent upon the bestowal of Christ's righteousness, which is brought to us by Christ's declaring His righteousness to be ours; that it was in this way that Abraham received righteousness; and that it is in this way, too, that we receive righteousness and are made obedient. This righteousness is a gift. We cannot earn it. We cannot claim it by any natural right that we have, but, thank God, we can accept it in all its blessed fullness by faith in the atoning blood of Jesus.

There is absolutely no doubt that the blood of the atonement is the means by which faith secures justification. But in chapter 5 Paul proceeds to show still more clearly what it is that has given the blood of the atonement its justifying power.

In verse 18 we are shown that by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, and also that by the righteousness of One, the gift of righteousness (the free gift) came upon all men unto justification of life. And in verse 19 we are taken to the heart of the matter, and shown in what it is that our justification has its root: "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the

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obedience of One shall many be made righteous.”

Two personalities are here brought to view, Adam and Christ. The one by his disobedience made many sinners, the other by His obedience makes many righteous. Thus it is by our relationship to Adam that we have been made sinners, and it is by our relationship to Christ that we are made righteous. Our connection with one brought us disobedience; our connection with the other brings us obedience.

Observe here that it was through disobedience imputed to us that we were made sinners. It is by righteousness Imputed to us that we are made righteous. It was Adam’s disobedience that brought sin; it is Christ’s obedience that brings righteousness.

As the seed of Adam, we are by nature the children of disobedience. The one requirement that God had made of Adam was obedience. That was and still is the only way by which man can glorify his Creator. In the same way that Levi paid tithes to Melchisedeci being in the loins of Abraham (Hebrews 7:9,10), so we were in Adam when he became disobedient. Had we been born before Adam disobeyed, we would not have been children of disobedience through him, for Adam then had an obedient nature, and we could not have inherited from him a disobedient nature. But since his fall, Adam had only a disobedient nature to pass on to us. Consequently we have been born, children of disobedience. Thus we became disobedient in Adam by inheriting his disobedient nature. (See Ephesians 22.) Since that nature was already under sentence of death, death passed upon us. This is clearly the teaching of Paul in Romans 5:12: “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in whom [margin] all have sinned.”

Thus, as by nature we became the children of disobedience, so by nature we also became the children of wrath. Ephesians 2:1. This is what is comprehended in the little word “as” in Romans 5:19: “As by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners!” This, too, is what is meant by Paul’s words, “In Adam all die.” 1 Corinthians 15:22.

Having taught us that death has come to all men through Adam, Paul closes this fifth chapter with the beautiful truth, “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:21.

Of Christ it was prophesied: “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart!” Psalm 40:8. Of Him it is recorded: “I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me!” John 5:30. His own testimony was: “I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will but the will of Him that sent Me!” John 6:38. After He had surrendered His life, it was written of Him that He “did no sin.” So Christ lived His whole life in loving obedience to His Father’s will.

In this wonderful life of obedience, we find the root of our redemption. Accepting Him and thus being united to Him, the way is opened for us to be accepted of God in Him. His nature is a sinless nature because of His obedience. By our union with Him we are made partakers of His divine nature. It is to bring this about that the promises of God in Christ Jesus have been given to us:

“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world.” 2 Peter 1:4.

When by faith we become partakers of His sinless nature, we are declared righteous through the imparting of His righteousness to us. Thus, from being children of wrath we become the sons of God. This is the new birth, and this the Savior has outlined as an experience necessary to our entering the kingdom. “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God!” John 3:1 Nicodemus, to whom the Savior unfolded this great truth, thought that He was requiring a second birth of the flesh. But Jesus made it clear that since birth by the flesh had made us children of disobedience, another such birth would not change our natures. If by birth we are to be made obedient, then that birth must be of the Spirit. So He said, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit!” Verse 6. Nicodemus was puzzled, and exclaimed, “How can these things be?” Then it was that Jesus unfolded to the mind of Nicodemus the gracious work of the atonement by which this would be accomplished. Then it was that He uttered that wonderful and very much quoted verse of Scripture: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life!” John 3:16.

Thus He revealed that His own work for us was based in the love of God for us, and thus it was that He made known that He was in the world to bring all this about. And let it never be forgotten that the righteousness which we receive in the new birth, is received only by virtue of our being accepted in Christ. “He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21. Thus, as by Adam we were made sinners, so by Christ we are made righteous. Christ’s obedience involved His bearing our disobedience, and His death in atonement for the guilt of our disobedience was an act of obedience to His Father’s will. It is by His obedience that the blood of the

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atonement is made effectual in delivering us from sin, from sin's power, from death the penalty for sin, and finally from sin's presence. Had our Redeemer been disobedient even in one thing, His blood would have had no redeeming value. But thank God, He did, only those things that pleased His Father.

"Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan the enemy of God and man would have triumphed." *The Desire of Ages*, p. 761.

By His obedient life, then, Christ has made His sacrifice and His priesthood effectual in the great deliverance which the Father has purposed in Him. By this deliverance the power of disobedience, the power that controlled our old life in Adam, has been broken, and the obedience of Christ has become the new power in us, the power by which the new life which we have received in the new birth is controlled. Thus it also is that a new ruler ship of our lives has been brought about through the atoning work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In view of Christ's atoning work, Paul admonishes us "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof. But yield yourselves unto God!" Romans 6:12, 13. This, he explains in verse 1-6, is nothing more or less than obedience. "Know you not," he says, "that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Yielding ourselves to obedience makes it possible for God to make real in us all that He has promised in the new covenant and under its power. Really, as we read the promises of the new covenant, they sum themselves up in this: that God will take away our disobedience, will make us obedient, and will give us grace and power so to live that sin shall not again have dominion over us.

When God made man, He gave him dominion over all the earth and over all life upon it. "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth!" Genesis 1:26.

Having made Adam and Eve, God blessed them both, and "said unto them. Have dominion!" Verse 28.

All this was changed when man in disobedience transferred his allegiance to another master. Obeying Satan, he became the servant of Satan. He yielded himself to obey sin, and became the servant of sin. By this a great change was wrought, not only in him, but also in his relationships. From having dominion over the earth and all life upon it, he himself was brought under the dominion of sin. From being ruler, he became a slave. Thus his dominion passed from him, and his seed were born slaves, children of disobedience, children of wrath.

But Christ, the second Adam, has taken the case for humanity precisely where the first Adam lost his dominion, and for us has recovered that which was lost. His life of obedience in the flesh qualified Him to pay in full the penalty for our guilt; and with His own precious blood He has ransomed us from the slavery of sin. From the day that Adam disobeyed the voice of God, the human race have not been their own. They became the bond slaves of Satan, having sold themselves for naught. Now, in a new way, we are still not our own, "for you are bought with a price." 1 Corinthians 6:20. We have not, however, thereby exchanged forms of bondage, but as freed men we are possessed of a new power through the willingness of our minds, and have received this new power in One who, made like unto His brethren, has become the second head of our race.

"Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1: 18, 19.

It is in view of the fact that we have thus been ransomed that Peter appeals for obedient living on our part, "being born again." Verse 23. It is because of this fact that Jesus is spoken of in the New Testament as having a right to reign over His people. This right is His because to Him "the first dominion" has come. Micah 4:8. He has wrested it from the hand of him who, through deception, took it away from man. He has healed the broken-hearted, He has delivered the captives, He has brought sight to the blind, and He has set at liberty them that are bruised. Oh, what a pitiable thing it is that we deny this gracious work of our Lord, and fail to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," and are "entangled again with the yoke of bondage" 1 Galatians 5:1.

But we have not yet reached the limits to which liberty in Christ is designed to take us. Paul's appeal in view of the victorious freedom which we have in Christ is: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof." Romans 6:12. He has already pointed out that Christ has both died to sin and is alive unto God, and because He lives, means hath no more dominion over Him." He also has pointed out that because of what Christ has done for us, sin shall not any more have ruler

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ship over us. His purpose is not merely to cancel sin's power in us, but much more than that; His gracious work in our behalf is purposed to give us ruler ship. Observe how Paul states this wonderful truth: "If by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ!" Romans 5:17. Paul means this, that all that Christ does in atoning for our sins is for the purpose of making us obedient. The life of obedience is a life of ruler ship.

In all this, then, it is clear that the Bible teaches that obedience is better than sacrifice. That the obedience of Christ has made effectual for us His act in bearing our sins; that it also has made effectual His death in paying the penalty for our guilt. That it makes effectual, too, His priestly ministry in our behalf, by which ministry our justification and son ship are secured through the blood of the Sacrifice. That it makes effectual His deliverance of us, by which deliverance sin's power over us is broken; and that it makes possible His great salvation, by which the existence of sin shall be forever eradicated.

It was to take away our disobedience and to make us obedient that Christ lived, labored, died, rose again, and ascended up on high. It is for this that He is now interceding at the right hand of the Father in heaven. It is to make men obedient that the gospel is being proclaimed. It is to make us obedient that the Bible has been given us. "All scripture," says Paul, "is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction!" For what purpose? "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Timothy 3:16,17. But while all this is so in very deed, we can be obedient only as Christ, our great High Priest, by His abounding grace and by the blood of the covenant, ministers to us His own obedience, and our faith appropriates His obedient life.

LIFE IN CHRIST ONLY

WHEN we turn in the New Testament to the Gospel according to John, we discover that John makes an altogether different approach to the atoning work of Christ from that of the other Gospel writers. He begins at the beginning, and shows us clearly why it is that He who "was God" needed to become man in order to deliver man from the power of death. It is impossible to read thoughtfully the first chapter of John's Gospel without concluding that there was but One in all the universe of God who could be the Savior of man. Indeed, it is not necessary to read beyond the first five verses of that wonderful chapter to comprehend why that is so.

The startling revelation that it brings to us is not that the Son of God left His glory, and became man, and dwelt among us as a bond servant; but, rather, that sin, which made the sacrifice of Christ necessary, has not changed God's purpose toward man.

There is no formal introduction to this Gospel. Its first fact is its important fact: "In the beginning was the Word." Were this not true, all that the Gospel relates would be valueless. To give power and effectiveness to all that is proposed in the gospel through Christ, this fact must stand. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we must know not merely that He is, but also that He was, and that He was "in the beginning!" His being in the beginning is our assurance of His being now and to all eternity.

The second fact is of equal importance: "And the Word was with God!" It is not enough that we know that Christ was in the beginning; we must also know that then He was with God that they were together in the beginning of the creative purpose. There is a very important reason for our being assured upon this point. He through whom the creative purpose once wrought is now entrusted with the responsibility of bringing about a new creation. And inasmuch as we are vitally concerned with that new creation, it is assuring for us to know that the work is in the hands of One who was with God in the very beginning, and that through Him the whole work of creation was executed.

The third fact is likewise of great importance: "And the Word was God." The whole purpose of the gospel is to take from man that which separates him from God, and to bring to him that which is of God and will make him one with God. "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in US," is the expression of a constant purpose of Christ for His people. Pleading with His Father for those whom the Father had given Him, He said, "They are Your. And all Mine are Your, and Your are Mine; and I am glorified in them. Holy Father, keep through Your own name those whom Thou has given Me, that they may be one, as we are."

This work of bringing us back to God and of making us one with God is vested in Him who in the beginning "was," who was there "with God," and who "was God." By these facts our hearts are well assured of the truth, the completeness, and the perfection of the work undertaken for our redemption by

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Him.

Observe the emphasis that John gives to all three of these facts in the second verse: "The same was in the beginning with God!" A wonderful foundation of gospel truth is thus laid for our study. This one who as the Word was with God and was God in the beginning is the one by whom "all things were made!" He was the agent of power in active operation in the whole work of creation. Observe again the emphasis here: "And without Him was not anything made that was made!" There can be no doubt at all as to when this beginning was, for clearly it is before all creation. There, He who is now our Savior became our Creator, and the Creator of all other things that were made. That He should be the One by whom the new creation is wrought is, therefore, in complete accord with the purpose that wrought by Him "in the beginning."

But still weightier testimony is supplied by John in setting before us the ground of fact on which Christ has undertaken with authority the work of our redemption. In the beginning when He was with God, and was God, and all things were made by Him, "in Him was life; and the life was the light of men!"

Well indeed had it been for us had we always remembered this great truth. But this is the vital fact that the serpent, in beguiling Eve, caused her to forget. The one thing that God had required of man was obedience. The one thing that could separate man from God, and bring death, was disobedience. The command of God concerning the forbidden tree was definite: "You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die." But at the suggestion of the evil one that she would not die, that disobedience would not bring death, that she had life in herself and therefore was independent of the Source of life, she partook of the fruit, and in doing so separated herself from Him in whom from the very beginning "was life." In reaching out to find life that was independent of Him, she found death; and Adam, joining Eve in her disobedience, brought death "upon all men."

In the beginning God had purposed that all life should, emanate from His Son. The one way to retain connection with that life was obedience to the Father's will. Any separation of His creatures from that source of life brought death. Now death having passed upon all men through sin, the one way for the redemption of man from death is to take away his disobedience, and to restore his connection with the source of life.

It was of this that the Savior spoke in His last discourse to His disciples before His betrayal.

Declaring Himself to be the true vine, His Father the husbandman, and His followers the branches, He made it clear that, once the uncleanness of disobedience is taken away, it is necessary for His people to abide in Him as the branch abides in the vine. "He that abides in Me, and I in Him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." John 15:5, 6. The secret of this abiding experience is obedience. "If you keep My commandments, you shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." Verse 10.

John tells us that "the life" which was in Christ in the beginning, "was the light of men." When sin came, the light was obscured to men by the darkness of their disobedience. But the life from which the light emanated was unaffected by the change that had come to man. "The light" continued to shine, notwithstanding the darkness, but "the darkness comprehended it not." Even then the situation of man was not regarded by God as utterly hopeless. Man was without means of recovering himself from death. But in due time "there was a man sent from God, whose name was John." He came to bear witness to the fact that the light was still shining; that the darkness had not extinguished it; that there is light for every man that comes into the world. But this light is the light of the life of the Son of God.

When man was wholly without strength, and could not so much as comprehend the light of the life of God's Son, He who was in the beginning with God and was God, He by whom all things were made and in whom was life, came into this world. "The world was made by Him," but notwithstanding that, the world knew Him not. "He came unto His own," to those whom He had made and to whom He had given life, "and His own received Him not." "But," wonderful, amazing condescension and love! "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

That this means that He gave them life is indicated by the next verse, where John continues, "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Born of God! There is the whole secret of life for sinful, ruined humanity. New life through the new birth. New life with new parentage. New life with new power. New life with a new standing before God. New life with new relationships. New life with a new outlook on the world and sin and death, upon time and eternity. In short, a new creation.

This new creation is the achievement of Christ. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ["there is a new creation." A. R. V., margin]." 2 Corinthians 5:17. The old creation had fallen in Adam. It

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was ruined by his disobedience. The new creation has in it the power and light of the life-of the Son of God, and is established in the obedience of Him who, though God, became man, and lived without sin.

It was with this purpose to re-create man and to give him life, that Christ came to earth. "I am come," He declared, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10. He had full right to do this, for the purpose of God from everlasting was that the whole creation should find life in Him only. He came to earth and took our flesh, but His perfect obedience in the flesh to the will of His Father has determined that that purpose shall continue in Him. Consequently when about to give His life for our redemption He was able to say, "I am the way the truth, and the life: no man comes unto the Father, but by Me." John 14:6.

In the old creation Adam was given dominion. As head of that creation, Adam failed, and passed in his failure under the dominion of death. With him the creation of which he was head also failed, and with him it passed under the ruler ship of death. "Wherefore; as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adams transgression." Romans 5:12, 14.

In the new creation another Adam has been given ruler ship. In Him dominion is again restored to us. Where, because of disobedience, death reigned in the old creation, now, because of the gift of righteousness, "they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Romans 5:17,18.

"The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" for the express purpose of bringing this about. It was this that God had covenanted with Abraham to accomplish. It was this that He purposed in His gift of Christ to the world. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16.

Thank God that all this is an expression of the same purpose that is revealed to us in the beginning. Sin has wrought no change in God's purpose for His creatures. The sins of His people have not changed God. The change that was brought about by sin was in us, and in that over which we had been given dominion. It is to the unchangeableness of God that we owe the fact that we even now are not destroyed because of sin. "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed. Even from the days of your fathers you are gone away from Mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto Me, and I will return unto you, said the Lord of hosts." Malachi 3:6, 7.

When we departed from God through sin, He did not pursue us with a changed purpose, but, having "chosen us in Him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love," and "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Ephesians 1:4-7.

As in the beginning when Jesus was with God and was God, we were chosen, according to the purpose of God, to be holy and blameless before Him in love. So now, in the same purpose, we are accepted in Christ through the redemption of His blood, our sins being forgiven according to the richness of His grace.

It was in Christ that we had life before sin came. It is in Christ that we now have life through the forgiveness of our sins. So it is written: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." 1 John 5:12. This, says John, is the record that God has given us of His Son; that life for us is in His Son, and we have that life by having the Son.

We should understand, then, that it was the Author of life that was made flesh and dwelt among us, it was the Author of life that was taken by wicked hands and slain on the cross of Calvary, it was the Author of life that was raised again from the dead, and it is the Author of life through whom we now have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus; whom you delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. But you denied the Holy One and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Author [margin] of life, whom God bath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses." Acts 3:13-15.

Oh, what an arraignment of guilt in those few words! The Holy One and the just denied. A murderer desired. The Author of life killed. How terrible, indeed, is sin, and how great the mercy and forbearance of God! He who had come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly, was none other than the Author of life. No other ever has been vested with such equality with the Father, or given

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such inherent power and authority. He alone possessed the right to give life. He alone could destroy death. In the beginning He exercised this power, this right, this authority, by giving life to those whom He had created. Now in this world that sin has ruined He has exercised it by abolishing death, and by bringing life and immortality to light through the gospel.

This is in definite continuance of the purpose of God grace that “was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,” and which has been “made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ” at His first advent. 2 Timothy 1:9,10. From everlasting He is “the life.” To everlasting He is the resurrection and the life. Death surely is a remorseless enemy, but, thank God, death is now a defeated foe. Its power is broken. Its bands have been burst. Over its empty triumph still is sounding the voice of Him who has gotten us the victory, saying, “He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.”

In His statement to the disciples, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father but by Me,” Jesus intended that they should understand Him to be not only the way, but the only way; not only the truth, but the only saying truth; not only the life, but the only source from which life can be received. If man, who is “dead in trespasses and sins,” is to receive life, then He must of necessity receive it in Christ, for He is the life—the only life. He that has Christ has life. There is no other in the eternal purpose of God in whom life inheres. Therefore there was no one else through whom man could be rescued from death and brought to life. He by whom man was created, and in whom man, in the beginning, had life, is the only one by whom fallen man could be redeemed.

It was not possible for an angel thus to succor helpless humanity. The angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.” But life did not inhere in angels, and therefore no angel could be the savior of lost man. Angels, with all other created beings, are dependent for life on Him who is the life. “All created beings live by the will and power of God. From the highest seraph to the humblest animate being, all are replenished from the Source of life.” “In our Savior that life that was lost through sin is restored; for He has life in Himself to quicken whom He will. He is invested with the right to give immortality.” “For as the Father bath life in Himself; so bath He given to the Son to have life in Himself.” John 5:26.

Faith in the Son of God assures us of life. “He that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.” John 11:25. “He that hears My word, and believes on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.” “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” “For as the Father raises up the dead, and quickens them; even so the Son quickens whom He will.” John 5:24, 25, 28, 29, 21.

Speaking of His own people, Jesus said, “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand.” John 10:28, 29.

With such wonderful assurance the word of God encourages us to believe in the Lord Jesus, and to accept life in Him. Yielded to Him, we are wholly secure in possession of that eternal life which He gives us. No man, no power outside of ourselves, can take that life from us, for the only thing that can separate us from that life is sin in our hearts. Therefore let us renounce sin, and choose life, that “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall” we “also appear with Him in glory.” Colossians 3:4.

RECONCILIATION

RECONCILIATION of man to God is set forth in the New Testament as a completed act on the part of God.

“You, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and without blame and without reproof in His sight.” Colossians 1:21, 22.

There are at least two parties to a reconciliation. In the case made necessary by sin, these two are the great Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth, and man, His creature. Both were present and participated in the reconciliation wrought on Calvary by the death of Christ. In the likeness of sinful flesh, the Lord Jesus hung upon the cross in man’s stead, as the representative of man, as the second head of the race. “He died for all!” 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15. “We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.”

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Romans 5:10. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." 2 Corinthians 5:19. Therefore man and his Maker, though estranged by sin, met together in Christ, by whose death reconciliation was effected. God's part in this transaction was and is complete. Whether men individually accept the reconciliation thus wrought, is quite another matter. What God has already done on His part is made effective in the individual when he does his part by accepting the reconciliation accomplished for the whole race by the death of Christ.

Reconciliation, however, was not first sought by man, it was first sought by God. "They heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And He said, Who told thee that thou was naked? Has thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou should not eat? And the man said, The woman whom Thou gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou has done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou has done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shall thou go, and dust shall thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; -it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise His heel!" Genesis 3:8-15.

It is apparent from this scripture that so far from seeking reconciliation, sinful man sought to hide from the presence of God. The announcement of His plan to save man was made by the Lord to the serpent in the presence of the first man, and not in response to an appeal from him for reconciliation. Neither in this scripture, nor elsewhere in the Bible, is there record of man's coming of himself to God in sorrow for his sin. There is, in the Scriptures, no story of man, unprompted by the Holy Spirit, coming in repentance and seeking reconciliation.

On the contrary, the attitude to which man's disobedience carried him, has always been one of estrangement from God. Sometimes Christians are led to a mistaken understanding of the work of reconciliation by the belief that it was God who needed to be reconciled to man. Such a conclusion must inevitably lead far from the truth as it is revealed in the Bible. A fact of far-reaching importance in this consideration is that the entrance of sin into the heart of man did not change God. This fact is basic to all that the plan to save sinners means to men. Were it not for the unchangeableness of God, there would be no such plan. "I am the Lord, I change not!" Malachi 3:6. God was love when He created man. He is still love, and in the unchangeableness of that love, He gave His only begotten Son to die for us. All the change that was brought about by the entrance of sin into man's heart took place in man and in that over which man had been given dominion. This change brought about a separation of man from God which was tragically complete. This being so, then it must be expected that the reconciliation of man to God, which was effected by the death of Christ, will once more bring about a great change in this world, including, as it does, the opening of the way for man's return to God.

"In the apostasy, man alienated himself from God; earth was cut off from heaven. Across the gulf that lay between, there could be no communion." Nowhere does the Bible picture man, unaided by God, seeking means to cross that gulf and to be reconciled to God. Man, who needed reconciliation, was not the one who sought it. He revealed no interest in being reconciled. On the contrary, in both Old and New Testaments God is portrayed as seeking man, and the picture revealed to us in the fourteenth psalm shows the great earnestness of the Lord in thus seeking us. Upon reading this and other scriptures which refer to it, we cannot fail to be impressed by the minuteness of the search. Observe the following:

"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that does good, no, not one." Psalm 142, 3.

Clearly is it shown by this scripture that man of himself was not a seeker after God. Clearly is it shown, too that man in his fallen, sinful state did not even understand either his own condition of great need, or God's unchangeable 'love for him. God had purposed that he should "reign in life." In the unchangeableness of that purpose He planned to save man from sin, and preliminary to that salvation He sought the reconciliation of man, and purposed it in the death of His Son. Hence it is written: "When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." and "being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life!" Romans 5:10.

But sin had not only estranged man from God, it had made man hostile to God. Observe that it was while we were enemies that we were reconciled to God, and then take note that it was into this hostile

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world that God sent His Son to reconcile us unto Himself. This was done, not because we loved God, but because He loved us.

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” 1 John 4:9, 10. So, in due time, it was recorded, “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost!” Luke 19:10.

Two distinct purposes are here stated: “to seek and to save,” but observe their sequence. The seeking was precedent to the saving. Thus, too, the act of reconciling the sinner to God by the death of Christ was wrought in order to bring about the sinner’s salvation, but did not of itself complete that salvation.

Paul has set forth in clear sequence the order of Christ’s work for us. He also has shown us the means by which this sequence is preserved. First we were reconciled; next we shall be saved. We were reconciled by the death of His Son; we shall be saved by His life.

Now, since we were first reconciled, and being reconciled, shall be saved, it is most reasonable to understand that the means by which these two’ results are accomplished have the same sequence. This is clearly indicated by the tense of the verbs used in Romans 5:10: “were reconciled” (past tense), “Shall be saved” (future tense). This being so, the death by which we “were reconciled” preceded the life by which we “shall be saved!”

The conclusion, therefore, is that by Christ’s life of priestly ministry since His resurrection He obtains salvation for repentant sinners through the blood of the sacrifice. By the life of obedience which He lived in the flesh, He wrought the righteousness which He now ministers to us as priest in the sanctuary in heaven. It is as Jesus Christ the Righteous that He is now before the Father as our advocate. 1 John 2:1. But the apostle Paul emphatically teaches that both the life of obedience which Christ lived in the flesh and His death on the cross would have been vain but for the risen life which He is now living and His priestly ministry before the Father in heaven:

“If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain!” “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished!” 1 Corinthians 15:14, 17, 18.

The effectiveness of Christ’s life in the flesh and of His death on the cross, is thus stated to be dependent upon His risen life in heaven. We therefore must conclude that Paul intends us to understand that the life of Jesus by which we are saved after being reconciled, is His risen life, by which His life of obedience in the flesh, His righteousness thus wrought in humanity for us, His substitutionary death for us on the cross of Calvary, and His priestly ministry, are made effective in us.

Plainly a vital distinction is made in the Scriptures between reconciliation and salvation. They are not contradictory, but are in part synonymous. Reconciliation is the first step in salvation. Salvation is the sequel to reconciliation. Each is indispensable to the other, and they harmonize perfectly in the carrying out of God’s great plan for saving sinners.

It is made very clear in the Scriptures that Christ died to save all, and with equal clearness is it also set forth that not all will be saved. The Scriptures show that reconciliation for all was made by the death of Christ, in order that they might obtain salvation; but they emphatically declare that notwithstanding reconciliation has been made for all, not all will be saved. They set forth the fact that all were reconciled while they were yet enemies to God, and that the fact that they were reconciled did not of itself change their attitude. They make it very clear however, that this attitude must be changed, for no one can be saved while still an enemy.

It is God’s purpose that the work of salvation shall, be as all-embracing as the act of reconciliation. Reconciliation was made for all. Salvation is offered to all. Such scriptures as John 3:16,17, reveal this: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved.” In order to make salvation possible for all, Jesus was delivered up for all, the iniquity of us all was laid upon Him, and He thereby became the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Romans 8:32; Isaiah 53:6; 1 John 2:2.

Besides these clear revelations of God’s all-inclusive purpose in the gift of Christ, are found in the Scripture passages which reveal the kindred fact that though God purposed to save all in Christ, and has made full provision in Him for the salvation of every man, yet not all will be saved. In this respect the work of salvation is distinguished from the act of reconciliation. God purposed to reconcile all men unto Himself, and He has reconciled every man to Himself by the death of Christ. It was in His purpose to save every

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man, but not every man will be saved.

The reasons for this are clearly given in the Scriptures. Reconciliation for us was completed on God's part without our having any participation in the act. Christ bore our guilt, but it was prophesied of Him in doing so: "I have trodden the wine press alone; and of the people there was none with Me." Isaiah 63:1 His utter aloneness in this act is indicated by the prophecy of the psalmist:

"I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." "Be not far from Me; for there is none to help." Psalm 69:20; 22:11.

His aloneness is also indicated by His despairing cry on the cross: "My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken Me?" Matthew 27:46.

It was for the ungodly that Christ died. Romans 5:6. It was while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us. Verse 8. It was when we were enemies and in hostility to God that Christ reconciled us to the Father by His death. Verse 10.

This act of reconciliation was wrought by God's imputing our trespasses to His Son, and not imputing them to us. 2 Corinthians 5:18,19. He was able to do this by His Son's taking our place, and by making Him to be sin for us. Since that is the way by which He reconciled us, and since He made that reconciliation by the death of His Son, He therefore completed that work upon the cross.

After Christ had by His death effected our reconciliation, He ascended to His Father to be accepted for us. God's acceptance of Him in heaven, as He who had lived faultless in the flesh, who had died in our stead, and who had come again from the grave, opened the way for Him to stand between God and man as Mediator with the Father, pleading the merits of a sacrifice already accepted by the Father in our behalf.

The reconciliation, effected by His death, however, becomes effective in us individually only as we accept Christ as our substitute, and accept His death in payment of the penalty for the sins which alienate us from God. God's satisfaction in this work of reconciliation is then signified by His acceptance of us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:6.

My acceptance of Christ as my substitute enables to bring Him as my sacrifice, and thus to show that, by the death which reconciled me and opened the way of approach for me to God, the penalty for my guilt has been paid in full. It enables me to show also that I am a suppliant through the blood for deliverance from the power of sin in me, and that I am an entrant to the new life which I have through the ministry Of His own life and power to me continually. That this ministry is the work of Christ after He becomes High Priest, is made still plainer in the following scripture:

"Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be [literally, become] a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Hebrews 2:17.

It is obvious from the wording of this scripture that the work of making effective in us the reconciliation wrought upon the cross, takes place after Jesus has entered upon His work as High Priest. It is here clearly shown that Jesus was made like His brethren so that as priest in heaven He could make reconciliation for the sins of His people. This, of course, is accomplished by making individually or personally effective an act already completed on the part of God, which awaits personal application by our High Priest when personal acceptance of it is made by individual believers in Christ.

It must be carefully observed that the act of reconciliation on God's part is clearly shown to be a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The end is our salvation-the presentation of us to God "holy and without blame and without reproof in His sight!" "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Romans 5:10.

The possibility that this reconciling act of Christ will ever bring individuals to that salvation, is shown in the Scriptures to be dependent upon their condition of life in relation to the reconciliation achieved, and not merely upon the act itself, wrought before many were born. Observe the statement:

"If you continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which you have heard!" Colossians 1:23.

Our continuance in the faith, "grounded and settled," our being unmoved from the hope of the gospel, are dependent, not upon strength inherent in us, but upon help continually received by us through the ministry of our great High Priest in heaven. Therefore the end to which reconciliation is purposed to bring us is reachable only through the priestly service of the Savior.

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Hebrews 4:14.

Now, having ourselves received the benefits of reconciliation, God has committed to us the ministry of reconciliation to others. We as His ambassadors are to beseech others, "Be you reconciled to

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God!” In other words, we implore men, “Permit the Lord Jesus in His priestly service to make yours, by acceptance of Him as your substitute, the reconciliation which He wrought by His death.”

The basis of such a plea by His ambassadors to those who have not yet accepted Him is, “He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” 2 Corinthians 5:21.

The assurance that we as Christ’s ambassadors may give is, “As many as received Him, to them gave He power [“right, or, privilege,” margin] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12, 13.

Observe that this right does not make men the sons of God, but makes it possible for them to become the sons of God. This right is not received automatically in consequence of what Christ has wrought, but is bestowed upon those only who believe on His name.

From all this we must conclude that God has fully done His part in reconciling us unto Himself; that if we will but choose to accept Christ by faith, thus performing our part, the benefits of reconciliation will be secured to us personally, and by being “born of God” we become the sons of God. That this is assured to us in the fact that our acceptance of Christ makes it possible for Him in His priestly ministry to make reconciliation effective in us individually; that its effectiveness in us makes us ambassadors for Christ. That our message as His ambassadors is, “Be you reconciled,” or in other words, “Accept reconciliation;” and that this is really the message of the gospel to all men.

THE VICTORY

IN varying ways those who have written prophetically of the work of Christ have pictured for us the certainty of its triumph. But nowhere else in the Bible is the completeness of that triumph so clearly and so beautifully stated as by the prophet Isaiah, who wrote of Jesus thus:

“He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation. For in this mountain shall the hand of the Lord rest, and Moab shall be trodden down under Him, even as straw is trodden down for the dunghill.

“And He shall spread forth His hands in the midst of them, as he that swims spreads forth his hands to swim: and He shall bring down their pride together with the spoils of their hands. And the fortress of the high fort of thy walls shall He bring down, lay low, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.

“In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open you the gates, that the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusts in Thee!” Isaiah 25:8 to 26:1

The apostle Paul assures us ‘ that the first part of this prophecy will have, its fulfillment in the resurrection of the just:

“Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” 1 Corinthians 15:51-55.

For this victory Paul thanks God, and declares that it is given us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 57. But reference again to the prophecy of Isaiah reveals the fact that the completeness of this victory is made possible only by the whole experience of Christ in His work for us, and by the whole service of Christ in our behalf-by His life in the flesh, by His death on the cross, by His resurrection from the dead, by His life after death, by His Second Coming, by His power in raising the dead, by His destruction of sin and of those who have chosen to serve sin, and by the entrance of His people into the eternal city.

Sometimes we hear of Christ having obtained complete victory for us upon the cross. But we need to understand the relationship of what Christ did for us on the cross to this complete victory of which Isaiah has prophesied, and of which Paul has written. Thank God for the victory won for us by Christ on the cross. There “His right hand and His holy arm had gotten Him the victory. As a conqueror He planted His banner

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on the eternal heights.” There the purpose of Satan was defeated and his kingdom wrested from his control. It was there that Christ met the powers of darkness in their most intense and determined efforts to defeat and ruin Him. And it was there He triumphed gloriously over them. And inasmuch, as He was there in our stead, He did it all for us. Therefore the victory that He there gained was ours.

That victory is basic to all that can be understood as triumph in the great struggle, but it was not in itself complete. It yet remained to be seen if death would be “swallowed up of life.” If the Lord had permitted victory to rest with what was accomplished on the cross, we still would be under the curse, and subject to death. The aged apostle John, near the close of a long experience, wrote that faith is the victory. But faith, according to Paul, is vain if Christ had victory only on the cross, “And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” “And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins.” 1 Corinthians 15:14, 17. To free us from our sins, Jesus died as our substitute, rose again from the dead, and was accepted for us by the Father, and He makes atonement for us before the Father by ministering His own blood in our behalf.

Paul has written, “This Man, because He continues ever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.” Hebrews 7:24-26.

By this it is evident that Christ’s life of priestly ministry in heaven is a part of God’s plan for man’s salvation, and that because Jesus has an endless life He is able “to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.” It is but another way of saying that though the death of our Savior on the cross paid the price of man’s redemption, the work of atoning for our sins embraces even more than the actual sacrifice of Christ. It includes also the ministry of Christ’s perfect life through the Holy Spirit to the believer, and the presentation of the merits of His shed blood in our behalf before the Father, since Christ “ever lives to make intercession” for the believer. This work Christ accomplishes as our High Priest in heaven.

THE CONTINUAL BURNT OFFERING

THE revelation which the Bible gives of God’s plan to save sinners, shows clearly that its success depends upon the individual sinner’s attitude toward its provisions. No work of saving mankind in the mass is unfolded to us in the Scriptures. God’s gifts through Christ are for all mankind. His calls for acceptance of those gifts are to individuals.

“Whosoever will,” “If any man will,” “If any man hear My voice, and open the door,” “Except a man be born’ again,” are examples of the pointed, personal nature of God’s calls through the gospel of His Son. The great gift of God to the whole world, His only begotten Son, can be accepted by mankind only as it is accepted by individuals. Consequently, Christ can save the world only by saving the individuals of the world. These basic facts were typified in the earthly sanctuary service by the offerings that were there presented.

Of these there were five which were given prominence: the burnt offering, the meat offering, the peace offering, the sin offering, and the trespass offering. They were presented for the priests, for the people as a whole, and for the individual sinner. In its nature the burnt offering was a substitution sacrifice.

“If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord. And, he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him!” Leviticus 1:3, 4.

At the inauguration of the sanctuary services, the sacrifice of the continual burnt offering was established by divine command. Because of its Unvarying daily continuance it was called the “continual burnt offering.”

“Now this is that which thou shall offer upon the altar: two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one, lamb thou shall offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shall offer at even: and with the one lamb a tenth deal of flow mingled with the fourth part of a bin of beaten oil. And the fourth part of a quart of wine for a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shall offer at even, and shall do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto the Lord. This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord: where I will meet you, to

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“speak there unto thee.” Exodus 29:38-42.

As the morning and evening sacrifice, the continual burnt offering represented Christ as the substitute which God had provided for all men. It presented Him as the gift of God. It was John 3:16 in type: “God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” It evidenced the fact that One had been delivered up for all in order that each individual might, through Him, be provided with a way to escape the wrath to come.

It taught the lesson that “as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.” Romans 5:18.

In the continual burnt offering was unfolded the glorious truth that in Him who gave Himself a ransom for all, a way of approach to God had been provided for all men. By it, too, assurance was given that because One has been delivered for all, each individual may now sue for mercy and claim pardon.

The continual burnt offering, while declaring that God had provided a substitute for all, was not presented to the Lord in substitution for any particular individual. Every reference in the Scriptures to the continual burnt offering reveals this to be true. It gave no indication that the Substitute, given of God for all, had, as yet, been accepted by any. But since efficacy of the gift made to all is possible only in its acceptance by each, it was necessary that other sacrifices be offered to typify this most important feature of the saving work of Christ.

God, from the depths of love that human thought never can fathom, gave His only begotten Son to die for a lost race. This the continual burnt offering clearly typified. But in order that this great truth might become effective in his experience, the sinner must be led to accept Christ’s death as his death, Christ’s burial as his burial, and Christ’s risen life as his new life. The plan to save sinners concerns itself not merely with past disobedience and present guilt because of that disobedience, but much more with making us obedient. Indeed, the taking away of our disobedience by paying its penalty in full, is but preliminary to making us obedient, and thus preparing us to dwell eternally in the presence of a holy God. Not merely to destroy the power of sin in us, but to impart new power to us for holy living, is God’s purpose for us in Christ Jesus.

The sinner’s consent to share the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and to accept Christ’s life as his own, does not come to him by compulsion. As with Christ in coming to “tabernacle in the flesh,” to take our sins upon Him, and to die in our stead, there was complete willingness of mind; so with us in consenting to share the death, burial, and life of our Savior there must also be complete willingness of mind. The penitent sinner must bring the sacrifice with his own hands. He must choose to accept the substitute who has died for him. He must consent to have his guilt borne away from him by the death of his substitute. He must be willing to have the dominion of sin over him taken away. He must choose to accept a new power for the governance of his life thereafter. All these he must have or do only because he so desires. Though Christ has died for man’s sins, and thereby has paid in full the penalty for his guilt, if the sinner still chooses to live in sin, and does not accept for himself the blood of the atonement, he is dead, not with Christ, but in his sins.

It is this personal fellowship with Christ in His death, that makes Christ’s sacrifice effectual in and for us as individuals. In the typical service this great truth was represented by the individual sinner’s bringing to God his offering in acknowledgment of his own sins. It was by the blood of his personal sin offering that atonement was made for him.

“He shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.” Leviticus 4:29-31.

Thus was taught in type the great, eternal truth that while God the Father gave His only begotten Son for the redemption of all, and while Jesus, the Son of the eternal Father, gave Himself to be the propitiation, not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world, the sacrifice of the Savior reaches and affects the individual life only when, by his own choice, the sinner consents to be crucified with his Lord and die in Him. As Christ yielded Himself to the death of the cross for us, so we must yield ourselves to the death of the cross with Him, and, dying in Him, become dead to sin through Him. This yielding of Christ to die our death was set forth in the typical service of the earthly sanctuary by the daily sacrifice of the continual burnt offering, while our yielding to share His death for us was typified in the sin offering brought to the door of the sanctuary by the repentant sinner, and there slain by him in acceptance by him, and him alone, of the substitution made for him.

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The continual burnt offering witnessed in the type to the fact that God had purchased with the blood of His Son the life of every individual in the whole world. It set forth in figure the fact, which is basic to all else that enters into our Lord's saving ministry for man, that Christ Jesus came to this world to die a ransom for sinners. It was for this He left His Father's throne. It was for this He took our flesh. It was for this He lived as boy and man. It was in full view of this that He ministered in the flesh. "To this end was I born," said Christ, "and for this cause came I into the world!" John 18:37. Paul declares, "In due time Christ died for the ungodly." Romans 5:6. On this eternal, unalterable fact faith must rest for all that God's promise has to bring to His child. Aside from this fact the sinner has no approach to God. It is important that this be understood.

Our faith rests upon an act of Christ that in itself is complete. He died. He died for us. By His death He obtained our ransom. That act of Christ's is unalterable. Nothing that men or demons are able to do can change it. Its result, too, is unalterable. Our ransom has been purchased by the death of our Lord. That fact rests upon no act or attitude of ours. It rests unchangeably upon the act and attitude of Christ. The sinner may or may not accept the act or recognize the attitude, but in either case, neither of these is thereby affected. The attitude of Christ toward the sinner has been unalterably established by His act in dying for all. Refusal by any to recognize that attitude affects only the unbelieving sinner.

The continual burnt offering in the daily service of the sanctuary represented not the sinner's attitude toward the act of Christ, but the act itself; and it invited a right attitude on the part of the sinner toward that act. It made clear that in the death of Christ an indestructible basis had been provided for man's faith—a basis which is as little affected by man's influence, as the fact in which it establishes itself is beyond the possibility of alteration. It told the story, not that sin had died, not that we had died to sin, but that Christ had died for the ungodly. His death did not occur when the ungodly were penitent and desirous of having their ungodliness turned away from them, but when they were enemies to God. Romans 5:8,10. This was the first great truth that was unfolded by the typical service of the earthly sanctuary, and it was by the sacrifice of the continual burnt offering that this important truth was most clearly set forth.

THE SIN OFFERING

BOTH the sin offering and the trespass offering were propitiation in their purpose. The sin offering was a sacrifice brought either by an individual sinner or by the congregation, for sin that had been committed ignorantly by the individual or the congregation respectively, and after consciousness of the sin had been awakened.

"If the whole congregation of Israel sin through ignorance, and the thing be hid from the eyes of the assembly, and they have done somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which should not be done, and are guilty. When the sin, which they have sinned against it, is known, then the congregation shall offer a young bullock for the sin, and bring him before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the elders of the congregation shall lay their hands upon the head, of the bullock before the Lord: and the bullock shall be killed before the Lord. And the priest that is anointed shall bring of the bullock's blood to the tabernacle of the congregation: and the priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, even before the veil. And he shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the Lord, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And he shall take all his fat from him, and burn it upon the altar. And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this: and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them. And he shall carry forth the bullock without the camp, and, burn him as he burned the first bullock: it as a sin offering for the congregation.

"And if any one of the common people sin through ignorance, while he does somewhat against any of the commandments of the Lord concerning things which ought not to be done, and be guilty; or if his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge. Then he shall bring his offering a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savor unto the Lord; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

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“And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings. And the priest shall; burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the Lord: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him.” Leviticus 4:13-35.

The trespass offering, like the sin offering, was a sacrifice brought by the individual sinner because of sins which he had knowingly committed. This is indicated by the following scripture: “If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord, and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence. Or bath deceived his neighbor he shall bring his trespass offering.” Leviticus 6:2, 6.

Each of these two offerings was a sacrifice for sin for which the penalty of guilt was paid by substitution. “He shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation, for a trespass offering, unto the priest. And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord and it shall be forgiven him for anything of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.” Leviticus 6:6,7. They were brought in order that atonement might be made and forgiveness obtained. Leviticus 4:34, 35.

In offering this sacrifice, the sinner brought an animal to the door of the sanctuary, placed his hand upon the head of his victim, presumably confessing over it his sin, and then slew it in the place where the burnt offering was slain. “If his sin, which he hath sinned, come to his knowledge: then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering.” Leviticus 4:28, 29.

Thus the sinner acknowledged the authority of God’s law which he had transgressed, and that his life was forfeit because of his transgression. That he was guilty and therefore deserving of death; that he desired pardon of his sin, and that this could be secured only through the death of the Substitute which God had provided and ordained to death for him.

Thus also it is seen that the continual burnt offering and the individual’s sin offering were slain at the same place. This makes it clear, that while the continual burnt offering was made for all, its merits became effectual for the individual only when he brought his personal offering to the same place-not upon the altar, but in the place where the burnt offering was slain, which was at “the side of the altar northward.” Leviticus 1:11.

A basic fact of the gospel of God is that “when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly!” Its companion truth is Paul’s statement to the Galatians, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and, gave Himself for me!” Galatians 2:20.

The fact of first importance in this scripture is the last one stated: That Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me.” In giving Himself for all, Jesus had each one in mind. His love, which embraced all, is mine in a particular, personal sense. He gave Himself for me.

Recently I stood before a wonderful picture which was the gift of a certain gentleman to the residents of the city in which it is hung. It was the work of three artists who had used a vast amount of material in its production. It cost them thirty-seven thousand dollars to produce it. It is a valuable and beautiful gift. But because it was presented to all of that city, it is the possession of no one in particular. There is no way whereby that picture can ever become the possession of any one person alone.

The gift of Christ is unlike that. In giving Himself for all, He made provision for the gift to be received by each in the particular, personal way that makes Him one’s very own Savior. The city could receive and keep the picture for all, only by assuring the giver that it never would be allowed to become the particular possession of any one. The giver’s interest in the individual residents was only as they happened to be units of the mass. He had no particular individual in mind.

Christ gave Himself for all, but He gave Himself for an offering because He loved each particular individual, and had each individual in mind when He gave Himself. Observe, too, that His gift, in the individual sense, also, is substitutionary. He gave Himself for me. He died in my stead His love centers in individuals-all individuals. The gift of Himself is for individuals, for all individuals. Paul had made the sacrifice of Christ his own, and in his statement of the fact he has revealed a wonderful understanding of

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the atonement. To the Galatians he declared in his introductory words, "Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us, from this present evil world!" Galatians 1:3, 4. Building upon that fact, he proceeds to show how the act of Christ reproduces itself in us to make the work of atoning for our sins complete, and declares:

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me." Christ's death for us paid the penalty for our guilt, and prepared a way for us to die to sin. Payment of the penalty alone would not be a complete work. In addition to this the power of sin which has had dominion over us must be broken. How is this brought about? As Christ's death for me paid my penalty in full, so, my being crucified with Him brings my release from the dominion of sin over me, "for he that is dead is freed from sin." Romans 6:7.

The atonement of Christ provides not only for the sinner's release from sins already committed, which it has secured in the death of the Savior, but it also provides for the sinner to be led to repentance, and to choose to die to sin, and thus to have sin's power over him broken, for he that is dead is freed from sin. Consequently the atoning work of Christ, which He began upon the cross, must continue this side of the cross in order to bring to us this wonderful result.

Release of the individual from the dominion of sin is an important part of the work of the atonement. It was typified in the sanctuary service by the sacrifice of the sin offering. When brought to the door of the sanctuary and there slain by the repentant sinner, it represented Christ as the sinner's substitute. He was not the sinner, but He took the sinner's place. He did this so fully that the Bible says He was made to be sin for us. 2 Corinthians 5:21.

The blood of the sin offering represented the forfeited life of the sinner. "The life of the flesh is in the blood," "for the blood is the life." Leviticus 17:11; Deuteronomy 12:23.

Since the life that the Substitute gave represents the life of the guilty sinner for whom it was given, the blood of the Substitute must represent the life of guilt for which it was shed. Since in His death, as the guilty sinner's substitute, Christ, though sinless, was made to be sin for us, the life in the righteous blood that He there shed stood in place of the guilty lives of those for whom He was made to be sin.

Since I am dead, by being crucified with Him, then it is my life which has been yielded in Him. In the type, the blood of the sin offering represented the guilty life surrendered to Christ, which He purged by His death. It evidenced the penitent's recognition that the penalty for his guilt had been paid, and that, by that payment he had been ransomed. In the antitype, acceptance of the merits of the blood of Christ evidences the same recognition. "You know that you were not redeemed, with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." 1 Peter 1:18, 19.

It evidences the willingness of the repentant sinner to accept the guiltless life of the Savior that has been yielded for his ransom. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans 6:4.

It evidences, too, the accomplishment of a purpose in the heart of the repentant sinner to have the power of sin destroyed in him. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin!" Romans 6:6,7.

In the type, the continual burnt offering expressed the yearning of God's love for man. The sin offering expressed the yielding of man's heart to God. In the antitype, God's great love found expression in the gift of Christ. Man's surrender to that love finds expression in such acceptance of that gift as takes him to the cross, and puts him on it with his crucified Lord. There is the basis for a complete separation from sin, and a union with our Lord so perfect that it enables Him to present, us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Jude 1:24.

With the crucified Christ typically before them in the burnt offering, every individual of the children of Israel was required to decide on which side of the controversy between God and Satan he would place himself. Among the last words of Moses to that people were these: "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil!" "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live!" Deuteronomy 30:15, 19.

What Moses meant here was, "Yield yourselves unto God. Put your wills on His side. Accept Him. Choose life." That which Moses had that day set before Israel had been set before them in every sacrifice of the continual burnt offering in the sanctuary throughout their journeys. Every sin offering

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brought by repentant sinners to the sanctuary was a response of those individuals, which registered their surrender to the will of God, and their choice of life through the blood of the sacrifice. It signified that they were yielding themselves as individuals to death in their substitute, and accepting life over which sin does not have dominion.

In the antitypical experience of God's children the same requirements are to hold. In the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, we have set before us the same choice. We must inescapably make our choice between "life and good, and death and evil." It is not enough that "life and good" have been brought within our reach by Christ who gave Himself for us. We must choose to accept that "life and good," and to make them our own by faith, from the willingness of our minds. It is not enough that by the death of Christ the obstacles have been removed from the way of our approach to God. We must of ourselves choose to draw near in that way which the death of our Lord has prepared for us. It is not enough that Jesus has died in my stead, and thus has paid the penalty for my guilt. Convinced by the Holy Spirit of my sinful condition, and led by Him to ask deliverance, I must of my own volition confess my need of such substitution service. I must acknowledge freely that my life is forfeit because of my transgressions. I must own that I am guilty, and therefore deserving of death. I must come for pardon of my sin. I must die in my Substitute, and live anew in my risen Lord. It is in this way that the gift of God for man's redemption is made effectual. God gave His only begotten Son, that all might have life. That gift is effectual in bestowing life only as it is accepted by individuals, and when it is so accepted. This great truth was clearly taught in type in the earthly sanctuary.

By way of summarizing what has been set forth, it should be noted that morning by morning and evening by evening, in the continual burnt offering, the faith of the people was directed to the great antitypical sacrifice, "the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world." As individuals were brought under conviction, they brought their own sin offerings to the door of the sanctuary. These were propitiatory in their purpose. Each one was brought to make atonement for sin and to bring forgiveness.

"The priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the Lord. And the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him." Leviticus 4:34,35.

Recognizing that a way had been provided, through the substitute, for him to escape the just penalty for his sins, the sinner made that provision effectual for himself by his voluntary acceptance of the substitute. In his substitute he died. He being dead, sin had no more dominion over him. The priest took the blood of his substitute, and for him ministered it in atonement upon the altar. Thus he obtained pardon for his transgression. The animal brought in the sin offering typified Christ, the sinner's substitute.

The blood of the sacrifice represented the life of the sinner. Leviticus 17:11; Deuteronomy 12:23. Christ died in substitution for us. When we accept His death, we are dead in Him. It then is our life that has been Yielded up in His death; and His blood, as the blood of our sin offering, represents the guilty life that we have surrendered to Him, and which, by His death, He has freed from guilt.

Our death in Christ is death to sin. It has for its purpose, not our extinction in view of past failure, but our being made alive unto righteousness. Observe how the apostle Peter expresses this: "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness!" 1 Peter 2:24.

Christ's death for us on the cross, and our death in Him, both have the same objective. That objective is not merely salvation from eternal destruction, but salvation to a life of eternal righteousness. This righteousness God imputes to those who die in Christ. He "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." Romans 4:24, 25. Thank God that through Jesus Christ our Lord, we, being dead to everything that hinders righteousness, may live anew in righteousness to the glory of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

THE SACRIFICE

As "the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), Christ is the antitypical sacrifice to which all the sacrifices of the type pointed. He was "without blemish," though "in all points tempted." He was the innocent victim of our guilt; and though He "knew no sin," He was "made . . . to be

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sin for us.” The life which He gave us for our redemption was untouched by guilt of His own, and therefore was not under condemnation. Just before His betrayal He said to His disciples: “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world comes and hath nothing in Me.” John 14:30. It was this perfection of life which qualified Him to be the sacrificial substitute for guilty man. He had perfect life to give.

His sinless life was the result of His own choice. Of His own purpose He lived so that His life expressed only the will of His Father. Said He: “I came down from heaven, not do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.” John 6:38. Again He said: “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.” “The Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him.” John 4: 34; 8:29.

Three times during His life in the flesh Jesus had the spoken assurance that His Father was well pleased with Him. We read that after He was baptized, “Jesus went up straightway out of the water. And, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him: and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3.16, 17.

Again, during His ministry, He “takes Peter, James, and John his brother, and brings them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with Him.

Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spoke, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear you Him!” Matthew 17:14

When facing betrayal and death, He exclaimed: “Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.” John 12:27, 28.

He was qualified by the perfection of His life in the flesh to take guilty man’s place, and to give His life a ransom for the sinner. Thus, as the sacrifice in substitution for guilty man, He was acceptable to the Father.

Through the offering of the body of Christ, once for all, we are sanctified by the will of God. Hebrews 10:10. But the sanctifying element in the sacrifice is the blood. To scorn the blood of the sacrifice, and count it an unholy thing, is to trample on the Son of God, and to do despite unto the Spirit of grace, through which Christ “offered Himself without spot to God!” Hebrews 10:29; 9:14. The sacrifice of Christ rejected, there remains no other sacrifice for sin. The sinner then must come into judgment unsanctified, and unsheltered from the fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. Hebrews 10:26-31.

It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7. There is no sin from which we can be cleansed by any other agency. There is no sin from which we cannot be cleansed by the blood of Christ, if we seek such cleansing.

It is by His blood that Christ redeems us to God from our lost condition. Revelation 5:9. It is by the blood that Christ has entered into the sanctuary in heaven, there to complete the work of atonement by which sin is forever put away, and which was begun and shall all be wrought by the sacrifice of Himself. In the merits of that perfect sacrifice all accomplishment in our behalf by our High Priest in heaven is made possible.

THE PRIESTHOOD

IN the work of the atonement two essentials are to be observed, a sacrifice and a priest. Neither of these could of itself complete the work of atonement. By reading Leviticus 4:27-31 it will be seen that the functions of the sacrifice and the priest are quite distinct. The sacrificial animal was the sinner’s substitute, and as such it was necessary that it should die. The priest was the sinner’s mediator, and as such it was necessary that he live. The sacrifice took guilty man’s place, and paid the penalty for man’s guilt, giving up its life in doing so. The priest’s work began after the sacrifice was slain. He took the blood, the price paid to ransom the guilty sinner, and ministered it before the Lord for each seeking, repentant, individual soul.

Some have thought that the high priest ministered in only the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary. Such is not the case, however. When God gave charge to Aaron and his sons concerning the office of their priesthood, He gave Aaron as high priest precisely the same charge concerning his priestly

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service at the altar and in the holy place, that He gave to Aaron's sons. Observe the words of this charge to Aaron: "Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest's office for everything of the altar, and within the veil; and you shall serve." Numbers 18:7.

The veil here is clearly the first or outer veil of the sanctuary, as is plainly shown by reference to the fifth verse, where the word "sanctuary" is used instead of "within the veil." If the phrase, "within the veil," in this passage were interpreted to mean the most holy place, as some declare, then the charge to Aaron would require his sons also to minister in the second apartment, which was never permitted. The service of the high priest was at the altar and, in both apartments of the sanctuary. The service of the other priests was at the altar and in the holy place of the sanctuary. There was no limitation on where the high priest should serve.

The Scriptures refer to Christ both as priest and high priest. They refer also to Aaron in the same way. "Take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother that he may minister unto Me in the priest's office. And they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto Me in the priest's office." Exodus 28:14. "No man takes this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a high priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee. As He said also in another place, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." Hebrews 5:4-6. Though being High Priest, Christ also is Priest, as was Aaron. His ministry therefore extends through the holy place into the most holy place. He is "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle" (Hebrews 8:2), "a High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle." Hebrews 9:11. Furthermore, all the elaborate garments to be worn by the high priest were for service in the holy place, with the sole exception of the plain linen garments which he was to wear on the Day of Atonement. Exodus 28:2-38; Leviticus 16:4, 23. Also, the consecration of the high priest and of the priest was the same. Exodus 29 and Leviticus 8.

By the ministry of the blood the priest obtained pardon for the sinner, which removed the sinner's guilt. Notice how clearly this was taught in the services of the sanctuary: "He shall bring a kid of the goats for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar, And the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him." Leviticus 4:28-31.

In connection with this scripture it should be recalled that reconciliation was typified by the death of the sacrifice, but atonement was made by the priest with the blood of the sacrifice, not at the place where the sacrificial animal was slain, but upon the altar. So, too, in the antitype, reconciliation was made by the death of Christ, but atonement for the penitent is made with the blood, not at the place where the Sacrifice was slain, on the cross, but by the Priest in the heavenly service.

For the typical service the priest was taken only from the tribe of Levi and from the family of Aaron. He could enter upon his priestly ministry only after he had been washed clean, clothed in the, garments of the priesthood, anointed with the anointing oil, and hallowed by the blood of the sacrifice. Exodus 29:1-28; Leviticus 8:13-26. He could not minister at the altar until blood had been shed. Leviticus 8:13-15. He could not come before the Lord in mediation for man without "somewhat to offer!" Hebrews 8:3 (cf. Leviticus 9:2). He was required to be consecrated for his service. Leviticus 8:33.

When the repentant sinner slew his sacrifice, the priest took the blood and with it made atonement for the sinner by placing with his finger some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and by pouring out all the blood at the foot of the altar. Without question the blood of the sin offering is the atoning element. Leviticus 17:11. But atonement was not made by the blood until it was put upon the altar by the priest. Therefore atonement was not made by the mere shedding of the blood of the sacrifice, but rather by the shedding of the blood and the ministry of that shed blood by the priest. Leviticus 4:34, 35.

In the type both sacrifice and priest typified Christ. As the great antitypical sacrifice, Jesus took guilty man's place and paid the penalty for his guilt, giving up His life in doing so. As the great antitypical High Priest His work began after the sacrifice was slain. The merit of His perfect life, the blood He shed upon Calvary's cross, He pleads before the Father for each seeking, repentant individual. By virtue of that ministry, He obtains pardon, which removes the sinner's, guilt, and ministers His own righteousness to the pardoned one. To that one He imparts power to live a new life, and for him He obtains acceptance of that new life with God.

Christ, too, was required to be anointed and consecrated for His priestly service. "The law makes men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, makes the Son,

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who is consecrated forevermore!" Hebrews 7:28.

This could not take place until the blood of the sacrifice had been shed, for the blood of the sacrifice figured in an important way in the consecration of the priest.

"He brought the other ram, the ram of consecration: and Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the head of the ram. And he slew it; and Moses took of the blood of it, and put it upon the tip of Aaron's right ear, and upon the thumb of his right hand, and upon the great toe of his right foot. And he brought Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear, and upon the thumbs of their right hands, and upon the great toes of their right feet: and Moses sprinkled the blood upon the altar round about!" "And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him. And sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him." Leviticus 8:22-24,30.

Just as Christ could not enter upon His priestly work without first being consecrated a priest forevermore, so He could not begin that service till He had "somewhat to offer." "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer." Hebrews 8:3.

With these facts before us, it is impossible to conclude that a complete work of atoning for sin was wrought upon the cross. Since the blood of the antitypical sacrifice was shed upon the cross, and atonement for sin was made with the blood by the priest, it is apparent that the antitypical work of atonement was not completed until after the blood was shed and was available for ministry by the priest.

Some believe that the cross was the antitypical altar. Believing, thus, they conclude that the work of atonement for sin was completed on the cross. If that position is taken, then the work of atonement for sin was completed at an altar without a priest. Then the sacrifice was slain upon the altar, which never was done in the type. Then, too, if Christ were priest upon the cross, as He must of necessity have been under such teaching, then He was priest before the blood of consecration, had been shed. He must then have presented a dying sacrifice instead of one already dead for us, and then also our Priest must have died. Such a position is untenable. The teaching of both Old and New Testaments is that atonement is not made alone by the shedding of the blood of the sacrifice, but rather by the shedding of the atoning blood and the ministration of the shed blood in behalf of penitent sinners by the priest.

The atonement has to do with taking away sin. An important part of this work is obtaining forgiveness for the repentant sinner. It is helpful to note how this is done. In the type, forgiveness was obtained by the priest's making atonement with the blood of the sacrifice. Forgiveness did not come merely by shedding the blood of the substitute. Confession of sin was required, and presentation of the substitute was necessary; but after all this was done, forgiveness was obtained through the blood ministered by the priest.

Thus we find it is also in the antitypical work of atonement. Forgiveness comes to us through the blood. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission." Hebrews 9:22. But it does not come by the mere shedding of blood upon the cross. It is obtained by the Savior exalted in heaven.

Observe the teaching of "Peter and the other apostles" on this point: "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:29-31.

This, surely, is very clear. The apostles are showing how God through Christ had provided for the putting away of sin. Men slew the Redeemer and hanged Him on a tree, but God raised Him up and exalted Him to be a Prince and a Savior for the purpose of giving repentance and forgiveness of sins.

It is admitted by all Christians that there can be no putting away of sin without forgiveness. It is also admitted that sinners can find forgiveness only when they repent of their wrong doing. Repentance and forgiveness both come to us through the ministry of the exalted Christ, who ministers His shed blood in our behalf. Indeed, the apostles here teach that it was for the purpose of obtaining these for us that God exalted Christ at His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, The atoning sacrifice, full and complete, was made upon the cross, as Christ expired with the cry, "It is finished." But it, cannot be that Christ's atoning work was completed at the cross, since He was exalted to the right hand of the Father in order to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, as the foregoing scripture declares. It must certainly be that Christ's work of putting away sin, so wonderfully begun at the cross by the sacrifice of Himself, is being continued and made effectual for individual sinners by His priestly ministry in heaven, and that this is to be continued as long as penitent sinners are seeking salvation.

All that Christ now is doing is part of His great work of atonement. That work will continue as

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long as sinners sue for pardon, and as long as those who have obtained pardon need to come to God by the blood of the atonement. It will continue until the record of their sins has been blotted out from the books of record, in heaven, and sin has been "put away" so completely that it will never again rise to blight, curse, and ruin God's creatures.

THE ANTITYPICAL PRIEST

To make atonement for man's sins, Jesus needed not only to live faultlessly, and then to die as the sinner's substitute, but He must also qualify to stand for man before God in mediation ministry. "Such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens!" Hebrews 7:26.

Reading the book of Hebrews through, we observe some of the experience and qualities which it was necessary for Jesus to have to become a priest forever, and something, too, of what His priesthood means to us.

It was necessary for Him to take on human flesh as the seed of Abraham, to be made in all things like unto His brethren, and to stiffer temptation.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same. That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Hebrews 2:14-18.

In these verses two things are stated as the purpose of the Savior: To "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," and to "deliver them who . . . were . . . subject to bondage." In order to accomplish these, it was necessary, according to these verses, for Christ to do three things: To partake of flesh and blood, to die, and to be made a priest. His being made man of the seed of Abraham was necessary to His death, His death was necessary to His priesthood, and His priesthood is necessary to the accomplishment of all that God had purposed in His life in the flesh and by His death on the cross.

He was "faithful to Him that appointed Him." Hebrews 3:2. He is touched with the feeling of all our infirmities. Hebrews 4:15. He learned obedience by suffering. Hebrews 5:8. He was made perfect by the sufferings He endured. Being made perfect, "He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him." Verse 9. He was "called of God a High Priest!" Verse 10. As priest He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens!" Hebrews 7:26. He entered upon His priestly ministry after the sacrifice had been made. Hebrews 8:1 He did not serve as priest while He was on earth. Verse 4. He has been made a priest "after the power of an endless life!" Hebrews 7:16. He was made a priest after the order of Melchisedec by the oath of God. Hebrews 7:20,21. By the word of that oath He was consecrated a priest forevermore. Hebrews 7:28. It is because of His mediation for us as priest that we are able to draw near to God and enter into the holy place by the blood of the sacrifice. Hebrews 10:19,20, R. V. It is by looking unto Him "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," that we can run successfully and "with patience the race that is set before us!" Hebrews 12:1,2. It is to Him, "the Mediator of the new covenant," whose blood "speaks better things than that of Abel" (Hebrews 12:24), that we now have come, and through whom alone we come to "God the judge of all!"

It is through Him wholly that "God deals with" us "as with sons," and in Him we are made "partakers of His holiness!" Hebrews 12:7, 10. He "was delivered for our offence" but, thank God, He "was raised again for our justification!" Romans 4:25. And now, having "an unchangeable, priesthood, "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:24, 25. Thank God that He who died for our offenses is alive again, to obtain for us by His priestly ministry all that His death won for us and gave us the right to have.

Seeing, then, that "we have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Hebrews 8:1, 2), "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." Hebrews 10:22. "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." Hebrews 10:23. "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

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Hebrews 12:1. Let us “follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God.” Hebrews 12:14, 15. Let us see that we “refuse not Him that speaks” (Hebrews 12:25) to our hearts from heaven. Waiting for the coming of Him who has delivered us from wrath, and “receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” Hebrews 12:28.

THE INCARNATION PRECEDENT TO CHRIST’S PRIESTHOOD

IN the first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews we have the statement that Christ, “when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high!” Hebrews 1:1

This experience of being seated on the right hand of God is in definite fulfillment of the prophecy recorded in Psalms 110:1, which reads: “The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Thy footstool!”

That this experience was to be associated with the priesthood of the Savior is evident, for in the fourth verse of the psalm the declaration is made that “the Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.”

The reference of the apostle Paul to Christ is in evidence of the fact that in Him the prophecy of this psalm meets its fulfillment.

He came from God to man as God’s representative, for He was the Son and Heir through whom the Father had spoken. He went back to the Father from man as man’s representative, having taken on Him the seed of Abraham, and thus been made like unto His brethren. He was taken from among men to be ordained for men in things pertaining to God. It was after He had taken on Him the seed of Abraham that He was made a priest forever.

It has been shown in a previous chapter that the basis of the Savior’s priesthood is His life in the flesh. His obedience was perfected by the suffering that He endured in the flesh. This truth is very plainly set forth by Paul in the, following scriptures:

“It became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their life time subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted,” Hebrews 2:10,11, 14-18.

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:14-16.

“So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest; but He that said unto Him, Thou art My Son, today have I begotten Thee. As He said also in another place, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared. Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered. And being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of God a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec!” Hebrews 5:5-10.

It should not escape our notice in reading these passages that strong emphasis has been laid upon Christ’s being made perfect. “Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him; called of God a High Priest.”

As the Son of God in eternity, He was perfect. It therefore was unnecessary for Him to be made perfect as the divine Son. But as the Seed of Abraham, it was necessary that He be made perfect. This was accomplished by the things that He suffered. He was tempted in all points, yet as child and man He was

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without sin. The perfection thus obtained is the qualifying quality in Him for the priesthood-the quality by which He became the Author of salvation, called of God a High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. His priesthood therefore was consequent to His being thus qualified, and most certainly after His incarnation.

Referring again to the prophecy of Psalms 110:4, we find it there stated that “the Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” Now this statement follows that of the first verse, “The Lord said unto try Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand, until I have made Your enemies Thy footstool.” It is interesting to note that Paul finds the fulfillment of both these statements of the prophecy in Christ’s experience after His death.

“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, said the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them. And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood, of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Hebrews 10:12-22.

It is after He has thus offered one sacrifice, and is set down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, that He is a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, in harmony with the prophecy. Regarding the time when His priesthood would begin, Paul speaks further in the seventh chapter.

The perfection which we already have noticed as the basis of Christ’s priesthood was not to be found in the Levitical priesthood. If it were, Paul argues, there then would have been no reason for another priest after another order to be called. The proof that He offers of this important fact is that the change had been made. The priesthood having been changed, there was of necessity a change also of the law that governed the making of priests. The law rigidly excluded from the service of the sanctuary all those who were not of the tribe of Levi, and provided that the priests should be taken exclusively from the family of Aaron.

Now Jesus was born of the tribe of Judah, of which tribe nothing was said by the law of the priesthood concerning priestly service. But notwithstanding those rigid requirements of the law, another Priest has arisen after an entirely different order, “who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.” This priest is He of whom the psalmist had prophesied, “Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec!” Now this change from one order to another could be brought about only by the annulment of the commandment which confined the priesthood to Levi. The Levitical priests were made without an oath, but this Priest was made a priest forever “with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord swore and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.” (See Hebrews 7:11-21)

“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this Man, because He continues ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needs not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people’s. For this He did once, when He offered up Himself. For the law makes men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, makes the Son, who is consecrated forevermore!” Hebrews 7:22-28.

This change of the priesthood, which took place only with a change of the law of the priesthood, indicates clearly that one priesthood follows the other. Christ’s priesthood followed His coming out of Judah. Christ came out of Judah when He was born of the virgin Mary, and became the Seed of David. His incarnation ‘therefore preceded His priesthood.

But let us notice, too, that the commandment that was disannulled to make way for His priesthood, is spoken of by Paul as “a commandment going before,” or a foregoing commandment. It went before something. What was it that this commandment, by which the sons of Levi were made priests, preceded? It was the oath that God had sworn by which Christ was made a priest. Paul speaks of this in verse 28: “The word of the oath, which was since the law, makes the Son, who is consecrated forevermore!” Christ’s priesthood, therefore, began after His incarnation, and after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever.

In Hebrews 10:5-10 Paul refers to another prophecy of the Psalms concerning Christ, and this also

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he applies to His incarnation, sacrifice, and priesthood, placing them in that sequence: "Wherefore when He comes into the world, He said, Sacrifice and offering Thou would not, but a body has Thou prepared Me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou has had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God. Above when He said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou would not, neither had pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He takes 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."

Observe that this prophecy is applied at its beginning to the time when Jesus came into the world. But its great fact is that He came into the world to take away the typical service with its sacrifices and priesthood and to establish the will of God, The succeeding verses in the chapter make it clear that He did that by the sacrifice of Himself and His own priesthood. But let us not fail to notice that these two priesthood's are spoken of by Paul in this scripture as "the first" and "the second!" The "first" had to be taken away in order that the "second" might be established.

Thus from these many angles we find that the Scriptures clearly teach that the incarnation of Christ preceded His priesthood. From that great fact we should take comfort for our souls, "for we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:15, 16.

THE PASSOVER

CHRIST'S saving ministry was foreshadowed in the feasts of the ceremonial service. Of these there were six that were annual. Three of these occurred in the spring of the year, and three in the autumn. The first three began in the first month, and the last three began in the seventh month. Each of these feasts represented some phase of Christ's service.

The Passover was the first of these annual feasts. It represented the death of Christ. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." 1 Corinthians 5:7, 8.

The Passover was to be eaten. The requirement to partake of the Passover lamb indicated the necessity for the sinner to partake of Christ, and thus to make the sinner's identity with the Substitute complete. Observe the emphasis placed on this by Christ: "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even he that lives by Me." John 6:57.

The suppliant for pardon, for deliverance from bondage, must not only be willing that another shall pay the penalty for his guilt, but must be willing also to receive life that is without guilt through the death of his Substitute. It is in this that the distinction between the world and the child of God is fixed. Christ died in substitution for every man. But comparatively few are willing to eat His flesh, and thus live by Him. It is this personal acceptance of the Substitute that makes Him our Passover in an individual sense.

It was not alone the blood shed, neither was it alone the blood applied, but rather the blood both shed and applied that brought about the Passover in Egypt. "You shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you." Exodus 12:22, 23.

It was by the ministry of the blood that the children of Israel were led to expect deliverance: "The blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt!" Exodus 12:13.

From these scriptures it is dear that the shedding of the blood, the paying of the penalty, while basic to that which was effective in the plan of deliverance by the Passover, was not in itself a final objective, or even a sole means to the reaching of a final objective. The ministration of the blood was an essential part of the work of deliverance, and was precedent to the act of deliverance. After the blood had been shed, it was necessary to minister it in the prescribed way before deliverance could be wrought.

Observe, too, that each one made the Passover his own, by killing the lamb, by applying the blood, and by remaining in the house on which was the token that evidenced acceptance of the substitute and the

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ministry of its blood.

As our Passover, Christ paid the penalty for our guilt by His death. In His death He died unto sin. Romans 6:10. But since He died in our stead, we therefore died in Him. Romans 6:6. That being so, then we are freed from sin, for "he that is dead is freed from sin." Romans 6:7. Now, being free from sin, it no longer has dominion over us. Romans 6:14. Consequently, while sin has reigned, heretofore, in our mortal bodies unto death, now, through the gift of righteousness which we have by partaking of Christ, we reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Romans 6:12; 5:17. This dominion is restored to us by the power of sin being broken in us. "It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, He also will deny us." 2 Timothy 2:11, 12.

Suffering death in Christ, as death for our guilt, brings to us life in which righteousness has ruler ship. That life is alone in Him over whom death hath no more dominion. Romans 6:9. But by refusing to accept His death in substitution for us, or in the words of Paul, "if we deny Him," we are left under the dominion of sin, and therefore are subject to death for sin's guilt upon us. This life, which we have in Christ, was prefigured in the Levitical ceremonial services by the Feast of the First Fruits.

THE FEAST OF THE FIRST FRUITS

AT this feast the first ripe sheaf, of the harvest was presented by waving it before the Lord. "The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When you be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then you shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. And you shall offer that day when you wave the sheaf a he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the Lord. And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the Lord for a sweet savor: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of a quart. And you shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the self same day that you have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.' Leviticus 23:9-14.

"The Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, Concerning the feasts of the Lord, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My feasts. Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest, a holy convocation, you shall do no work therein: it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings." Verses 1-3.

This was a service of acceptance. The sheaf was to be accepted for them. It typified the acceptance of the world's harvest in Christ. It represents the resurrection of Christ, and His acceptance for us by the Father. "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept!" 1 Corinthians 15:20.

This feast was accompanied by the offering of a lamb without blemish for a burnt offering. The presentation of the first fruits was an act performed by the priest. This service in the antitype was no other, and no less important, than the priestly act of Christ in obtaining our acceptance by the Father in Himself. Paul speaks of this acceptance in his epistle to the Ephesians thus: "To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Ephesians 1:6.

Christ, having been accepted for us by the Father to die in sacrificial substitution for guilty man, and being raised again from the dead, ascended to the Father, in order that He might be accepted for us, thus bringing us who were afar off near to God, and obtaining for us, who were alien and hostile, adoption into the family of God.

All this, it was made clear in the type, was brought about through the shed blood of the sacrifice, for the Wave sheaf of the first fruits was not presented without the blood of a lamb. Leviticus 23:12. This being an act of service performed by the priest, it therefore typified service to be rendered by our antitypical High Priest. It was not done at the slaying of the Passover lamb, but "on the morrow after the Sabbath." Its antitype, therefore, was not at the cross, but on the third day after the cross, and afterward in the ministry of Christ as priest, by which ministry the gathering of the harvest will finally be brought about.

Not by the shedding of blood alone, therefore, are we "made accepted in the Beloved," but also by the ministering of that shed blood by the priest. Our acceptance in the Beloved is clearly the result of priestly service through the blood, after the cross, and not alone by the shedding of that blood upon the cross before Jesus had been made a priest forever.

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Assurance of Christ's acceptance for us was given by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

"This Jesus hath God-raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which you now see and hear." Acts 2:32, 33.

"Every priest stands daily ministering and offering often times the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God., from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering, He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." Hebrews 10:11-15.

"Christ's ascension to heaven was the signal that His followers were to receive the promised blessing. For this they were to wait before they entered upon their work. When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity. The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven's communication that the Redeemer's inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise, He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people." – "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 38, 39.

Assurance is given to us, also, in the gift of the Holy Spirit, that we are accepted in the Beloved. "In whom you also trusted, after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that you believed, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." Ephesians 1:13,14.

"You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." "The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Romans 8:9,16.

"Now He which established us with you in Christ, and bath anointed us, is God; who bath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in. our hearts." 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22.

"We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now He that bath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also bath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit!" 2 Corinthians 5:4, 5.

When the Holy Spirit comes to our hearts with the assurance that we are accepted of God, the coming of the Spirit for that purpose is the direct result, not alone of the shedding of the blood on the cross, but also of a ministration of that blood by our great High Priest in behalf of those to whom the Spirit is sent.

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you!" John 16:7.

By the feast of the first fruits the people of God were taught that as the Savior would be raised from the dead, so we also shall be raised from the dead. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order. Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." 1 Corinthians 15:22, 23.

But observe that He who raised up Jesus from the dead, has purposed also to raise us up by Jesus: "Knowing that He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." 2 Corinthians 4:14.

Now it was by the Spirit that Jesus was quickened. 1 Peter 3:18. That being so, it should be understood that it is only those who have obtained acceptance with God whom the Spirit will raise up by Jesus. The work of atonement must therefore continue until all who are to be saved have obtained acceptance. Therefore the work of the atonement must continue as long as probationary time shall last.

How can it be, then, that the work of the atonement was completed on the cross before the Priest, by whom alone atonement with the blood could be made, was raised from the dead, and before confession of sin, or acceptance of the Sin Offering, or desire for mediation ministration by the Priest, had entered our hearts? The typical teaching of the sanctuary services makes clear, that atonement is made for individuals by the priest only after the individual sinner has become conscious of his need and sought atonement by the blood at the hands of the priest. With this, New Testament teaching is in full agreement. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sins. But it is when we confess our sins that God "is faithful and just to forgive-us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:7, 9.

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The teaching of the New Testament is, that atonement is made for the sinner in the priestly ministry of Christ after consciousness of his need has been awakened, and when, in that consciousness, he seeks such atonement through the blood of the atoning sacrifice. Further, the New Testament teaches that our acceptance of Christ as our atoning sacrifice, and our dependence upon His priestly mediation, as well as God's acceptance of us in the Beloved, are all in view of the judgment which will take place subsequently to our being individually accepted in the Beloved. Paul has stated this very clearly:

"Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad!" 2 Corinthians 5:9, 10.

It also is the teaching of Paul that the call of God for men to repent and avail themselves of the provisions of the plan for their deliverance is given in view of impending judgment.

"The times of this ignorance God winked at. But now commands all men everywhere to repent: because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead!" Acts 17:30, 31.

The last part of this passage is, especially worthy of our attention. It affirms an astounding thing, which, as we examine it, is nothing less than this: that judgment has been absolutely assured by the resurrection of Christ—that assurance of the fact that God "will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained," is given in the fact that He raised up Christ from the dead.

The meat offering was associated with the Feast of the First Fruits. This was a non bloody offering, which represented the life which the pardoned sinner finds in Christ. Offered in connection with the Feast of the First Fruits, it taught in type that for, this life we are dependent on Christ's resurrection. This teaching finds its counterpart in the words of Paul:

"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Corinthians 15:20-22.

It revealed the great truth that our acceptance of the death of the Lord Jesus as our sacrificial substitute commits us to the life also of Jesus being made manifest in us. 2 Corinthians 4:10. It is the evidence in type of the fact that the death of Christ is made effective for us by His resurrection. In the light of this teaching we are led to conclude that the effectiveness of substitution deliverance is dependent upon something which takes place on this side of the cross, namely, upon the priestly ministry of our risen Lord, made possible by His resurrection.

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:14,15.

To this priesthood Christ came, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life!" "This Man, because He continues ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore [because of His priesthood] He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing that He over lives to make intercession for them." Hebrew 7:16, 24, 25.

Is not this, then, the sequence of service as we find it outlined in the word of God? The Lord Jesus shed His precious blood to atone for our sins, the sinner comes to God pleading the shed blood of Christ, and seeking pardon of his guilt, the atoning blood of Christ which he pleads is the evidence that the penalty for his guilt has been paid, the priest ministers the shed blood before God in the sinner's behalf, and through the merits of the blood obtains pardon for the sinner; thus atonement is made. In this work of atonement the priest continues to minister His power and life to that pardoned sinner as long as he has need. Thus salvation to the uttermost is afforded.

For this service two things are essential, an enduring sacrifice and an unchangeable priesthood. In Christ, the substitute for man, an enduring sacrifice has been provided. He needs not to offer Himself often, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. Hebrews 7:27.

"Once has He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Hebrews 9:26. "By one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 10:14. In Christ as priest we have an unchangeable priesthood. "Thou art a priest forever." Hebrews 5:6. "Even Jesus, made a High Priest forever!" Hebrews 6:20. "The law makes men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, makes the Son, who is consecrated forevermore!" Hebrews 7:28.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus and having a

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High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water!" Hebrews 10:19-22.

Death had dominion over Jesus as the sacrifice for man, but as priest death has no more dominion over Him. Romans 6:9,10. He died unto sin; He lives unto God. Now if we are dead with Christ, we shall also live with Him. This is the life that was prefigured by the meat offering. But in its association with the Feast of the First Fruits, it deeply impressed the lesson that this life is possible only through the blood ministered in our behalf by Him who, made a priest by the oath of God, continues ever.

PENTECOST

THE third of the ceremonial feasts was the Feast of Pentecost. "You shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall you number fifty days; and you shall offer a new meat offering unto the Lord. You shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the first fruits unto the Lord. And you shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams. They shall be for a burnt offering unto the Lord, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savor unto the Lord. Then you shall sacrifice one kid of the goats for a sin offering, and two lambs of the first year for a sacrifice of peace offerings. And the priest shall wave them with the bread of the first fruits for a wave offering before the Lord, with the two lambs: they shall be holy to the Lord for the priest. And you shall proclaim on the selfsame day, that it may be a holy convocation unto you: you shall do no servile work therein: it shall be a statute forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations." Leviticus 23:15-21.

This feast represented the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of Christ's priestly ministry.

"When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them doyen tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of theta. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Acts 2:14.

Connected with this feast was a burnt offering, a sin offering, and a peace offering, signifying that Pentecost was--- related to the saving work of Christ, and was possible only through the shed blood of the Sacrifice. Connected with it also were the two wave loaves, which were called the bread of the first fruits, and linked Pentecost with the first fruits of the Spirit. The offering of the meat offering at the Feast of Pentecost indicated that that which it typified had to do with the new life obtainable only in Christ.

In the type it occurred annually fifty days after the Feast of the First Fruits, and therefore typified a fact of Christ's work as priest. It typified the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In the antitype it evidenced the acceptance of Jesus by the Father, and His glorious exaltation to the right hand of God in heaven.

"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which you now see and hear." Acts 2:32, 33.

"For such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled ' separate from sinners, and made higher than the heaven." Hebrews 7:26.

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." Acts 5:29-32.

The different features of this service witnessed to the following facts: The blood of the offerings evidenced that the penalty for sin had been paid, The loaves of the meat offering testified of resurrection and life through the blood. The Pentecost offering, which always was in the nature of a thanksgiving sacrifice, witnessed to the peace secured through the death of the substitute.

The whole service in the antitype gave assurance in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that Jesus had been accepted for us as Mediator with the Father and testified to power provided to live victoriously in Christ, for the gift of the Spirit was the result of the glorification of the Savior.

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“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believes on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spoke He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)” John 7:37-39.

The fact that made possible the coming of the Holy Spirit in the fullness of Pentecost, was that the ministry of the atoning blood -by our great High Priest had begun in the heavenly sanctuary. To this ministry He had been consecrated forevermore by the oath of God. A sacrifice by which God’s justice had been made evident, had been offered. The witness of His blood now was continually before the Lord in a ministry of atonement in heaven. God had placed in the sanctuary a priest that His own oath had consecrated, and through His priestly ministry was prepared to give power to become children to all those who believe on Christ. Through the ministry of His Son, too, He was ready to make us partakers of His own divine nature. To all this the Spirit had come to bear witness, and His coming and presence is the earnest of our heir ship to the eternal inheritance.

The disciples were the first of those living at the time of Christ’s death to understand the atonement, and the first to claim its benefits through the blood of the atonement. They consequently were the first upon whom the Holy Spirit came in evidence of the fact that Christ’s priesthood had been inaugurated. They were the first on earth to know that the blood of the covenant was being effectively ministered in behalf of repentant sinners.

“The Pentecostal outpouring was Heaven’s communication that the Redeemer’s inauguration was accomplished. According to His promise, He had sent the Holy Spirit from heaven to His followers, as a token that He had, as priest and king, received all authority in heaven and on earth, and was the Anointed One over His people.” – “The Acts of the Apostles,” p. 39.

In His proclamation through Peter on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit made clear that it was because of this heavenly ministry by which sins were remitted that the Spirit is bestowed. He also made it clear that this ministry is for all peoples. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:38, 39.

Thus the marvelous scenes of the day of Pentecost revealed the important fact that Christ’s atoning work had not been completed on the cross, but rather had begun there. Pentecost gave abundant assurance, however, both in teaching and in results, that the work begun by Christ on the cross will triumph gloriously through His ministry in heaven.

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 2:36.

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Acts 2:41.

“The world that Satan has claimed and has ruled over with cruel tyranny, the Son of God has, by one vast achievement, encircled in His love, and connected again with the throne of Jehovah. Cherubim and seraphim, and the unnumbered hosts of all the unfallen worlds, sang anthems of praise to God and the Lamb when, this triumph was assured.” – “Mount of Blessing,” p. 154.

In New Testament teaching concerning individual salvation, we find that the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the individual believer, and His control of the life, are made essential to victory in Christ. It calls for death to sin in Christ Jesus; for a new life in Christ in whom we have been quickened from the dead, and in whom we now live anew; and for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, without whom we are none of Christ’s.

“You are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you!” Romans 8:9-11.

So then, even after we have accepted the sacrifice which God has provided, and through the ministry of Christ have received the benefits of the atonement, it is necessary for us to have the Holy Spirit and to be constantly under His control. Otherwise God’s great salvation cannot be continuously effectual in us. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot even die to sin, for it is by the Spirit that the deeds of the body are mortified; and we cannot live anew without the Holy Spirit, for it is the Spirit that quickens us. Observe this in Romans 8:11,13: “If you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if you through the Spirit do mortify the

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deeds of the body, you shall live!” “If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you!”

The quickening of our mortal bodies is dependent upon the Spirit’s dwelling, in us. It works from within.

The Holy Spirit is provided to give us guidance in the new life. He bears witness to our son ship. No matter how confidently we may claim a right to God’s favor and to holiness of life, if, the witness of God’s Spirit is at variance with our own spirit, we may be sure that our relationship with God is not that of sons. While the Holy Spirit has been sent forth to witness to us and in us, He is given, in the sense of our Savior’s promise to His people, only to those who obey God. Acts 5:32.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit leads to more complete obedience. Obedience was the condition upon which Christ promised the Holy Spirit. “If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees Him not, neither knows Him: but you know Him; for He dwells with you, and shall be in you!” John 14:15-17.

This indwelling of the Spirit of God is our protection against the enemy. “So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and His glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall put him to flight.” Isaiah 59:19, margin.

Pentecost was a wonderful reality to the believers in Christ who were gathered together, when the Holy Spirit came upon them. One important thing that we should notice is that the Spirit, when He came upon them, filled all their hearts, and all that He did to make Pentecost wonderful was brought about by the Spirit having control of the men to whom He own. In this there has been no change. To us as to the first disciples the Holy Spirit is sent not merely to be with us, but to be in us, filling us with His presence and His power.

We hear far too much about “a visitation” of the Holy Spirit, when in reality He has not come merely to visit, but to abide. It is God’s purpose that our body shall be the “temple of the Holy Ghost,” and that He shall dwell in His temple, not as a Guest, but as Master. His control of us in the new life which we have in Christ Jesus, is our guaranty that there shall be no return by us to the old life. It is of first importance to us, therefore, that we quench not the, Spirit just as He is beginning to do His work, but that we honor Him, and obey Him in all things.

Observe how completely He was in control of the first disciples. Peter, the man through whom the Spirit spoke At Pentecost, declared to the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem on one important occasion, “The Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting and we entered into the man’s house!” Acts 11:12. The Spirit was in control of Peter. On another occasion, when Paul and Timothy purposed to go into Asia preaching the word, they were positively forbidden so to do. “Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia. But the Spirit suffered them not.” Acts 16:6, 7.

The Spirit had ruler ship of these men. When He bade them go, they went; when He suffered them not, they were wholly under His restraint.

This control of our lives by the Spirit is the secret of joyous, loving, peaceful, victorious Christianity, and that we may experience this in its fullness, we are admonished to “live in the Spirit” and to “walk in the Spirit,” that we fulfill not “the lusts of the flesh.”

“UNTO 2300 DAYS”

IN the book of Revelation the proclamation of the everlasting gospel to all people is foretold. John saw an “angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him. For the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the, sea, and the fountains of waters!” Revelation 14:6, 7.

This proclamation of the everlasting gospel is given in view of the judgment hour, and is the antitype of the Feast of Trumpets. In the type this feast was accompanied by the blowing of trumpets to warn the people to get ready for the Day of Atonement. On that day the high priest went into the most holy place to make atonement for the people and for the sanctuary and the altar. Its service was typical of the final judgment and of the ultimate disposal of sin. It represented that great, judgment scene in heaven, when the “Ancient of days” sits, “and ten thousand times ten thousand” stand “before Him,” and “the books” are

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opened. It was the cleansing of the sanctuary, and prefigured the final work of atonement to be wrought in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

By the blowing of the trumpets every soul was given to understand that then he must be prepared for the judgment, or he cut off from God's people. But associated with the sounding of the alarm, was also the offering of sacrifices, setting before the people the glorious truth that a way had been prepared whereby they might come into judgment without being brought under condemnation. In the antitype we find that with the warning of judgment is associated the "everlasting gospel!"

With this alarm of judgment, already come, is given the invitation to accept the Savior, and thus to come before the judge with the penalty for transgressions already paid.

The Day of Atonement was approached by the children of Israel with very solemn hearts. The warning of judgment in the blowing of the trumpets called every one to afflict his soul, and to look to God for mercy through the blood. On that day the high priest made sacrifice for the people and brought the blood before the Lord. "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat." Leviticus 16:15.

It is of this that the apostle Paul writes in the words, "Into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for the errors of the people." Hebrews 9:7. Thus was typified a work of judgment in the heavenly sanctuary which, completes the great atoning service of Christ. On the cross of Calvary He shed His precious blood to atone for our sins. By His priestly service in heaven He saves us through the blood. All that is thus accomplished in our behalf is scaled for eternity by the judgment, and thus the atoning acts of our Lord are made complete. Throughout the years since Christ began His priestly service in heaven, He has been ministering pardon through His shed blood. But when the time for judgment is reached, the books are opened, and the dead are judged according to those things that are written. That review of the records is final. The sins that are then blotted out are gone so completely and finally that not even remembrance of them remains. This great cleansing work closes Christ's mediation for sinners and prepares the way for His glorious second advent.

The Feast of Tabernacles was a season of great rejoicing. It represented the gathering of God's people. The precious harvest of the earth, at the Second Coming of Christ. In the type only those who were Israelites born could take part in it. The word of the Lord relative to this is most explicit: "You shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths." Leviticus 23:42.

They were to leave their homes, and for seven days celebrate this feast in booths made of boughs of the trees and branches of the palms. It commemorated the time of Israel's sojourn in the wilderness. It prefigured the glorious ingathering of the redeemed of all peoples and ages, when the Lord of the harvest shall send forth His angels to gather the precious wheat into His heavenly garner. At this feast the people praised God with great rejoicing. They remembered their wonderful deliverance at His hand from the bondage of Egypt. They recalled His tender care of them in all their wilderness journeying. But most of all they rejoiced because of His pardon and acceptance of them on the Day of Atonement just gone by. It was the thought that in judgment they had found mercy, that filled their souls with rejoicing, and gave to this feast its real significance. These Israelites horn could participate in this feast, however, only as they appeared before the Lord with the prescribed offerings. Leviticus 23:36, 37.

So it will be when Jesus comes to take His people from their earthly homes. Only those who have become Israelites by the new birth can have part in that greater Feast of Tabernacles. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:1 He who was "once offered" is then to appear "unto salvation." Hebrews 9:28. Christ will then have divested Himself of His priestly robes, and will be seen coming clothed with royal vesture. On that vesture is written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords," but that vesture has been "dipped in blood." Though on His head are "many crowns," He has won His right to reign supreme by virtue of His sacrifice. Revelation 19:12, 13,16.

To those who have made preparation for His Second Coming, He will now "appear unto salvation." To all others He will come with "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." 2 Thessalonians 1:9.

"Nothing less than the death of Christ could make His love efficacious for us. It is only because of His death that we can look with joy to His Second Coming. His sacrifice is the center of our hope. Upon this we must fix our faith." – "The Desire of Ages," p. 660.

These three annual feasts, trumpets, atonement, and tabernacles, were in the time of the harvest. They find their antitypes in the events of the end, namely, the last proclamation of the gospel, the judgment, and the second advent of our Lord. ,

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According to the prophetic Scriptures, these events are to follow each other closely. By reading Revelation 14:6, 7, we discover that the final proclamation of the gospel begins when “the hour of His judgment is come.” Examining Revelation 22:11,12, we learn that the Second Coming of Christ does not take place till the investigative judgment has closed. By the same scripture we are taught that it does occur “quickly” after that event takes place. By these two scriptures we discover that the event which occurs between the beginning of the final proclamation of the gospel and the coming of the Lord is the first phase of the judgment.

Now this is exactly as it was prefigured in the feasts of the sanctuary. The last three of the six annual feasts followed closely one after another. On the first day of the seventh month the blowing of trumpets began, and on the fifteenth day of the same month the Feast of Tabernacles began. Between these two the Day of Atonement came on the tenth day of the month, and the Day of Atonement was the time when the sanctuary was cleansed. It typified the judgment.

Now let us see how this agrees with the time prophecy of Daniel concerning the cleansing of the sanctuary, which is the antitype of the Day of Atonement.

In Daniel 8:14 the time for this to take place is given thus: “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.”

In Daniel 9:25 we are told “that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks!” Verses 26, 27: “And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, . . . and He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.” It is made clear in the scripture context that this period of seventy weeks is the first 490 years of the 2300 years of Daniel 8:14. Thus the 2300 prophetic days, or literal years, began when the seventy weeks began.

Both periods, then, were to begin when the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem was given. This occurred in 457 BC. The first seven prophetic weeks, or forty-nine literal years, following the year 457 BC. were given to the work of building the city and to setting in order the affairs of government. This was accomplished in the fifteenth year of Darius Nothus, 408 BC, and was in exact harmony with the prophecy. Sixty-two weeks, or 483 years more, were to extend to Messiah the Prince. Christ was set forth as the Messiah, or the Anointed, at His baptism, when He was anointed with the Holy Ghost. Acts 10:37, 38; 4:27; Luke 4:18. This anointing was at the beginning of His ministry, which began in the autumn of 27 AD. This is the exact point to which those sixty-two prophetic weeks reach. Obviously it was of this that our Lord spoke when He said, “The time is fulfilled!” Mark 1:15.

After seven weeks and sixty-two weeks the Messiah was to be cut off, in the midst of the seventieth week, thus causing the sacrifice and the, oblation to cease. This period of three and a half literal years, reaching from the autumn of 27 AD, ended in the spring of 31 AD, at the crucifixion of Jesus, when Christ our Passover was crucified for us. (See 1 Corinthians 5:7.)

Thus it will be seen that the Feast of the Passover which was to meet its antitype sixty-nine and a half prophetic weeks after 457 BC, actually met its antitype in the spring of 31 AD, exactly sixty-nine and a half prophetic weeks after the commandment went forth to restore and to build Jerusalem. The latter half of the seventieth week carries us to 34 AD, and thus this period of seventy weeks “determined upon” the people, Israel, ended with the autumn of 34 AD, when persecution by the Jews caused the apostles of our Lord to turn to the Gentiles with the gospel, and they “went everywhere preaching the word.” Acts 8:4.

This period of seventy weeks, as already stated, was but a portion of the longer period of 2300 prophetic days. It was the first 490 years of that longest time prophecy. If we take 490 years from the complete period of 2300 years, we have left 1810 years. This, added to 34 AD, the year to which the seventy weeks, or 490 years, reached, brings us to 1844 AD; and since we measure 1810 years from the autumn of 34 AD, we find the whole period of 2300 years reaching to the autumn of 1844.

Now what is the event to which we are brought at this date? It is the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary. “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Since this is the work that was typified by the service of the Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary, which represented the judgment, then the judgment began 1810 years after 34 AD, in the autumn of the year 1844 AD.

This diagram shows clearly that the first three of the annual feasts came Within the last of the seventy weeks, “in the midst of the week,” as predicted by the prophet Daniel. Type met antitype with amazing accuracy.

According to the same prophecy, the other feasts should occur in their order in association with the

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cleansing of the sanctuary, which began in 1844. In the autumn of that year the judgment hour began, and when that time came, the gospel of the kingdom was already being proclaimed. At the close of this work comes the second advent.

Surely prophecy could not have marked the time of the judgment more clearly. The existence of a movement the active purpose of which is to proclaim "the everlasting gospel" to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and which since that date has been giving in trumpet tones the alarm of the hour, abundantly meets the type in the Feast of Trumpets. The judgment hour "is come," and then, when that hour has closed, the great antitypical harvest home will follow. Our Lord will soon, finish His priestly work. Within the seventy weeks He made reconciliation for iniquity and brought in everlasting righteousness. That work was done at that time to make possible the very work He is now doing in the heavenly sanctuary. All that Christ our Passover did, all that Christ the first fruits has accomplished, all that the exalted Christ who has shed forth the Holy Ghost has begun to do in heaven in our behalf, has been done with that great harvest home in view. The phase of His work in the heavenly sanctuary which He began in 1844 is the last act of priestly service which He is to render before His second advent. When it closes, He will come and will not tarry. We who recognize in theory our Lord's closing work in the heavenly sanctuary should be alarmed lest we be found approaching the close of the judgment and the time of His coming without the joy of His salvation in our lives.

Let us, in Christ our Passover, find the way of faith and sincere truth to a full realization of the redemption that is in Jesus our Lord, that at His appearing we may enter into His glory with exceeding joy.

FORGIVENESS

THE hopelessness of sinful man outside of God's plan for his redemption is declared in the words of the psalmist: "If Thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Psalm 130:1 But the ground for hope in the Lord is stated in the next verse: "There is forgiveness with Thee."

This basic fact in Christian belief was taught by the typical service of the earthly sanctuary: "If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the Lord," "he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord, a ram without blemish out of the flock, for a trespass offering, unto the priest: and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord, and it shall be for 'Yen him for anything of all that he hath done in trespassing therein.'" Leviticus 6: 2, 6, 7.

This forgiveness is of God, and is in definite relationship to the promises of the unchangeable covenant. "O Lord, to us belongs confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against Thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him." Daniel 9:8, 9.

Even the most vile, and those most hopelessly discouraged by their sins, need not despair, for God's forgiveness covers all our iniquity. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities; who healed all thy diseases!" Psalm 103:2, 3.

It was misunderstanding of this great truth that ruined Cain. "The Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? And He said, What has thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood cries unto Me from, the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; when thou tills the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shall thou be in the earth. And Cain said unto the Lord, Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven." Genesis 4:9-13, margin.

Misconception of God's attitude toward the sinner wrung from Cain those despairing words, "Behold, Thou has driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from Thy face shall I be hid." It was with this burden of unbelief and misunderstanding on his heart that he "went out from the presence of the Lord." This attitude of persistent unbelief -never permitted the revelation of God's mercy in the forgiveness of sins to lead Cain from the darkness of his own sinful course to the light and love and plenteous redemption of his Lord who delighted in mercy.

The fact of forgiveness as taught in the Bible has to do with a need as wide as the race, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God!" Romans 3:23.

Men, according to the Scriptures, are divided into two classes: Those who are dead, distant, and alien, and those who have been made alive, brought near, and given the place of sons. Those of the first class are said to be without hope, while those of the second are said to have been begotten unto a lively hope. Between these two conditions of life the forgiveness of God has wrought, working upon the one class

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and making possible the other. "You, being dead in your sins, . . . has He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Colossians 2:13.

The apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians, clearly says that the basis of this forgiveness is the blood of the atonement, for in Christ "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins." Colossians 1:14.

But it should be understood that the sins that are forgiven are the sins of the persons who repent of their wrong doing and confess their guilt in their transgressions. To this, both the Old and the New Testament, in many passages, bear witness. Observe the following:

"I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgave the iniquity of my sin!" Psalm 32:5.

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!" 1 John 1:9.

It should also be understood that conversion precedes forgiveness. It is not enough merely to have sorrow for sin, and to cry to the Lord for its removal. We must come in confession with sincere purpose to turn away from sin, and to live apart from it, turning to God in all things.

"When Thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against Thee, and shall turn again to Thee, and confess Thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto Thee in this house. Then hear Thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of Thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which Thou gave unto their fathers!" 1 Kings 8:33, 34.

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me!" Acts 26:18.

Forgiveness is not holiness. Our guilt is the obstacle that stands in the way of a life of progressive holiness for us. Forgiveness provides a way whereby our guilt is canceled. But the remission of our sins is not to be confused with the actual bestowal of righteousness. Forgiveness is precedent to the bringing in of righteousness. "Then did I own my sin to Thee, uncovering my iniquity; and as I vowed I would confess, Thou did remit my sinful guilt!" Psalm 32:5, Moffatt's translation.

The cleansing from all unrighteousness accompanies the forgiveness of our sins. That this cleansing is by the blood of Jesus we learn from the words of the apostle John: "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin!" 1 John 1:7.

Cleansing us from all sin by the blood of the, atonement is as surely an act of atonement as is the shedding of the blood by which the cleansing is accomplished. Since it accompanies, the act of forgiveness, it is clearly a work that is performed by the risen Savior as priest in the sanctuary above. Observe this in the preaching of the apostles: "Him bath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31.

But we proceed a step further, to find in the teachings of Paul that forgiveness precedes justification. Proclaiming Christ to the people at Antioch, he said: "He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:37-39.

By this it is evident that justification follows belief in God's willingness to forgive, that belief of God's forgiveness follows the preaching of that particular truth, and that this preaching is through Jesus Christ, who, though slain, saw no corruption, and was raised again from the dead.

Now if the preaching of the doctrine of forgiveness is through the crucified and risen Christ, and belief of this doctrine brings justification, then the priestly service which obtains for us that justification, is rendered after we believe. Since this work of justifying us is an important part of the atoning work of Christ, then it is quite evident that the work of atonement was not completed at the cross. The Scriptures plainly state that Christ there "was delivered for our offenses," but "was raised again for our justification." Romans 4:25.

In the type it is clear that forgiveness was obtained for the penitent through the blood of the sacrifice by an act of the priest. "If a soul sin he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord. And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord." Leviticus 6: 2, 6, 7.

Because forgiveness is a gift obtained for us by the Savior exalted in heaven, the obtaining of our forgiveness through His own precious blood is an act of Christ's priesthood, and as such is in harmony with the type. Observe in Acts 13:24-38 that the doctrine of forgiveness bases itself in the death and resurrection

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of Christ, and that emphasis is given to the resurrection of Christ as a basis for forgiveness. "He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins!" Acts 13:37, 38.

The typical service revealed clearly that there can be no forgiveness until the penalty for sin has been paid. However, the mere payment of the penalty, while basic to the act of forgiveness, is not forgiveness. There must be acceptance of the payment by Him who demands it. There must be tendered with it acknowledgment of the justice of the penalty. There must accompany it evidence of a purpose to turn away from sin. There must be a seeking of new power to live aright in God's sight. There must be acceptance of new principles for that new life.

These were provided in the type by the penitent's bringing a substitute to sacrifice at the appointed place, thus acknowledging his need and the justice of the penalty prescribed. By laying his hand upon the head of the victim, thus expressing his willingness to have his guilt borne by another, and his debt paid by substitution. By slaying the victim as an offering for his sin, thus expressing his willingness to die in his substitute, and to accept the life which his victim's death permitted to continue; thus, also, signifying the acceptance of a new principle and a new power for that life. These all were provided in the typical service by the individual sin offerings.

At the making of the continual burnt offering there was no personal acknowledgment of guilt, no personal tender of this offering as an individual ransom, no presentation of this as a personal substitute, no laying on of the hands of individual sinners, no personal acceptance of the victim's life in substitution by individuals, no personal killing of the sacrifice by the penitent, and, no evidence presented with it that individuals had purposed to live anew in new power upon new principles. At the making of the sin offering, all these were in evidence.

The continual burnt offering served to keep before the minds of the people the great fact of redeeming love, that God had provided a ransom for all. The individual sin offering signified that the penitent, in approaching God, did so by faith in the sacrifice which God had provided, and on the grounds of that provision, had come to express his acceptance of it, and to yield himself to the demands of a just God.

In figure the sinner thus died; but inasmuch as his death was by substitution, he had died only to the law which demanded his death, that is, he had died legally. He, in reality, had continued to live. It is this fact that makes it necessary for man, the penalty for whose guilt has already been paid by the death of his substitute, to obtain forgiveness through a ministry of the blood of the sacrifice, by the priest.

In reality he must receive pardon for that for which he has died in figure, and, thank God, he can do this through the ministry of the blood of Christ. Being pardoned, he is justified, and thus given a changed standing before God. He must have sin's power in him broken. He must have a changed purpose, and a new power to keep him. From being under the dominion of sin, he must be given ruler ship in Christ.

Now all this, after the price had been paid on the cross, is, in the antitype, made possible by the cross, but through the blood of the cross is made real by the priestly ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.

As the typical priest took the blood and with it made atonement, and thus brought forgiveness to the penitent, so our antitypical Priest with His own blood makes atonement for the penitent in the heavenly sanctuary and obtains forgiveness for him. Then it is that our antitypical Priest, through His own blood ministered in the heavenly sanctuary, presents the merits of the life He gave for the penitent, and secures his justification. This latter, as we have already seen by Paul's teaching in the book of Acts, is made possible by the belief of the penitent in the doctrine of forgiveness. Thus justification is dependent upon forgiveness, and follows it in the penitent's experience.

It is to be observed that this justification is very full and all embracing: "By Him all that believe are justified from all things." Acts 13:39.

It is evident, then, that since this justification is dependent upon the faith of the penitent in God's forgiveness of him, the justification which is thus made possible by that faith embraces all that has been forgiven and no more. That being so, and since the penitent is justified from all things, we therefore conclude, that he has been freely and fully forgiven all the sins.

In the type, however, forgiveness followed the killing of the sacrifice and the offering of its blood on the altar. There is no indication that forgiveness was obtained by other means. It is so in the antitype. Forgiveness can come only after we have paid the penalty by dying in our Substitute, and the price of our ransom from sin's guilt has been accepted in discharge of our debt. In other words, forgiveness comes when in confession of our faults we hold nothing of the price back, but yield ourselves wholly to God. As

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surely as no partial confession of our sins can be acceptable to God, so surely can there be no partial forgiveness of sins extended by God.

The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. But it cleanses us from sins that have been forgiven. The cleansing of all unrighteousness is the immediate result of being forgiven. Since the cleansing can be no more complete than the forgiveness, the forgiveness must be complete. In other words, when the heart is cleansed, the Lord does not cast out six devils and leave one. Neither does He partly cast out the whole seven and at the same time leave them partly in. Rather does He leave the whole heart swept and garnished and ready for full occupancy by the Holy Spirit, and the sending of the Holy Spirit is an act of Christ's priestly ministry. "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." John 16:7.

The coming of the Spirit, then, is possible only through Christ's priestly ministry. Righteousness is obtainable only through Christ's priestly ministry. Forgiveness is a gift of the exalted Savior. None of these is obtainable by the transaction at the cross in itself, yet not one of them is obtainable but by the blood of the cross ministered in the heavenly sanctuary.

This truth in no way militates against the fact that throughout the centuries that elapsed before the death of Christ, men did obtain forgiveness of sin and were accepted by God. This, however, was done by virtue of a sacrifice yet to be offered, and a priestly ministry yet to be begun. Jesus is referred to in the Scriptures as the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world!" His death was anticipated in God's purpose to save man, and He was counted as having already been slain from the moment that His death was pledged as necessary to meet man's need. This, though, does not change the fact that in the course of the development of God's purpose to save us by Christ, it was of necessity that an hour should arrive when that which was only of promise would become a reality. The time would come when the slaying of the Lamb would no longer be prospective, but actual. Until that time came, these things that at yet were not, were counted in God's purpose as though they were.

During all the years that intervened between man's fall and Christ's death, prayers were offered, confession of sin was made, and forgiveness was implored. Without question these prayers were heard, these confessions were received, and pardon was bestowed. This, however, was all done through faith in, and by virtue of, that which, in the fullness of time, was yet to be actually done in man's behalf.

In a most positive way the Scriptures declare that it is the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:7; Revelation 1:5. With equal clearness of statement they set forth the truth that it is through the blood of the Savior that we have redemption. Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18, 19. In no less positive terms the Scriptures also declare the truth that without the resurrection of Christ, faith in the blood of the sacrifice is vain, and we would yet be in our sins. 1 Corinthians 15:17.

So, then, faith before the cross and faith since the cross have the same resting place, namely, the substitution death and the priestly life of the Savior, the one as much as the other. The word of God makes it abundantly clear that neither Christ's death for man nor His atoning ministry preceded His taking our flesh and becoming man. He became a priest after He sprang out of the tribe of Judah. Hebrews 7:14. His priestly ministry did not begin before He was made a priest, but in the same way that provision was made whereby men could obtain forgiveness of sin and acceptance with God through faith in the merits of the blood that was not yet shed, so they obtained forgiveness and acceptance by virtue of a priestly ministry of that blood which had not yet been instituted in fact.

In the Savior's teaching He used a parable by which He set forth a very important phase of this question of forgiveness. This we now should note.

A certain king, taking account of his servants, found one who owed him ten thousand talents, but had not the means to pay the debt. According to the law, the king ordered that he, his wife, his children, and all that he had, be sold, and that payment be made from the proceeds. At this the servant fell down at the king's feet, and besought him, saying, "Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." Then the king, moved with compassion, had him loosed, and forgave him the debt.

"But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him a hundred pence: and he laid bands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owed. And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

Then his lord after he had called him, said unto him thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desired me: should not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that

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was due unto him. So likewise shall My heavenly Father do also unto you, if you from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." Matthew 18:23-35.

The forgiveness of God, represented by that of the king in this parable, is the basis in us for a compassionate attitude toward our fellow men.

"We ourselves owe everything to God's free grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Savior effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our exaltation to heirs hip with Christ. Let this grace be revealed to others." - "Christ's Object Lessons," p. 250.

If we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us our trespasses. "Nothing can justify an unforgiving spirit." We are forgiven by God, not because we are worthy, but because, without merit in us, He so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us. We do not make ourselves worthy of His forgiveness by forgiving our brethren, and we are not forgiven because we forgive. A forgiving spirit in us makes it possible for God to give us His pardon. An unforgiving spirit keeps us in a condition of disobedience, and reveals that we are unwilling to receive the love of God into our hearts. This is nothing less than rejection of God's pardoning love. The blessing of forgiveness cannot come to such, for by their own attitude they have alienated themselves from the pardon of God. The simple fact is that if we would be forgiven, we must be forgiving. "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:14, 15.

In the round of ministry in the earthly sanctuary, a sin offering was presented for all the people. "And unto the children of Israel thou shall speak, saying, Take you a kid of the goats for a sin offering." "And he brought the people's offering, and took the goat, which was the sin offering for the people, and slew it, and offered it for sin." Leviticus 9:3, 15.

The blood of the sin offerings for the people was borne into the sanctuary by the priest, some of it was sprinkled before the veil, and placed on the altar of incense in the holy place, then the rest of it was poured out at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering.

"The priest shall dip his finger in some of the blood, and sprinkle it seven times before the Lord, even before the veil. And he shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the Lord, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation!" Leviticus 4:17, 18.

Thus the blood, being the life (Leviticus 17:14), in which the guilt of the people was removed from them, was the medium through which sin was "transferred in figure to the sanctuary!"

Besides the sin offerings for the whole of the people, were the sin offerings which were brought to the sanctuary by individual penitents. The individual approached God through the blood of the sacrifice. His faith took hold of the promise of God renewed in the general offerings of the daily ministration, that through the merits of the substitution Sacrifice which God would provide, all sin would be purged from him. His own individual sin offering indicated that he was willing to accept that Sacrifice as his own to take away his sins, and purge his guilt, and to pay his penalty by dying his death.

Sometimes the blood of the sin offering was not taken into the holy place of the sanctuary. Instead it was placed by the priest upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and poured out at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering. In such cases, its flesh was taken into the holy place, to be eaten there by the priest. Through the medium of the blood borne into the sanctuary or put upon the altar, the sanctuary and the altar were defiled by the uncleanness of the people in all their sins. There was thus a blood record of the sins of the people in the sanctuary. From this defilement the sanctuary was cleansed by the atoning blood once a year, on the Day of Atonement.

"He shall make an atonement for the holy place, because, of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remained among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and make an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel!" Leviticus 16:16-19.

Until the sanctuary was thus cleansed, the sins of penitent sinners remained in the sanctuary in the blood of their sin offerings, and though the penitent had been pardoned, the blood record of his sins remained until the work of atonement for that year was completed. When the prescribed atonement had been made on the Day of Atonement, for himself, for the people, for the sanctuary, and for the altar, the high priest, in his character of mediator, and by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, took the sins upon

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himself, and confessed them over the scapegoat for the purpose of their extinction. (See Leviticus 16:6-22.)

With this Scriptural teaching the following statement is in entire agreement:

“On the Day of Atonement the high priest, having taken an offering from the congregation, went into the most holy place with the blood of this offering, and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat, directly over the law, to make satisfaction for its claims. Then, in his character of mediator, he took the sins upon himself and bore them from the sanctuary. Placing his hands upon the be-ad of the scapegoat, he confessed over him all these sing, thus in figure transferring them from himself to the goat. The goat then bore them away, and they were regarded as forever separated from the people.” – “The Great Controversy,” p. 420,

JUSTIFICATION

ANOTHER important feature of Christ’s work of atonement is that by which justification is brought to the pardoned sinner. One of the reasons which Paul submits for his great confidence* in the gospel of Christ is that it reveals righteousness for the just, and they, being possessed of that righteousness, shall live. Romans 1:16, 17.

Great importance attaches in the Scriptures to the work of justifying unworthy lives. One of the serious questions therein asked is, “How should man be just before God?” Job 9:2, margin. Indeed, this is the theme of the book of job, and as we follow the discussion of this theme through its chapters, we discover that man is not justified by anything that he can do, but that through the ransom which has been provided, he is delivered from going down into the pit. Through prayer and confession of wrong doing, forgiveness is obtained. By His great grace the Lord renders to pardoned man His own righteousness, and thus he is justified.

As we pursue this question in the New Testament, we find that “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” That we are freely justified by God’s grace “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God bath set forth to, be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus!” Romans 3:20, 24-26.

This justification, while it is “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” was not obtained for us at the cross. He was there “delivered for our offenses,” but He “was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:25. By this it is evident that our justification is a work that is wrought by our risen Lord, and is part of the priestly service upon which the risen Savior has entered in heaven.

Observe the teaching of this doctrine of justification by the apostle Paul: “He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.” Acts 13:37-39.

Notice that it is through Him “whom God raised again” that forgiveness of sins is preached, and “by Him all that believe are justified.”

We already have observed that forgiveness comes from the exalted Savior through the blood. We should now note that they who believe in the forgiveness of sins are also justified by the exalted Savior. The first man to reject the doctrine of forgiveness was Cain. Upon learning from the lips of God the awful consequences that would follow his terrible sin, he exclaimed: “Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.” Genesis 4:13, margin. Refusing to believe the doctrine of forgiveness, though the Lord had placed a protective mark upon him, and sought to shield him from the consequences of his deed, he “went out from the presence of the Lord” an unjustified man. His lack of faith in blood atonement, as evidenced by the bloodless offering which he brought and his refusal to believe that his sin could be forgiven, made it impossible for God to justify his unworthy life, and consequently the peace “which passed all understanding” was unknown to him. The rest of his life was one of sin and unrest.

Far different is it with those who believe the doctrine of forgiveness. By His own precious blood, shed for the remission of sins, Christ in His priestly ministry obtains pardon for them. That being done, He then is able “to declare His righteousness” as theirs. Thus without their sins, but with His righteousness, they have been made just in the sight of God. “Being justified,” they have “Peace with God.” Romans 3:24-26; 5:1.

This is as surely one of the acts of Christ as is any other in His great work of atonement. Indeed, were it otherwise, we might well ask, In what respect is needy man benefited by any Work of atonement that stops short of making him just in the sight of God?

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This justification of our lives was not wrought for us when Christ was on the cross, but is wrought by Him in His priestly ministry, and, follows both the forgiveness of our sins and the imparting of His righteousness to us. It is the goal to which our faith leads, and is subsequent to our act of believing. Therefore, we should understand that the great work of atonement by which sinners are made just before God is yet in progress. It will continue as long as sinners seek through Jesus the justification that God has provided in Him. When this work of atonement is finished, then there will be no further justification of men, and Christ will proclaim the close of His priestly service by saying: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still. And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Revelation 22:11.

The close of this work of atonement is quickly followed by the coming of the Savior, for immediately following that dread decree is the announcement: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work a hall be!" Verse 12.

When Jesus had come to the end of His days in the flesh, He declared in His prayer to the Father, "I have finished the work which Thou gave Me to do." John 17:4. When He hung on the cross of Calvary, a sacrifice for our sins, His expiring words were, "It is finished!"

When His priestly work closes and full atonement has been Made for the sins of His people, He will, in the words already quoted, indicate, that this phase of His work also has been finished. Beyond that point there will be "no more sacrifice for sins." How very important it is, then, that we each fully accept Christ while mercy waits for us to come to Him!

"Having a High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised;) and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. Exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:21-25.

BEARING INIQUITY

IN the first prophetic utterance of the Bible, a double bruising was foretold. The head of the serpent was to be bruised; but before that would take place, the serpent was to bruise the Savior's heel. The prophet Isaiah, in foretelling this bruising of Christ, has informed us that it would take place when His soul was made an offering for sin. At that time He was to bear our iniquities, and it was for these that He was bruised. In accepting our grief and carrying our sorrows, He was smitten and afflicted.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all! He was oppressed, and afflicted; He was brought as a Lamb to the slaughter; He was taken from prison and from judgment; He was cut off from the land of the living; He was stricken for the transgression of the people. He had done no violence. There was no deceit in His mouth. Yet He was bruised and put to grief, and bearing our iniquities, He poured out His soul unto death. He was even numbered with the transgressors. He bore the sin of many, and while doing so, made intercession for the transgressors. (See Isaiah 53:3-12.)

This, surely, is a wonderful description of what actually did take place in the experience of the Savior. Living two thousand years this side of the cross, we know, as matters of historic fact, that Jesus did indeed pour out His soul unto death, that He was indeed numbered with the transgressors, that He did indeed bear the sins of many, for He was made "to be sin for us," and that He did indeed make intercession for the transgressors with the never-to-be-forgotten prayer, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." We know, too, by the word of eternal truth, that He now is making intercession for His people before His Father in heaven. But the point to be noticed in the statement of Isaiah is, that when He died an offering for sin, He bore our iniquities.

The apostle Peter very evidently is referring to this prophecy when speaking of Christ as our example. He says: "Even hereunto were you called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth: who when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously: who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes you were healed. For you were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." 1 Peter 2:21-25.

But we should here observe that when Jesus bore our iniquities, He bore them in His own body,

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and the place where He bore them, in His own body was on the tree. He bore them there for the purpose of taking them away from us. He was on the cross as "the Lamb of God." As the Lamb of God, He "takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29. It was, therefore, as the sacrifice that Jesus bore the sins of the people. It was as the sacrifice that He was made to be sin. In the type, the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice, while the high priest represented Christ as a mediator. Christ was upon the cross as our sacrifice. He was made a priest after His resurrection. It was after "He had by Himself purged our sins" that He began His priesthood, and "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Hebrews 1:1 The bearing of our sins in His own body on the tree was then already accomplished; and it was in view of this fact, and in consequence of it, that Christ "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

As a sacrifice, Jesus was "made to be sin for us." "He was numbered with the transgressors." "He made His grave with the wicked." "The iniquity of us all" was laid upon Him. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us, and thus He bore our sins. He was without sin, yet was counted a sinner for our sakes. He was free from the guilt of iniquity, yet in order that we might be made just before God, He bore our iniquities. It was as a sacrifice that He stepped down to the lowest depths of shameful humiliation, enduring the cross and despising the shame. But it is as a priest that He "is set down at the right hand of the throne of God," where He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Hebrews 12:2; 7:26.

While it was necessary for Christ as man's sacrificial substitute to be made sin for us, and to taste death for all men, it is also necessary that, as man's Mediator in priestly service, He minister in the unchangeableness of a priesthood that "continues ever," and is "separate from sinners." "For such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners!" Hebrews 7:24-26.

There appear in the Scriptures to be but two occasions when Christ bore the sins of the people in His own person, first, on the cross of Calvary, where, as a sacrifice, He paid the penalty for man's guilt by taking man's sins upon Himself, and dying to release man from them. On that occasion He bore them away from us. This was at the beginning of His great work of atonement, when the blood of the atonement was shed. Again at the close of His priestly ministry for sinners, Christ as High Priest takes the sins of His pardoned people, and bears them from the sanctuary to place them on the head of the antitypical scapegoat, Satan, and thus to prepare for the last act in the great controversy-the destruction of sin and death, and of him who had the power of death, Satan. Hebrews 2:14, 15.

We should note that the scapegoat does not receive the sins from the sinner. He does not bear them away from the sinner. They are placed upon him, not to free the sinner, for this already has been accomplished by Christ. The scapegoat receives them only after the work of atonement for sinners is finished and probation for sinners has closed. They are then placed upon him for his own and their extinction. Before he receives them, the judgment has already irrevocably decreed that they from whom they had been borne in the blood of the eternal Sacrifice, had been forever delivered from them, forever separated from them.

It is just and proper that he who is the originator of every act of sin, shall be made to bear his full load of guilty responsibility, and to suffer the full penalty for his wrong doing. It is just and proper, too, that, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Christ, who died to destroy the devil and to deliver us from death, shall bring the controversy between Himself and Satan to a close by destroying Satan in his sins. When this shall have been accomplished, the song of Moses may again be sung, "Jehovah has triumphed, His people are free."

Some profess to understand that those who take the position that the scapegoat is Satan, teach that Satan therefore is our sin bearer. But these are manifestly wrong in view of the fact that all atonement for sinners has been completed and these sins have already been borne away from them before they are placed by our great High Priest on the head of Satan. In reality, what has been done is that the Savior has atoned for the guilt of His people in their transgressions, and settled forever with that in the depths of His own being. But in doing that, He certainly did not also atone for Satan's guilt in the sins that we have committed.

While we have been forgiven and cleansed through the gracious work of Christ in our behalf, while our sins have been separated from us as far as the east is from the west and shall be remembered against us no more, the sins themselves will be destroyed only when they have been placed upon their originator and he with them is brought to his end in the fires of God. Were our sins destroyed at the point where either the sinner's penalty was paid or the sinner is forgiven, inasmuch as there can be no condemnation where there is no sin, the devil, who is primarily responsible for all sin, then, would be just as free from condemnation on account of those sins as would be the forgiven sinner. In so far as this would

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be the case, our Savior would be made the devil's substitute. Surely Christians must not encourage reasoning which leads logically to such an unreasonable conclusion.

With bitter hatred of righteousness, Satan has used every evil power to make the blood of the atonement ineffectual in every individual case. He alone is primarily responsible for all sin, and it is wholly reasonable and right that he should be sent to his destruction with all the sins upon him that ever have been committed; while it would be wholly unreasonable and wholly wrong that Jesus, in taking away the sins of those whom Satan has so cruelly deceived and so utterly ruined, should thereby free him from any sin that has ever been committed. "For his iniquity that he hath done," whether through human instrumentality that remain unrepentant or through those who afterward turn from their wickedness, "shall he die." "In his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." Ezekiel 18:26, 24. Of him it has been prophesied:

"Thou has sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire!" "Thou has defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shall be a terror, and never shall thou be any more." Ezekiel 28:16, 18, 19.

Thus we see that the ways of the Lord are equal. The unrepentant sinner will die in his sins. The repentant sinner dies to sin in Christ, and being dead to sin, is freed from his sins by Christ. But these sins, of both the repentant and the unrepentant, are primarily the sins of Satan, the instigator of all sin. He, too, must die in his sins. Therefore the sins from which the penitent sinners have already been freed by the blood of Jesus, being also the sins of Satan, are put upon him, and he is destroyed with them upon him.

Christ then is the only one who bears sin away from man. This He does in fact for those who believe in Him as their Savior and accept His blood for their cleansing. In Him they have been freed from sin. To them Christ gives eternal life.

The unrepentant sinner does not accept Christ, who is the life. He therefore must die in his sins, for they have not been borne away from him. Satan, since every sin is his, dies in them all. However, this does not make him the bearer of the sins of either the righteous or the wicked. He bears only his own sins.

Christ, by His death on the cross, has made Himself responsible for the sins of every soul who has obtained pardon through His blood, whom He presents to His Father, holy, without blame, and without reproof in His sight.

The unrepentant sinner, by scorning the blood of Jesus, has chosen to bear his own sins. Though Christ died for him and bore his sins in His own body on the tree, he has "counted the blood of the covenant" "an unholy thing," and has "done despite unto the Spirit of grace." Hebrews 10:29. There is no other blood by which his sins can be purged. There is no other to whom he can turn to take away his sins, and set him free. Therefore he must die in his transgressions. With the multitudes of the unrepentant in "the lake of fire," "the devil that deceived them," bearing all his own sins, shall come to his end. "Death and hell" shall be destroyed with him. Beyond that there shall be no more tears, "neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 20:14, 10; 21:4.

THE SANCTUARY IN HEAVEN

THE writer of the epistle to the Hebrews refers to the sanctuary on earth as the sanctuary of the old covenant. Hebrews 9:1. In detail he has mentioned the structure and some of the furnishings of this "worldly sanctuary" thus:

"There was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the show bread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all. Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant. And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing. Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience. Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings,

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and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.” Hebrews 9:2-10.

In this way he shows that the service of the earthly sanctuary was imperfect, and was intended to serve only for a limited time. At the expiration of that time, a change was to be made which would bring the service of the sanctuary of the old covenant to an end, and usher in the service of a “greater and more perfect tabernacle!” Observe this in the next two verses: “But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”

This greater and more perfect tabernacle is the one from which the sanctuary of the old covenant was patterned; for the whole idea of building a sanctuary on earth came from the Lord, and He expressly enjoined Moses to build it according to the pattern shown him. This pattern was that of the heavenly tabernacle, and we find it to be so stated in words of plainest import:

“Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall you make it.” Exodus 25:8, 9.

That the sanctuary on earth and its furnishings were a copy of those in heaven, is made quite clear in the epistle to the Hebrews: “It was therefore necessary that the Patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these. But, the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” Hebrews 9:23, 24. Goodspeed, in translating this passage, uses words that make it even clearer that the tabernacle after which the earthly sanctuary’ was patterned, is in heaven. His translation of this scripture reads as follows:

“BY such means, therefore, these things that were only copied from the originals in heaven had to be purified, but the heavenly originals themselves required far better sacrifices than these. For it was not a sanctuary made by human hands and only copied after the true one, that Christ entered, but He went into heaven itself, in order to appear now on our behalf in the very presence of God.”

It should be observed that this greater and more perfect tabernacle in heaven has “holy places.” Verse 24. It was made by the Lord Himself, and not by man. Hebrews 8:2. It has a priesthood. Hebrews 7:12-24. This priesthood ministers in this true tabernacle in heaven, with the blood of the antitypical sacrifice which was shed for all men on Calvary. Hebrews 8:1,2; 9:11,12.

This sanctuary in heaven is referred to in the book of Revelation as the temple of God. In the temple John saw “the ark of His testament.” the altar of incense, a golden censer. Revelation 11:19; 8:1

This sanctuary in heaven, too, is to be both trodden underfoot and cleansed from the transgressions of the people.

These latter two most interesting features are brought to our notice in the vision of Daniel the prophet, with words, not his own, but which were uttered by supernatural beings. One saint was heard speaking to another, asking, “How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden underfoot?” Another saint was heard to reply, “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed.” Daniel 8:13, 14.

It has already been shown that the end of this period of 2300 prophetic days was in the autumn of 1844 A. D. The treading of the host underfoot began far back in pagan times. It ended when papal supremacy ended. This quite generally is conceded to be in 1798 AD. Thus it is seen that the treading of the host underfoot had already been accomplished before the 2300 days reached their end. The answer of the saint, “Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,” directs our attention to the beginning of the work of judgment in heaven at the end of that period. That work will forever end the controversy between righteousness and sin, and will set at rest every question relating to the ultimate of all evil. This feature of Christ’s priestly service, which began in heaven in 1844 AD, was definitely prefigured in the earthly sanctuary by the solemn work of atonement in the most holy place.

But it must, not be understood that the atoning acts of our Lord were confined to His great achievement for us on the cross and in the judgment. Indeed, a vast and continuous service of atonement has been in process in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary during all the years since Christ “by His own blood . . . entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us!” Hebrews 9:12. By reconciling us to Himself by the death of Christ, God has made it possible for us, by faith in what He has already wrought for us in Christ, to accept as ours that which He has accomplished for us and thus to receive atonement for our sins.

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Complete provision for atonement has been made for every soul. God has done His part. The Sacrifice has been slain. The Priest is at the altar. The offering of blood has been made. The service of priestly mediation is in progress. Yet while all this is so, no soul will ever be helped by this provision unless he is willing to accept the benefits of the atonement, and thus to do his part to make them vitally his own. In the type, that represented such attitude and action of the individual sinner had to do with service at the altar and in the first apartment of the sanctuary. This all was precedent to the special service of the Day of Atonement in the inner apartment of the sanctuary. Not one feature of all this part of the typical service was ever attempted without blood, and never was it undertaken before the sacrifice was slain.

In the antitypical service this is the feature of His ministry upon which Christ entered with His own blood after His ascension, precedent to judgment. The work of judgment, itself a feature of the work of atonement wrought in the inner apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, sets the seal forever on the atoning acts which have been wrought by the Priest in behalf of individuals in the holy place. As men have been made holy through the ministry of the blood of the atonement by the priest in the first apartment of the sanctuary, the judgment decrees that they shall remain holy. As men have rejected the atonement and continued in sin, so the judgment decrees that they must remain filthy. The work done in our behalf by the High Priest in the holy place is thus confirmed and sealed by that which, is done in the most holy place. Thus we see that the eternal destiny of the individual hinges on the attitude that he takes toward the atoning work of Christ, first on the cross as a sacrifice and next in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary as Mediator in our behalf. The blotting out of sins and the blotting out of names in the judgment are in absolute harmony with the results of priestly mediation accomplished in the holy place.

Therefore it is of necessity that there be a priestly work of atonement for penitent sinners in the holy place before the judgment shall forever seal their condition. It is also of necessity that this shall be accomplished after the Sacrifice has been slain, for it is a work of putting away sin, and “without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22.

These succeeding features of the atoning work of Christ are definitely fixed in their relation one to the other as parts of a great and perfect whole, and are dependent one upon the other. First, the incarnation of Christ, which made it possible for Him to die for our sins. Next the death of Christ on Calvary, which paid the penalty for our sins. Next His resurrection, by which His priestly mediation was made possible. Next, His priesthood, by which all that was accomplished by His death, and purposed for us in His death, is obtained for us individually.

The accomplishment of each part of Christ’s ministry for us has made possible the next, and has pledged its performance. His birth as the Babe of Bethlehem made possible and pledged His death on Calvary. His death on the cross made possible and pledged His resurrection from the grave. His resurrection made possible and pledged His priesthood. His priesthood makes necessary and pledges the judgment. The judgment makes necessary and pledges His second advent. His second advent brings us the immortality and inheritance of the eternal promise.

Bethlehem was the place of His incarnation. Calvary was the place of His death on the cross. Joseph’s new tomb was the place of His resurrection, where He burst the bands of death. The sanctuary in heaven is the place of His priesthood. The most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary is the place of the judgment. After that He will be seen coming in the clouds with power and great glory.

The time of His birth, death, and resurrection were all foretold. The time, too, when He would enter upon the closing phase of His priestly ministry was definitely marked in prophecy. But of the day and hour of His Second Coming knows no man, not even the angels. But this we do know, that as the judgment shall leave us, so shall the second advent find us, if filthy, then filthy; if holy, then holy. If in the judgment our hope has been found to be set on the living God, then at the Second Coming of Christ it will still be set on Him as Savior of them that believe. Though the hour is late, mercy still lingers. Therefore “having boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and having a High Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” And “let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear!” Hebrews 8:19-22; 12:28.

THE MOST HOLY PLACE

IN the great controversy between Christ and Satan, the holiness of God is one of the matters in dispute. This, therefore, is one of the most important of the many things that God has purposed shall be made manifest by His great work of atonement

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In the temptation in Eden this was the very thing that the devil so treacherously assailed. Speaking through the serpent to Eve, he said: "Yea, hath God said, You shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. And the serpent said unto the woman, You shall not surely die: for God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:1-5.

The matters in question in this dialogue were the truthfulness and the holiness of God. God had said, "In the day that thou eats thereof thou shall surely die." Genesis 2:17. Satan declared "You shall not surely die: for God does know that in the day you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Satan thus declared as truth precisely the opposite of what God had said, and thus the holiness of God was definitely challenged. It was by belief of this charge against God by Adam and Eve that sin entered the human heart, and brought death upon all men.

From the moment that man first questioned God's holiness, necessity has been laid upon the Lord to manifest to His creatures that He is righteous in all His ways. The whole plan of salvation is intended to make this manifest, and through that manifestation to make a second uprising of sin impossible.

Consequently the great central features of that plan must be expected to reveal clearly the holiness of the Lord, and indeed, to make it so very manifest to all that it can never again be called in question.

This being so, the place and the means by which this is accomplished surely should be regarded as most holy. At every step in the unfolding of God's purpose to save man from the ruin of sin, new revelations of His character have been given. More and yet more clearly the justice and mercy and goodness of God have been revealed. More and yet more, too, has the real character of Satan, His accuser, been unveiled. But it was not until the death of Christ that the character of Satan was fully revealed. "The arch apostate had so clothed himself with deception that even holy beings had not understood his principles. They had not clearly seen the nature of his rebellion." – "The Desire of Ages," p. 758.

From the moment that Jesus came into the world, Satan's hellish power was bent upon His destruction. But at the cross of Calvary "his disguise was torn away!" On the other -hand, the love of God in Christ is seen to be stronger than death.

Since His ascension to heaven, Jesus has been ministering in behalf of penitent sinners in priestly mediation. The basis of this ministry is the blood that He shed for all men on the cross of Calvary. This priestly mediation will be brought to its conclusion by His work in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. By it he that has been justified by Christ will be made eternally just, and he that has chosen to be unjust will remain eternally unjust. It is there, in the most holy place, that the goodness, justice, truth, mercy, love, and holiness of God will be most fully revealed in the completeness of His dealings with His creatures. With results that the judgment has irrevocably fixed, the holiness of God's character there will be put beyond question forever. This being so, is it unreasonable to conclude that the place where such a vital feature of the great controversy is forever settled shall for that reason be called "the most holy place"?

The testimony of those most intimately and most effectively influenced by the work that our great, High Priest does in the most holy place, is recorded in Revelation 15:24. Observe the words by which these saved ones express themselves in song: "Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou only art holy: for Thy judgments are made manifest."

The holiness of God, then, is a settled fact, and that great fact has been forever established in the confidence of God's creatures by its manifestation in the judgments of God. It affords ample reason for fearing the Lord and glorifying Him.

Some have claimed that "it was the immediate presence of God, as manifested in the holy Shekinah, that constituted the inner apartment of the earthly sanctuary the most holy place. And that consequently, when, at the time of His ascension the Lord Jesus sat down at the right hand of God, thus 'appearing in the presence of God for us,' He entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary." For, it is argued, "there can be no place in heaven more holy than the place of the unveiled, presence of Almighty God."

Most certainly God's immediate presence makes a place holy. Without question His immediate presence made the inner apartment of the earthly sanctuary "most holy!" But to claim that He was limited to this as a sole reason for naming that apartment the "most holy," is claiming too much. The inherent holiness of God's person hallows every place where He is, pleased to be. But to claim that this fact excludes Him from making any particular place or thing "most holy," and from requiring His creatures so to regard it, and

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that from considerations that have to do with service and associations as well as with His presence, is evidently wrong.

Observe that by His own will and act He has made other things of the earthly sanctuary “most holy.” The altar of burnt offerings was made “most holy,” and is so referred to in Exodus 40:10.

The altar of incense is spoken of as being “most holy.” Exodus 30:10. The perfume of the incense was made “most holy.” Verse 36. The remnant of the meat offering was made “most holy.” Leviticus 23. The sin offering was “most holy.” Leviticus 6:25. The trespass offering was “most holy.” Leviticus 7:1. The cakes of fine flour were “most holy.” Leviticus 24:9. Every devoted thing was “most holy.” Leviticus 27:28.

These all were made most holy and called most holy by the Lord because of their part in and association with the holy service of the sanctuary.

Why, then, must it be understood that the inner apartment of the sanctuary was most holy for the one reason only—that the presence of God was there unveiled? Of course the presence of God in the most holy place makes it most holy, but when all these other things connected with the sanctuary service also have been made most holy by their use and by God’s having called them most holy, and not because they are where His “immediate unveiled presence” is, dare we allow a theory of there being but one way whereby a place becomes most holy, and that a fixed, automatic way, to change our belief of vital, life-giving truth?

In the most holy place in the sanctuary in heaven the work of investigative judgment is performed. By that work God’s holiness will have been made so clearly manifest to His creatures that it will never again be questioned. In view of this it is wholly reasonable to conclude that the Place where such a work is wrought should be made by the Lord the most holy place. Surely the place where a work is completed that puts the holiness of God forever beyond question, is a most holy place. Why, then, should not God name it the most holy place, and require it to be so regarded, even in heaven, where every place is hallowed by His presence?

With the prophetic utterances of God’s word as to the time when the judgment should begin, and with the typical sequence of services in the sanctuary on earth, it is impossible to harmonize the theory that Christ entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary at His ascension. A number of scriptures clearly teach that He must perform acts of priestly service preparatory to the beginning of judgment. This, too, is required in the antitype by the full round of service throughout the year in the earthly sanctuary, for that service was unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.

Believing that Christ’s priestly service began after the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 8:3), and could not begin before, the conclusion is unavoidable that His ministry in heaven began after His ascension, in the first apartment of the sanctuary, and not in the most holy place. No man therefore should, conclude arbitrarily that because Christ appeared in the presence of God for us, He must then have begun His priestly ministry in the most holy place of the sanctuary. Indeed, the very verse of the Scriptures which tells us that He appeared in the presence of God for us, also informs us that it was heaven that He had entered. Heaven, however, is not the sanctuary. The sanctuary is in heaven. That which is in heaven can at most be but a part of heaven. We build a room inside a house. The room is not the house. It is a part of the house only, and is in the house. We may enter the house without necessarily entering the room, but we cannot enter the room without having entered the house. Thus Christ entered heaven, and being in heaven He is in the unveiled presence of the Father. His being in heaven, and consequently in the presence of God, should not be understood to mean either that heaven is the sanctuary, or that He went into the most holy place of the sanctuary when He entered heaven to appear in the presence of God for us.

For “Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Hebrews 9:11,12. “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is Passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession,” and “let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!” Hebrews 4:14,16.

Having therefore a High Priest who has entered the sanctuary in heaven and there is ministering His own blood in our behalf, “let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,” and “let us hold fast the profession of our faith.” “For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” Hebrews 10:22, 23; 3:14,

THE INVESTIGATIVE JUDGMENT

IN the prophecy of Isaiah there is a remarkable statement concerning the second advent of our Lord. It not only foretells the event, but it calls upon God's people to make it known among the nations, and thus to herald His coming. Observe the directness of the call, and notice what it is that the people are to say:

"O Zion, that brings good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that brings good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Isaiah 40:9, 10.

Four very definite things are here required to be stated in heralding the Lord's appearing, namely, "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand," "His arm shall rule for Him," "His reward is with Him," "His work [is] before Him!"

It is to the third of these, "His reward is with Him," to which I invite the reader's attention. This is not merely something that is prophesied of Him, but it is also what the church is required to proclaim as from the mountain tops, concerning Him. He is not only coming, He is not only coming to rule, but He is coming to give rewards that are with Him. The church is bidden to preach this message as good tidings with strength of voice and courage.

Again in a later chapter of his prophecy Isaiah refers to the same event, and repeats his call to the church. But on that occasion he makes it clear that the message is to be proclaimed to the ends of the earth, and to the end of time.

"Go through, go through the gates; prepare you the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world. Say you to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation comes. Behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him." Isaiah 62:10, 11.

We should notice here that in preparing the way of the people, the Lord's messengers are to cast up the highway, to gather out the stones, and to lift up a standard for the people. This is to be done in view of the coming of the Lord and in preparation for it. Everywhere it is to be said, "Behold, thy salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him."

It is not my purpose in this brief chapter to dwell upon the work of preparing people for the coming of the Lord. That work evidently is to be of the kind that makes the way to God very plain for the people, taking the obstructions out of it before their feet, and exalting the standard of God's righteousness in their hearts. But I would invite the reader to observe that the messengers of God again are bidden to proclaim the second advent to the end of the world, saying, "Behold, thy salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him."

From this it is clearly evident that Isaiah the prophet understood that when Jesus shall come the second time, He will come to reward His people, and His reward is with Him.

Almost as though He were giving response to this prophecy, the Lord Jesus exclaims in the last chapter of the Bible: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12.

Assuredly He is referring to the same event, and states the same purpose for His coming, as that of which Isaiah prophesied. But He limits neither His purpose nor His work to any portion of the people. He is coming to give every one his reward according to his works.

Turning back in the book of Revelation to the eleventh chapter, we reach a very illuminating statement regarding the way in which preparation for Christ's Second Coming is made. After the anger of the nations has come and God's wrath is kindled, the judgment hour is reached, the time for rewards to be given. Note the scripture:

"The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou should give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great. And should destroy them which destroy the earth." Revelation 11:18.

Without question this passage associates the judgment with the work of rewarding the righteous and recompensing the wicked, and it does this in a manner that makes the giving of the reward consequent upon the judgment.

Let us observe that when Christ comes, His reward is with Him. He does not have to determine after He comes who has a right to eternal life. His reward for every man is with Him when He comes. This information comes directly from Jesus Himself, and it is so plainly stated that there are not two ways left us

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to interpret His words. He is coming; His reward is with Him, to give every man according to his works. He it is also that has spoken through John, to tell us how the decision concerning every man's works is reached. While this passage describes the executive judgment upon the lost, it also reveals the manner of reaching decisions by which the judgment is executed:

"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." Revelation 20:12, 13.

According to the judgment, so is the reward. Judged according to works, all are rewarded according to works. But the decision to give a reward is made on the basis of the investigative examination of the works as written in the books. The language used in this scripture is very plain. It says, "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire!" Verse 15. Was not found where? In the book of life. When? When investigation of works and names was made of that which was found written in the books. Where and when was that investigation made? In the judgment, before rewards are given, when "every man" is "judged out of those things which were written in the books."

Observe, too, that "every man" is judged in this, investigative manner, and "every man" is rewarded in exact harmony with the decisions of this investigative judgment. Imagine, if we may, the rewards being given to every man before the investigative judgment determines what they shall be. Consider the character of these rewards. Those whose names are in the Lamb's book of life will be rewarded with eternal life. Those whose names are not in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire. Are such consequences to reach men on the basis of works, without investigation of the records which reveal the character of their works, or before such investigation takes place?

Nothing could be more preposterous than the claim that this judgment takes place after Christ comes, or even at the time of His coming. His reward for every man is with Him when He comes, and that reward has been determined by the judgment, given according to that which the investigation of the records has revealed.

By the prophecy of the seven churches we learn that the last church is named Laodicea, which means "the judging of the people." Think you that this name has been chosen by the Lord for this last church without any relation to the event which gives it significance? Let us go back to the prophecy of Isaiah again. In preparation for the Lord's coming the church is there required to cry to the end of the world, "Behold, the Lord God will come. Behold, His reward is with Him." "Behold thy salvation comes; behold, His reward is with Him."

That is the message which the last church is to give. Is it not a judgment message? Does it not warn of judgment? Does it not sound the alarm of judgment? Does it not require that the messenger who prepares the way of the Lord shall preach the judgment by which all rewards shall be determined?

We come back to the New Testament, and find that when the church responds to that call and rises up to fulfill that prophecy, it is required to preach a judgment message. Says John, as he views, this work of the church. "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him. For the hour of His judgment is come." Revelation 14:6, 7.

What judgment is this? Most certainly that in which the books are opened, and every man is judged according to his works out of those things which are written in the books. That judgment is investigative, and prepares the way for Jesus to reward the righteous and recompense the wicked.

The church that heralds our Lord's return must preach the investigative judgment, for it is part of the everlasting gospel that is to be preached to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, in order to "cast up the highway," to "gather out the stones," and to "lift up a standard for the people" in preparation for "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ!" Isaiah 62:10; Titus 2:13.

THE CLEANSING OF THE SANCTUARY

THE sanctuary on earth was holy. It was built for a holy purpose. That purpose had to do with making unholy men holy. In the accomplishment of this purpose, two agencies were employed, namely, sacrifices and a priesthood. Its work was carried on in two phases, these being indicated by the plan of the

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sanctuary building in two apartments, named, respectively, the holy place and the most holy place, or the first and second apartments. These distinct phases of the work accomplished in, the sanctuary were also indicated by the fact that the work performed in the holy place was of daily occurrence, while that which was wrought in the most holy place was of yearly occurrence. The full round of service was so ordered that its yearly performance represented the full work of deliverance undertaken by our Savior in behalf of sinners.

In connection with these services were certain ceremonial feasts which represented the work of Christ in behalf of 'His people from the offering of Himself for their sins to their life in the hereafter.

The work of daily ministration began in the making of the continual burnt offering, giving assurance of provision for man's redemption by the vicarious offering of life for sin. It continued day by day through the ministry of the priesthood, many sacrifices being employed, until sin, separated from God's people through the blood of the sacrifice, was put upon the scapegoat and borne away forever. Those who scorned this way of release from sin were cut off from among God's people.

In the course of this ministry the sanctuary, in both its apartments and in its holy things, and the altar of burnt offering received the uncleanness of those of the children of Israel who availed themselves of its cleansing provisions. This uncleanness was purged from the sanctuary and the altar on the Day of Atonement once each year.

The purging of this uncleanness was a special work by which atonement was made for the sanctuary, for the altar, and for the holy things of the sanctuary. In harmony with the Bible principle, that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22), this cleansing of the sanctuary was accomplished by blood atonement.

"He shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remained among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goes in to make, an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and made an atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Leviticus 16:16-19.

The Scriptures make it clear that in order for the services of the sanctuary to begin, it was necessary for atonement to be made for the altar. This atonement is declared to be a cleansing., "Thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou has made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever touched the altar shall be holy." Exodus 29:36, 37.

Moffatt's translation of this scripture makes it very clear that it was guilt from which the altar had to be purged: "Every day .you must offer a bullock by way of sin offering, to expiate sins, and thus purge the altar from guilt, anointing it to render it sacred; seven days you must spend expiating the altar and rendering it sacred."

This atonement for the altar is referred to as a cleansing which made the altar holy, and when this atonement, thus ordered for the altar of burnt offering, was actually made by Moses, it is recorded that it purified the altar. "He slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it." Leviticus 8:15. Moffatt translates this as "purging it of guilt."

The apostle Paul, when commenting on this atonement, tells us that Moses "sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry." He then refers to this work of atonement as a purging with blood. Hebrews 9:21,22.

This all occurred before the regular sanctuary services began, and in preparation of the sanctuary and its holy things, for that sacred service. The continuance of such a work of cleansing year by year throughout the generations of Israel emphasized its importance as a type of a very necessary and important feature of the atoning work of Christ. It was made necessary "because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins." Leviticus 16:16, 19.

Now this service of atonement was typical of a work to be done in heaven. Writing of this service by which these material things were purged by blood atonement, the author of the epistle says:

"Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry." "It

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was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us!' Hebrews 9:21, 23, 24.

Observe in this passage that it is of things in the heavens that the writer of this epistle speaks, and not of persons, or of a spiritual church on earth, or of a spiritual temple of living stones. Observe, too, that those things on the earth which Moses sprinkled and thereby purified were copies of things in heaven. Observe still further that it is things in the, heavens that are to be purified by the better sacrifices. To ridicule the existence of these things in heaven is to ridicule the Lord Himself, who employs them in the work of our deliverance.

Both the English Revised Version and Moffatt, as well as Weymouth and others, in translating this passage, use the word "cleansed" instead of "purified."

Thus in both New and Old Testament teaching it is made clear that the work of atoning for the sanctuary and the altar is a work of cleansing. It also is obvious that it is a work of cleansing from the sins of the people. It is made clear, too, that the things in heaven are to be cleansed in the same way as were their copies on the earth, but with the atoning blood of the "better" sacrifice.

Therefore there is to be an atonement for the holy place, the most holy place, and the altar in heaven; and by that atonement these things in heaven will be "cleansed, purified," purged from guilt which has been brought to them by the uncleanness of the people.

It is of this yearly atonement service in the earthly sanctuary and its antitype that Paul goes on to write in his epistle to the Hebrews. In verse 24 of chapter nine he tells us that it is "Into heaven itself" that Christ has entered, there "to appear in the presence of God for us." Having entered into heaven for that purpose, He does not have to offer Himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place every year with the blood of others for in that case "must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world. But now once in the end of the world bath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second, time without sin unto salvation!" Hebrews 9:26-28.

Observe this reasoning. The writer is helping us to understand the antitype. He tells us that instead of being like the high priest that entered into the holy place often with the blood of others, Christ by His own blood has entered into heaven itself for us, not to suffer death often, but since He offered Himself once for all, He now ministers the merits of that one sacrifice which was made for all.

The purpose of that one sacrifice is to put away sin, not merely to forgive acts of sin, or merely to break the power of sin, or even to replace sin with righteousness, but to put away sin. This means to bring it to a complete end. This is the real purpose of God in His dealings with sin, and this He has purposed in Jesus by the sacrifice of the cross.

Now while the author reasons that in His great sacrifice Christ died for all men, and consequently those who accept His substitution death die in Him, he clearly shows that our death in the Lord Jesus does not eliminate the necessity for us to appear in judgment. Appealing to the Christians at Rome, Paul said: "Why does thou judge thy brother? Or why does thou set at naught thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Romans 14:10.

Again, in writing to the church at Corinth he declared, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Corinthians 5:10.

The apostle Peter, too, preaching in the house of Cornelius, avowed that it was to preach and to testify that Jesus had been "ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead," that the Savior had commanded His disciples. Acts 10:42. We therefore would be quite wrong in concluding that because of what Jesus has done for us upon the cross we shall be under no obligation to appear before God in the judgment. We are assured, however, of the fact that, having died to sin in Christ, the judgment will seal the fact that our penalty has been paid, our guilt has been pardoned, and through the blood of the covenant we have passed from death to life in Christ the Redeemer.

We should observe that in the closing verses of Hebrews 9 the writer reasons that "as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; but unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Observe also that at His first advent He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and at His Second Coming He has put sin away from His people forever, and comes without sin unto their eternal

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salvation. How has He done this? Most certainly by the great work of atonement which, by the sacrifice of Himself, began at the cross, and was continued by His priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary until, in the judgment, sin's reign is ended, its power is broken, and it is put away forever. That work of judgment will be conducted in two phases, the investigative phase, which begins at the house of God; and the executive phase, which gives effect to the judgments passed by the judge in the investigative phase of His work.

It is evident that there must be investigation and decision in judgment before the execution of judgment can take place. That there is to be an investigation of personal cases, and a decision concerning them according to what is found written in heaven's records, is very clearly taught in the Scriptures. Revelation 20:11-13. That there is a blotting out of sins for some, and a blotting out of names for others, is also plainly stated. Acts 3:19; Revelation 3:5. That there is to be a giving of rewards according to works is unquestionably true. Revelation 22:12. That there are to be rewards and punishment according to the judgment, is beyond the possibility of question. That the giving of such rewards and the administration of such punishment is according to a previously reached decision, is clearly understood by the reading of many scriptures.

The Judgment in its investigative phase takes place while Christ still mediates for sinners, but with its close, Christ's mediation work for sinners will also close. Thereafter He will appear "with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all!" Jude 14, 15.

The service of the Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary typified the judgment. The investigative judgment as an act of atonement puts away sin forever from those whose sins are blotted from the record in heaven and whose names are retained in the Lamb's book of life. It just as definitely puts away sin as any other act of the atonement, and it does it by the same atoning element effectual in all other acts, namely, the blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us from all sin.

Of one thing we may be sure, that as certainly as Christ once appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, so surely is the judgment a definite feature of the great atoning work by which sin is put away. It is the natural consequence of the sacrifice of Christ to put away sin. As a work of atonement it is not merely a logical thing, but is, in the nature of things, demanded by the offering of Christ for sin, and is bound to follow that great saving act. In the nature of things also, its results must be irrevocable and final.

Now continuing to follow this reasoning in regard to the service on the Day of Atonement in the earthly sanctuary, we observe that the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews opens the tenth chapter by stating that the whole typical service, being but a shadow of the reality, could not make man perfect. Had it been otherwise, there would have been no need of a change. Notwithstanding this, however, that part of the service which typified the judgment was never omitted; remembrance of sin was made every year. Verse 3. But the blood of bulls, and, goats could not take away sins. Verse 4. However, that which the typical sacrifices and services could not do, Christ, the reality to which all these pointed, does through the offering of Himself and His priestly ministry. Verses 12-14. Thus it is possible for us to approach God. Verses 19-22. If the sacrifice provided by the offering of Christ is not accepted, there is no other sacrifice that can be made acceptable. Verse 26. There is in that case no way whereby we can stand in the judgment. Verse 27.

We should next observe how this is illustrated in verse 28: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses!"

Reading this verse, we recall that in preparing for the Day of Atonement in those ancient times, each one was required to afflict his soul. Those who neglected or refused to do this were cut off from among God's people. It is clearly to this that the writer refers, for he continues: "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we, know Him that bath said, Vengeance belonged unto Me, I will recompense, said the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Hebrews 10:29-31.

The teaching here clearly is that by the blood of the covenant we are sanctified. If we hold not our sanctification clear through, the judgment will commit us to fiery indignation (verse 27); and we then shall find it "a fearful thing to fall," unsanctified, "into the hands of the living God."

From this we learn that our sanctification by the blood of the covenant is in view of the judgment, and looks to the judgment for its eternal seal.

Now, the cleansing of things in the earthly sanctuary, and of things in heaven, being possible only by blood atonement, and the Scriptures plainly teaching that both must be cleansed, there must still be a

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cleansing of the things in heaven, as there have been cleansings of the sanctuary on earth. Since those cleansings of the earthly sanctuary were typical of the cleansing of the sanctuary in heaven, and those cleansings were performed. In figure by the blood of the atonement, and in figure sin was thereby put away with results that were irrevocable, there must necessarily also be a cleansing of the antitypical sanctuary by a work of atonement, the results of which will, be unchangeable, and therefore final.

It is wholly reasonable, too, that the Lord should indicate to His people in His Holy Word the time when such a work shall begin. With unmistakable sureness He has marked, by prophetic statement, the time when the first and basic act in His great atoning work would take place. Why, then, should it be thought strange that He should also have marked the time when its great closing feature should begin?

Since the Bible mentions only two sanctuaries in which, because of the uncleanness of the people, a cleansing is needed, and in which such a work of cleansing by atonement is possible, and with sacrifices, and priests, and holy places, and altars, and all the other holy things of their service, it is also wholly reasonable for us to conclude that when God speaks of a cleansing of the sanctuary, He is referring to one of these two.

So when we read, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed" (Daniel 8:14), we believe that the Lord intends us to understand that He is referring to one or the other of the only two sanctuaries that the Bible brings to our knowledge in which are those things which need to be cleansed, and whose cleansing forms part of God's great plan for putting away sin.

We conclude, too, that when He said, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed," He wished us to have knowledge of the time when this important work would begin.

It is a well-established fact that this period of time, representing 2300 literal years, extended from 457 BC to 1844 AD. It is at the end of this period that the sanctuary referred to in Daniel 8:14 is to be cleansed. Consequently the cleansing could not begin before the year 1844 AD.

Inasmuch as the earthly sanctuary long before that time had concluded its work in God's plan and had ceased to exist, we conclude that the reference of Daniel 8:14 is to the sanctuary in heaven, the only sanctuary existent in 1844 or since, that by, any stretch of understanding can be regarded as measuring with what either needs or demands cleansing, according to, the word of the Lord.

Plainly the Scriptures require that the ministry of atonement by which this sanctuary shall be cleansed shall have to do with a sin offering, a holy place and a most holy place, an altar, and other holy things, and shall, by its performance, put away sin. Just as plainly must this service of atonement be rendered by our High Priest. This work of atonement, too, must bring the mediation of the High Priest in behalf of sinners to its finality.

No place or thing or personality on earth should be understood to be either the sanctuary to be cleansed or the instrumentality by which its cleansing shall be accomplished. No chain of theoretical reasoning that would turn the faith of God's children from this clearly outlined truth, should be forged. No ecclesiastical power or person, no nation or people of the earth, can perform for the sinner that which Christ, our great High Priest, alone has qualified to do for His people. No historic circumstance, no event of human accomplishment, should be credited with cleansing that which only the blood of the atonement can purge. On earth the cleansing of the sanctuary by the blood atonement was but a figure of the great and solemn work of judgment to take place in the antitypical sanctuary in heaven.

When the investigative phase of the judgment is finished, and the sins of God's people have been blotted from the books of records in heaven, and when our High Priest has with His own blood cleansed or justified the sanctuary, then He will put the sins that have defiled the sanctuary upon their originator, whose power will be broken, whose reign will be ended, and who will finally perish in the fires that purify the earth. The end of those sins is in the fire of the last day, at the close of the one thousand years, when Satan, sin, sinners, and death will come to their utter end. Then affliction will never again rise up to blight and curse the fair creation of God.

The judgment by which the sanctuary is cleansed, seals forever the deliverance of God's children wrought by Jesus through His own precious blood. Their names are in the Lamb's book of life. The record of their sins has been purged. They are in possession of everlasting righteousness, and glory and immortality are theirs through Him who loved them and gave Himself for them. Thanks be to God for so great salvation through Jesus His Son, our ever blessed Lord!

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WITHIN THE VEIL

IN the Old Testament scriptures that refer to the sanctuary there are two veils brought to view. The first of these was at “the door of the tent,” the holy place; and the second was the curtain which divided the holy from the most holy place within the sanctuary. Both of these are called “the hanging,” or “a hanging,” and “the veil.”

Reading the instruction given to Moses, we find that he was required to “make a veil of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen of cunning work,” and “hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold!” This veil was to separate the holy place and the most holy. He also was instructed to “make a hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework,” and to hang it upon “five pillars of shittim wood,” overlaid “with gold.” Exodus 26:31-37. Again Numbers 3:25 speaks of the curtain for the door of the tabernacle of the congregation as “the hanging;” and in verse 31 we find that the curtain between the holy and the most holy place is there also referred to as “the hanging.” Giving the sons of Kohath their charge for the keeping of a particular part of the sanctuary, the Lord said. “Their charge shall be the ark, and the table, and the candlestick, and the altars, and the vessels of the sanctuary wherewith they minister, and the hanging, and all the service thereof.”

This reference to “the hanging” must refer to the veil within the sanctuary, for the hanging at the door of the first apartment and the hanging at the door of the court were already given to the charge of the sons of Gershon. Verses 25, 26. That this is so is further shown by the instructions given for the moving of the tabernacle in the journeys of the people:

“When the camp sets forward, Aaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering veil, and cover the ark of testimony with it!” “And when Aaron and his sons have made an end of covering the sanctuary, and all the vessels of the sanctuary, as the camp is to set forward; after that, the sons of Kohath shall come to bear it: but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die. These things are the burden of the sons of Kohath in the tabernacle of the congregation.” Numbers 4:5, 15.

Thus we see that the curtain between the apartments is called both a “veil” and a “hanging.” We have also seen that the curtain at the door of the holy place is called a “hanging.” Now let us notice a passage where this curtain also is referred to by the Lord Himself as “the veil.”

“The Lord said unto Aaron, Thou and thy sons and thy father’s house with thee shall bear the iniquity of the sanctuary: and thou and thy sons with thee shall bear the iniquity of your priesthood. And thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring thou with thee, that they may be joined unto thee, and minister unto thee; but thou and thy sons with thee shall minister before the tabernacle of witness. And they shall keep thy charge, and the charge of all the tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor you also, die. And they shall be joined unto thee, and keep the charge of the tabernacle of the congregation, for all the service of the tabernacle: and a stranger shall not come nigh unto you. And you shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar: that there be no wrath any more upon the children of Israel. And I, behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel: to you they are given as a gift for the Lord, to do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest’s office for everything of the altar, and within the veil; and you shall serve: I have given your priest’s office unto you as a service of gift: and the stranger that comes nigh shall be put to death!” Numbers 18:1-7.

Fenton translates verse 7 as follows: “You and your sons with you shall guard the priesthood, and all the matters of the altar, and of the House of the Veils, and perform the service prescribed for the priesthood.”

Moffatt translates it: “You and your sons shall discharge as priests A the duties connected with the altar and what lies inside the curtain!”

That this reference to the veil is to the first veil, the curtain at the door of the first apartment, there can be no reasonable doubt. The Lord here is giving the Levites and the priests charge concerning their duties in the sanctuary service. In allotting their respective services, the Lord charged the Levites that they should minister unto Aaron and his sons in their service, but they were not to “come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar.” Aaron and his sons, the priests, were to keep the charge of the sanctuary and the altar.

In repeating this charge to Aaron the Lord said: “Therefore thou and thy sons with thee shall keep your priest’s office for everything of the altar, and within the veil.”

Thus in three of these seven verses we have the full field of priestly ministry defined as being the

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altar and the sanctuary. The expression, “for everything of the altar, and within tilt veil,” in the seventh verse, is the equivalent of “the sanctuary and the altar” in the fifth and third verses. It therefore must refer to the veil at the door of the holy place, the one entrance to the sanctuary. The inclusion of the sons of Aaron with him in this charge also indicates that the expression “within the veil” is intended to mean within the sanctuary as a whole, and not within the most holy place exclusively, for only the high priest was permitted to enter the most holy place.

Placing these three statements together, we see that the conclusion is inescapable that the three define the same thing. “The vessels of the sanctuary and the altar.” “The sanctuary and the altar.” “The altar, and within the veil.”

When we turn to the New Testament, we find that in presenting to the Hebrews the great theme of Christ’s atoning work, the writer of the epistle mentions the veil three times. On two of these occasions he indicates to what it is that he refers when he uses the word “veil.” One of these is in Hebrews 9:3, where, in describing the earthly sanctuary, he says: “After the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the holiest of all!”

In this instance he positively locates the veil mentioned as between the apartments of the sanctuary. But his use of the distinguishing term “second,” plainly indicates that he was aware of the existence of a first veil.

Another instance is found in Hebrews 10:20, where he clearly states that it is to the flesh of our Lord that he refers as the veil. This reference to the flesh of our Lord as the veil will be more clearly understood if we recall that the veils of the sanctuary were not to keep the people from God, but to enable them to draw near. It is impossible for depraved humanity to come into the unveiled presence of God and not perish. It was just as impossible for Jesus to come in His glory to bring us to God. We could not have endured His brightness. He therefore veiled His glory with flesh, and by this new and living way, with the unendurable glory veiled by His flesh, and having Him as our High Priest, we are able to draw near in full assurance of faith.

The other reference to the veil in the book of Hebrews is without indication as to which of the two veils is intended. It occurs in Hebrews 6:19, which, with the succeeding verse, reads as follows. “Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entered into that within the veil. Where the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.”

In examining these two verses, it is first to be noticed that the author is not writing about the veil, but about the sure and steadfast hope which entered into that within the veil as an anchor of the soul. Therefore we should not read the passage as if it were written to explain either the veil or the location of Christ in His service within the sanctuary. The reference to Jesus in verse 20 is by way of assurance to us in laying hold of sure and steadfast hope.

In this sixth chapter of the epistle, the appeal is made for advancement toward perfection and steadfastness of faith. Observe the first appeal of the chapter: “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection;” and also his expression of desire in the eleventh and twelfth verses: “We desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. That you be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

These people were diligent in acts of ministry to the saints. The appeal is now made for the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. It is based on the immutability of God’s promise to Abraham, which the Lord had confirmed by an oath. The writer shows that God is working out that promise, through the priesthood of Christ. In evidence of this is offered the fact that Jesus already had entered upon the work of His priesthood in the sanctuary in heaven, made a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.

To interpret the expression, “within the veil,” used without qualification, as it is in this passage, to mean “within the most holy place,” would be very unsafe in view of the foregoing facts. To conclude arbitrarily that the words must be so interpreted, is to fail of recognizing that God has clearly used them otherwise. In view of God’s use of precisely the same expression with reference to the first veil, it is reasonable to conclude that when a New Testament writer uses these same words without qualification, they should be understood to refer to the same veil as that to which God has plainly applied them in the Old Testament.

Throughout this epistle to the Hebrews a number of passages tell us into what it was that Jesus had entered. These should not be ignored in seeking to understand Hebrews 6:19, 20. They occur in their

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sequence thus: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession!" Hebrews 4:14.

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. A Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 8:1,2.

"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us!" Hebrews 9:12.

"Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Hebrews 9:24.

All these passages refer to the entry of Christ upon His priestly ministry in heaven. They show that Jesus had gone into heaven, and had entered the sanctuary, there to perform His priestly service according to the manner in which it was prefigured by the copy on earth. In the Holy places? Most certainly! But in each according to the order already clearly marked out in the epistle to the Hebrews and in other scriptures.

If the expression, "within the veil," in Hebrews 6:19, is to be interpreted to mean in the most holy place only, and thus to compel the belief that Jesus immediately after His ascension entered upon that phase of His priestly work which was typified by the service on the Day of Atonement in the most holy place of the earthly sanctuary, well might inquiry be made as to when He had accomplished that phase of His priestly work that was typified by the service of the priest throughout the year in the holy place of the earthly sanctuary.

It has already been shown that the priesthood of Christ could not begin until after His incarnation. It has been shown, too, that He was prepared for His priesthood, not merely by being born in the flesh, but by the things that He suffered. He was qualified to be such a priest as our need demanded, not merely by being born in Bethlehem, but by enduring temptations at Nazareth, in the wilderness, throughout His ministry, in Gethsemane, at His cruel trial, and on the cross of Calvary, until He had been tempted in all points, was touched with the feeling of all our infirmities, and had endured unto death. When, then, did He minister in priestly service in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary if He did not do so after His ascension to heaven?

It has also been shown that the service of the priesthood in the holy place of the sanctuary is precedent to and preparatory for the work done in the most holy place. How, then, could Christ have entered at once into the most holy place to perform the part of His priestly service which must be accomplished there, without first serving in the holy place after He had been made a priest?

In the typical service, which was a shadow of the heavenly, no feature of the work done in the holy place was accomplished without blood. It was there that the priest made atonement for each individual penitent with the blood of the sacrifice. Has all this been ignored in the antitype? Or has it all been accomplished in some previous age without either the blood of the atonement or the priest of the oath?

All these and many other equally serious questions arise for settlement the moment the expression "within the veil" in Hebrews 6:19 is interpreted to mean "in the most holy place." Any answer to those questions which supports that interpretation brings confusion at once to our understanding of important and clearly taught doctrines of the Bible, and most of all to the doctrine of the atonement. Thus it will be seen at once to be important that we do not misunderstand this particular passage of Scripture, or take such meaning from it that we are unable to harmonize it with other clear statements of God's word.

Now if we look again at the setting of the statement in the chapter where it occurs, we will see how strained such an interpretation really is.

The author is writing of the hope set before us, and says that we have this hope "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," and that it enters "within the veil," whither Jesus, as our High Priest, has entered for us. Hebrews 6:19, 20. We do not understand that this sure and steadfast hope, which is an anchor of our souls, centers first and particularly in the phase of Christ's priestly work which is accomplished in the most Holy Place, and ignores that which is accomplished in the holy place. Is it not rather that our hope centers first in the atoning work that Christ does for us in the holy place, making effective for us all that He died to bring to us. And, after that, in that which He does for us in the most holy place, but only there in proportion to our confidence that, by what Jesus our High Priest has wrought for us in the holy place, He has made us to be accepted in the Beloved?

What is this sure and steadfast hope that entered into that within the veil? It is the "better hope" by which we draw nigh to God. Hebrews 7:19.

It is the "hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." Titus 1:2. It is the hope of eternal life, according to which we are made heirs. Titus 3:7. It is the hope which is

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laid up for us in heaven, whereof we have “heard in the word of the truth of the gospel.” Colossians 1:5.

It is the “lively hope,” unto which we have been begotten “by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven” for us. 1 Peter 1:3, 4. It is the hope which “we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entered into that within the veil.”

The hope mentioned in Hebrews 7:19 is contrasted with the law by which men were made priests under the old covenant. That law made nothing of the priesthood perfect, but thee bringing in of this better hope did make things perfect. By that hat hope “we draw nigh unto God!” In the twenty-fifth verse it is said that we come unto God by Christ. Does not this hope by which we draw nigh concern itself, then, with the whole ministry of Christ in the sanctuary?

It is in what Christ does for us through the blood of the atonement in the holy place that we have ground for hope in the judgment. Without the blood of the covenant wherewith we are sanctified, there remains only “a certain fearful looking for of, judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” Hebrews 10:27.

So then the sure and steadfast hope which is an anchor to the soul must of necessity enter into Christ’s priestly ministry in the holy place, for it is by that phase of His ministry that we draw nigh, and it also is by this hope that we draw nigh. Indeed it is by this very ministry that the hope is made sure and certain to us. The veil, therefore, within which Christ had entered at the time when the author wrote his epistle to the Hebrews, was the first veil, that is, the veil at the entrance to the whole sanctuary.

The reference to this hope which we have cited from Titus 1:2 is also illuminating. There it is mentioned as the hope of the promise. That which was promised is eternal life. The one who made the promise was God, who cannot lie. The time when the promise was made is stated to be before the world began. This eternal life which was thus promised is in Christ Jesus. We have that eternal life only by having Him, for “he that bath the Son hath life; and he that bath not the Son of God hath not life.” 1 John 5:12.

We therefore cannot have the hope of eternal life as an anchor to our souls unless we accept Christ, who is our life, and are accepted of God in Him. Our acceptance of Christ and His obtaining our acceptance by the Father are a part of our experience which is made possible only by the mediation of Christ in our behalf in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. The work accomplished in the most holy place confirms and seals for eternity that which has been done for us in the holy place. We therefore should understand the expression, “within the veil,” in Hebrews 6:19, to mean within the sanctuary as a whole, for the hope of eternal life, which is an anchor to the soul, takes hold upon the whole of Christ’s priestly mediation for us in both apartments of the sanctuary.

Noticing for a moment the other citation in Titus 3:7, we find it reads thus: “That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life!”

By this passage we see that the possibility of becoming heirs according to the hope of eternal life rests upon a work of justification being wrought for us. This sure and steadfast hope, which is an anchor to the soul, must, therefore, enter “within, the veil” into the place where justification is obtained for the penitent. This most certainly is a work wrought by our High Priest in the holy place. Therefore we should understand that the veil within which this hope has entered is the veil at the door of the holy place!

Twice in the Old Testament Scriptures the Lord has called the curtain at the door of the holy place “the veil” in Numbers 18:7, as already stated in this chapter, and again in Leviticus 21:23. In the latter passage God is giving direction forbidding the physically deformed of the seed of Aaron to officiate in the priest’s office. Observe its statement: “No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire: he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God. He shall eat the bread of his God, both of the most holy, and of the holy. Only he shall not go in unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar, because he hath a blemish; that he profane not My sanctuaries: for I the Lord do sanctify them.” Leviticus 21:21-23.

This expression, “unto the veil, nor come nigh unto the altar,” is equivalent to the one in Numbers 18:7, “everything of the altar and within the veil,” and, like it, indicates the altar and the entire sanctuary.

The writer of the epistle is, therefore, not without authoritative precedent in his use of the words “within the veil” when writing in Hebrews 6:19 of entrance to the whole sanctuary through the curtain into the holy place. The seventh chapter of the epistle strongly indicates that the whole priesthood of Christ began after His ascension, and the eighth chapter begins by saying: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”

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So then it is evident that this hope, which is an anchor to the soul, takes hold of the whole priestly ministry of Christ.

With rejoicing we accept the assurance that, though it still is “set before us,” that hope has been made sure and steadfast, not only by the oath of God by which the promise was immutably confirmed, but also by the mediation ministry of our Lord, at “the altar, and within the veil,” where, in both first and second apartments of the heavenly sanctuary, His blood “speaks better things than that of Abel.”

God, who “cannot lie,” has pledged us eternal life in Christ Jesus. “Blessed,” then, “be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that faded not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:3-5, 10-13.

“Christ being come a High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood” hath “entered in once into the holy place, having obtained etern4redemption for us.” Hebrews 9:11, 12.

THE THRONE OF THE MAJESTY ON HIGH

IN the summing up of the things presented in the first seven chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews, these words are used: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum. We have such a High Priest, who is set on the, right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens!” Hebrews 8:1. With somewhat similar phrasing our attention has already been drawn to the fact that Christ, “when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” Hebrews 1:1

Again in Hebrews 12:1, 2, in an altogether different relationship, the same fact is restated in almost the same words. In the appeal to us, in view of the great cloud of witnesses that have been called to our minds in the eleventh chapter, to run with patience the race set before us, it is declared that after enduring the cross, Christ “is set down at the right hand of the throne of God!”

In one of these passages it is stated that Christ “is set on the right hand of the throne.” In another it is stated that He “is set down at the right hand of the throne.” While in the third it is stated that He “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty, on high.”

Each of these three passages very clearly has reference to an event which occurred this side of the death of our Lord. He is equally clear that this event is associated with the priesthood of Christ. They all agree that the place of the exalted Savior, in heaven is at the right hand of the throne of God.

On the other hand, we find in Revelation 3:21, that the place there assigned Jesus is not at the right hand of the throne, but in the throne, We note, too, that it mentions two thrones. Observe its statement: “To him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne!”

Again in the fourth and fifth chapters of the book of Revelation we have frequent references to the throne. In an, the word “throne” occurs seventeen times in these two chapters. In the fourth chapter, where the word is found twelve times, a detailed description of the throne there referred to is given. It was after a door in heaven had been opened that this throne was seen, It was a throne that “was set” in heaven, and One sat on the throne. The appearance of the One who sat on the throne was as “a jasper and a sardine stone” (red stones). There was a rainbow round the throne like an emerald (a bright green). Around the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and on these were twenty-four elders clothed in white, with crowns of gold.

Out of the throne proceeded lightning, and thundering, rind voices, and seven lamps of fire were burning before it. These are described as the seven Spirits of, God. Before the throne was a sea of glass, clear as crystal, and around the throne were four living creatures (A. R. V.). These creatures differed in facial features, but were alike in that they were full of eyes, and each had six wings. In the hand of Him who sat on the throne was a book which was sealed with seven seals.

A, strong angel was then heard calling for one who was worthy to loose the seals. No one in

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heaven or in earth was able to open the book or even to look on it. But when the prophet despaired because no one worthy to open the book was found, one of the elders bade him, "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!"

Then the prophet "beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures [A. R. V.], and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain!" The Lamb "came, and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne,"

There can be no question as to who it is that is here spoken of as "a Lamb as it had been slain." It is our gracious Lord Jesus. Neither can there be any question that He is not the one "that sat upon the throne." It is evident that He came to take the book from the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Being in the midst of this group, made up of the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures, it was necessary for Him to come to Him that sat on the throne in order to take the book out of His right hand. The prophet appears to have seen the throne very distinctly, for his description of it is quite in detail. He is definite in his statement that One sat in the throne. He is definite in each of the four references that he makes to that One as "Him that sat upon the throne." He is just as definite when he refers to that One as "He that sat," and not less definite when he mentions both Father and Son, saying, "Unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." It, then, would appear that this is not the throne of which Jesus spoke when He said, "I am set down with My Father in His throne."

That we are so to understand is made clear in Revelation 7:1-17. For after reading there of the throne and of the great multitude standing before it, we find the Father and the Son mentioned in the same way: "Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Again, in verse 15 we find the same definiteness of expression as in chapters 4 and 5, regarding the One that sat on the throne, in the words, "He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them."

But verse 17 mentions very definitely that Jesus is in the midst of that throne upon which the Father was seen sitting. It goes to show, however, that, while a good deal has been said about the throne of God in the Bible, there is a great deal more relating to it that is very mysterious. It goes to show too, that we are very little warranted, in coming to conclusions beyond that which is plainly stated regarding it in God's word. Especially are we in danger when we make our understanding of, an important doctrine' to rest upon a theory as to the throne's location, or upon our own tragically imperfect conceptions of what it is and how and where, and what are its associations, and what its greatness and its glory.

God has been pleased to reveal some things regarding it. The rest we shall not know until with clearer vision and more perfect understanding we learn in the great school of the hereafter. Until then all guessing and theorizing and attempts to explain what God has not revealed, are likely to be wholly wrong. They therefore cannot be relied upon as a basis for sound doctrinal belief. They should not be trusted in the teaching of doctrine.

In the long ago the Lord was pleased to give to the prophet Ezekiel views of His throne. In the prophet's recital of these it is evident that he experienced difficulty in commanding language to describe adequately what he saw. But from the description that he has given it is clear that God's throne is not merely a fixed seat in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary.

Ezekiel does not say where the throne was when he saw it, but he was by the river Chebar when the vision was given him. In the first chapter of his book he describes the four living creatures at length, and the wheels that "were so high that they were dreadful!" The wheels are said to have moved in unison with the living creatures, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels.

Upon the heads of the living creatures was the "likeness of the firmament as the color of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above. And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other!" Every one covered his body with two of his wings on each side. "And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of His joints even upward, and from the appearance of His loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord."

In this description of the throne we are given four distinct features that are relatively located. But by associating with them the vision of the prophet Isaiah we are given an additional feature, and its relation to these four is clearly given. While Isaiah's description of the throne is brief, it is interesting and vivid:

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and

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His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at, the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke?" Isaiah 6:1-4.

We now have cited from prophets of both Old and New Testaments three different visions of the throne. While it is clear that there are points of similarity in the descriptions given, they also vary widely in very essential things. From the descriptions of the prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah, however, we clearly understand that, as they saw it, the throne was overshadowed by the seraphim who were above it, while it was above the firmament which was over the heads of the living creatures. This would place them relatively as they appear in the accompanying diagram.

Such a description of the throne is so wholly unlike that of the mercy seat in the most holy place of the sanctuary, that it is impossible to conclude that they are identical. Indeed, there is no proper ground anywhere in the Holy Scriptures for such a conclusion. When God's throne is referred to, it is called a "throne." When the ark is referred to, it is called the "ark."

The throne which Ezekiel saw when he was by the river Chebar appears again in chapters 10 and 11 of his prophecy. There the glory of the Lord is seen going up from the cherubim, on the right side of the house, to stand over the threshold of the house. Observe the words of the prophet: "Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory." Ezekiel 10:4.

Then we find the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold, having moved to the east gate of the Lord's house. Verses 18, 19. Next we find it gone up from the midst of the city, and standing upon the mountain on the east side of the city. Ezekiel 11:22, 23.

Now lest there should be any misunderstanding regarding the expression, "the glory of the Lord," in this connection, and its relation to the throne should be questioned, we should be reminded that Ezekiel, in his first chapter, after describing the throne and Him that sat on it, says, That "was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord." We therefore conclude that since the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord is plainly revealed by the prophet as moving from place to place, so the throne of God is a movable throne.

The living creatures seen by Ezekiel seem to be the same as those seen by John, but whereas Ezekiel saw them with the firmament above their heads, and the throne above the firmament, John saw them "in the midst of the throne and round about the throne."

The cherubim in Ezekiel's vision bore the glory of the Lord from beneath the throne, but in the most holy place of the sanctuary they are above the mercy seat, overshadowing it with their wings. There the Lord communed with Moses "from between the two cherubim." Exodus 25:22.

In all three visions we may understand that the throne is in the house of God. This is indicated both by the references to "the house" and "the temple," and by some of the things associated with it in the descriptions given. But Ezekiel definitely saw it move both to and from the house, and John saw it "set in heaven." In Ezekiel's description there is nothing to suggest its association with a work of priesthood, while in John's vision it is definitely associated with a priestly service, as indicated by the expression, "Lamb as it had been slain."

With all their similarities and distinctions, however, there is nothing in these three visions to indicate that the throne of "the Majesty in the heavens" is in the most holy place. In John's vision there are definite indications that the throne which he describes was in the holy place of the sanctuary when he saw it. The three things that are very clear in all that is said, are that God's throne is not immovably fixed in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary; that the throne of God and the ark are not identical, and that there is more than one throne in heaven. The prophet Daniel saw thrones (plural) set for judgment. Daniel 7:9, 10. Christ, it is said, "shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne." Zechariah 6:13.

But there is still another interesting feature of distinction that we should notice before we leave the subject. The throne which Ezekiel saw was "as the appearance of a sapphire stone." Ezekiel 1:26. The sapphire is pure blue. This certainly cannot be the throne from which judgment is given in the most holy in the sanctuary, for John in vision "saw thrones" (plural) set for judgment (Revelation 20:4), as had Daniel, and he "saw a great white throne." and he "saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. And the books were opened: and another, book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man

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according to their works.” Revelation 20:11-13.

This “great white throne,” which clearly is the throne of judgment, is evidently prepared for its special work, for David prophesied of it in these words. “The Lord shall endure forever: He hath prepared His throne for judgment. And He shall judge the world in righteousness, He shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.” Psalm 9:7, 8.

With this amount of Scripture statement before us, then, it is proper to say that no one is warranted in, concluding that because Christ, having purged our sins, “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,” He therefore entered at that time the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. There being more than one throne in heaven, it manifestly is wrong to conclude that Christ must be understood to act as if there were but one, and that one immovably fixed in the inner apartment of the sanctuary.

May the good Spirit of God lead us far from such conclusions, and keep our hearts from straying into the tangled ways of error, where the glimmering of human theories is sometimes sadly mistaken for the torch of eternal truth!

THE PLEDGE OF ETERNAL TRUTH

TWICE in the book of Revelation its writer directs our attention to the fact that at the close of the judgment the temple of God in heaven is opened. In the first of these passages we are called to note that the ark of His testament was seen in the temple: “The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.” Revelation 11:19. In the second instance the whole temple is spoken of as “the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven.” Revelation 15:5. As we read this passage we are reminded that the language is very similar to that employed by the Lord in speaking to Moses in Numbers 1:50, where He calls the earthly sanctuary “the tabernacle of testimony.”

In “the ark of His testament,” within that “tabernacle of the testimony,” was the law of Ten Commandments, the rule of God’s government, and the standard of His judgment. It is significant that in connection with the judgment in which that law is the standard, the ark of His testament is brought to our view in “the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven.” In the ark is the law of the Lord. Its testimony is in agreement with the witness of those who stand on the sea of glass and proclaim in song the holiness of God. Revelation 15:2-4. In the bosom of that law God has placed the seal of His own righteousness, and given us an abiding pledge that His truth shall stand forever.

As we examine the pages of the Bible, we discover that four great cardinal truths are revealed, namely, that Jehovah is the Creator of all things. That man is a sinner because of disobedience, and consequently is lost; that Jesus is man’s Savior; that those whom He saves will inherit the earth made new, and inhabit it forever. Around these four salient facts all the story of the Scriptures is unfolded

A large proportion of its message is devoted to the revelation of the character and power and wisdom Of God as Creator, thus manifesting Him to His creatures as being worthy of their love, honor, thanksgiving, adoration, and absolute obedience.

The fact of man’s sin and the consequent alienation of man from God, is also clearly revealed. It is possible that the human mind never has plumbed fully the depths of debased misery into which sin has hurled us, or never has measured the distance to which sin has removed us from God. But the Bible reveals it, and in that revelation we see ourselves, not merely in estrangement from our Creator, but hostile and hopeless and lost.

It is then that the Savior is set forth in its story, bearing our sins, suffering our woes, descending to the very lowest level of human need, there to taste death for all men. Then, having burst the bands of death, He is revealed ascending up on high, where as High Priest and Mediator He intercedes for us. He is revealed, too, coming again to gather His own beloved and redeemed ones, to take them to be with Him in eternal habitations forever.

With the discovery of these four great facts the query very naturally presents itself, How may we, know that these four important things are true? Is there anything by which their truthfulness is pledged to us? How may we know that Jehovah is indeed the Creator? Has He left us anything to which we can look, and in the experience of which we can share, and thereby be assured that He did indeed create all things? Thank God that He has indeed left us such a memorial of His creative act; We read of it in the second chapter of the Bible:

““On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in

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it He had rested from all His work Which God created and made.”

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth! By the power of His word He laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever.” At its completion He “saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was, very good.” In six days He had accomplished the whole work of creation and on the seventh day He rested. Because He had so rested from His creative act, He blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it as a day of rest.

The voice of nature is heard by the soul telling us that there is a Creator. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork. Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge.” Psalm 19:1,2. These all declare as with one voice that there is a Creator, but it is the seventh-day Sabbath that speaks to us with the voice of assurance, because it identifies the Creator of all these things as Jehovah, who made them for His own pleasure.

Knowing our frame, and understanding our tendency to forget the things that it is most important for us to know, God has graciously given the Sabbath to keep us reminded of the great basic truth that it was He who made the heavens and the earth. For this purpose He has commanded us to keep the Sabbath holy, that we may be kept continually mindful of the creative power and purpose of Jehovah. His reasons for making holy the Sabbath and for commanding men to keep it holy, are clearly indicated in His law:

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it!” Exodus 20:8-11.

The Sabbath, therefore, is the thing which God has made to keep alive in us knowledge of and faith in His creative act. This is all the more needful for us because our faith in Him, as it concerns any other of His acts, is strong only in proportion to our belief in Him as the Scriptures first reveal Him, the Creator of the heaven and the earth.

The voice of the Sabbath was heard by man in his earliest years, and never since has there been a time when it was silent. Its testimony to the truth that Jehovah is the Creator is now more urgently needed than ever before. In these days of almost universal unbelief of basic Bible truth, when the teachings of evolution firmly grip the minds of men, its influence must still bless our lives by directing our faith strongly in the essential belief that Jehovah is the Creator of the heaven and the earth.

In the beginning God made man upright. He endowed him with high intellectual powers, and placed him in dominion over the earth. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in speaking of this, said: “Thou made him a little lower than the angels; Thou crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of Thy hands; Thou has put all things in subjection under his feet.” Hebrews 2:7, 8.

While he remained true to God, man was to have dominion. But his ruler ship could continue only as long as his allegiance to God remained true. “Obedience, perfect and perpetual, was the condition of eternal happiness.”

But as the story proceeds it is shown that a change took place. It continues: “For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.” Hebrews 2:8.

Man lost his dominion, and this is the evidence that he had become disobedient. Other scriptures are very direct in their statements concerning this. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God!” “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed. upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Romans 3:23; 5:12.

Throughout its entire story, after its first two chapters, the Bible speaks of man as being in disobedience, a fallen creature whose nature is corrupt, and whose thoughts are only evil continually. The evidence of life wholly supports the testimony .of Scripture on this fact, yet the existence of sin is boldly challenged by millions living today. How, then, may we know indeed that man is a sinner? There is but one thing which supplies this information, the law of the Lord.

“What shall we say then?” says Paul. “Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I hid not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet!” Romans 7:7. Again: “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:20.

In view of this declaration there is no way of knowing sin but by the law. In the very bosom of the law is the commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” Were it not for that commandment there would be no statement in the law to let men know who it is that is thus commanding their obedience.

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But when obedience to the Sabbath commandment is rendered, there is no uncertainty regarding the One who thus requires our undivided allegiance. That commandment alone of all the law gives assurance of power to save the transgressor.

The object of the law is to bring us to Christ for salvation. "Christ is the end [object] of the law for righteousness to every one that believes." Romans 10:4. His willingness to save is a demonstrated fact, for it was to seek and to save that which was lost that He left the glory of the eternal world. His ability to save is unqualifiedly asserted in the Scriptures. But on faith in His ability, as well as His willingness, to save us from sin, we are required to give up all that this world offers. How, then, may we know that Jesus can save us from sin? It is interesting to observe the assurance which God offers us upon this matter in His word. Observe it in the following passages:

"Thus said the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and He that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine!" Isaiah 43:1.

"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel. For thou art My servant: I have formed thee; thou art My servant: O Israel, thou shall not be forgotten of Me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee!" Isaiah 44:21, 22.

The assurance we have that Jesus can save, us is in the fact that He it is who created us. Of Him it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." Christ, the eternal Word, by whom Jehovah made all things, is the Redeemer of sinful man, and His power to redeem is manifest in His works of creation.

The act of redemption is a re-creative act. The strongest proof possible of power to re-create is surely the act of creation. That the act of creation is His we are assured by the fact of the Sabbath which commemorates the act. By the same commemorative token we are assured that in Christ's redemptive work in our behalf there is salvation to the uttermost.

Our salvation from sin will be complete, however, only when we have obtained inheritance among the saints in light. This inheritance is eternal, and is to be ours in a world without end. The constant claim of the Scriptures is, that the things which we receive in the gospel are eternal. These we are to enjoy forever with the eternal life which the gospel has brought to us. The promise of these eternal things finds its fulfillment in Christ, and it is said of Him that His years shall not fail. The promise of eternal inheritance is very definite. According to that promise, we "look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness!" 2 Peter 3:13.

But how shall we know that eternity will endure? How shall we know that the new creation will not also pass out of our possession? Note the assurance upon this matter which is provided for us in God's word: "As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, said the Lord." Isaiah 66:22,23.

Thus the Sabbath of Jehovah is God's constant memorial of creation. It is man's constant assurance of the power of Jesus to save from sin. It is Christ's constant sign of sanctifying power in the gospel. "Verily My Sabbaths you shall keep: for it is a sign between Me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord that does sanctify you." Exodus 31:13. It is not only in the heart of the law, which is God's standard in the judgment, but it is also His abiding guaranty that eternity will endure. Since, then, the command to keep the Sabbath holy is in the bosom of God's law, should we wonder that Christ has decreed that not one jot or tittle shall pass from the law?

Thank God that the Sabbath, ever directing our thoughts to Him who made us and has redeemed us to Himself by His own precious blood, is to remain with His people throughout time and to all eternity. As a divine pledge of all that is essentially and eternally true, God has made the Sabbath for man.

"Blessed," therefore, "is the man that does this, and the son of man that lays hold on it; that keeps the Sabbath from polluting it, and keeps His hand from doing any evil." Isaiah 56:2.

"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable. And shall honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure, nor speaking your own words. Then shall thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father. for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah 58:13, 14.

THE GLORY TO BE REVEALED

A GOOD deal is said in the Scriptures about the glory of Christ. Jude in this general epistle speaks about Christ's being able to keep us from falling, and to present us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Verse 24. In the beginning it was the privilege of man to live in the glory of his Creator; but sin separated him from the presence of God, and the glory departed from him. It is the purpose of God in Christ not only to take away our sin, the thing which took the glory from us, but also to present w "faultless" before the presence of His glory. For this experience of being presented before the presence of His glory we need earnestly to seek an adequate preparation.

No man can possibly be presented to the glory of our Savior's presence and live, without such a preparation as the Lord Himself has prescribed. This is plainly revealed by Paul. Writing of those who have not accepted the gospel, he has said: "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.

In speaking of the mystery of iniquity, again he has said: "The mystery of iniquity does already work: only he who now lets will let, until he is taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with, the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." 2 Thessalonians 2:7,8.

It is thus seen that though the glory in which man once lived has now, through sin, departed, there is a time coming when that glory will return. At that time there will be but two classes of men—those who are prepared to meet the Lord in peace, and those who are unprepared. The effect of His glory upon these two classes will be widely different. To those who have made the preparation it will bring "exceeding joy." But to those who are unprepared it will bring unmeasured anguish, with, "everlasting destruction."

This return of glory will take place at the Second Coming of Christ: "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory," Matthew 25:31.

The first and second advents of Christ are often mentioned together in the statement of the Scriptures. This fact stands out with striking clearness in such passages as Hebrews 9:28: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation!"

At Christ's first advent He appeared for the purpose of putting "away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." He will come the second time to bring eternal salvation to those who love His appearing. At His first advent He came in humiliation. At His second advent He will come in His glory. By those who love His appearing, His Second Coming will be greeted with super abounding joy. But had it not been for His life in the flesh and His shameful death on the cross, the "Presence of His glory" would be unendurable to all men.

The Savior's suffering in the flesh, and His return in power and great glory, are both essential to our being presented by Him "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." It was this important truth that the disciples failed to grasp. Their disappointment at the sufferings of Christ was of the keenest.

As two of them went in the way to Emmaus, "they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near, and went with them. But their eyes were held that they should not know Him.

"And He said unto them, What manner of communications are these that you have one to another, as you walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto Him, Art Thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and has not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

"And He said unto them, What things? And they said unto Him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and have crucified Him. But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yes, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not His body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that He was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said: but Him they saw not.

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“Then He said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to, enter into His glory?” Luke 24:13-26.

Well, indeed, might the Savior also judge us slow of heart and unbelieving in regard to this important truth, for it stands out in the Old Testament prophecies with startling clearness. In the very first prophecy concerning the coming of the Savior, it is clearly shown that preliminary to the bruising of the serpent's head is the bruising of the heel of the Seed of the woman by the serpent. The bruising of the serpent's head by the Seed of the woman without the bruising of the heel of the woman's Seed by the serpent, would have accomplished nothing for our deliverance from the power of sin.

Ungodliness is not turned away from us by killing our enemy, but, by changing us from what we are because of sin to what we can become in Christ Jesus through His righteousness. This change is brought about through the death of Christ. Hope, therefore, centered for us, not in that part of the prophecy which foretold the suffering of the serpent, but wholly in that part which predicted the sufferings of the Seed of the woman.

In the fact that He who was to suffer for us is identified as the Seed of the woman, we have the story told of His coming to take our flesh and through His suffering to obtain our deliverance. Thus in one verse, the very first prophecy of the prophetic word, we have a wonderful revelation of God's purpose to recover man from his lost condition. When we turn to the New Testament, we find that in the epistle to the Hebrews, the same story is gathered up and retold in other phrasing. With almost equal brevity it is written: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage!” Hebrews 2:14, 15.

Hence it is seen that in many scriptures of both Old and New Testaments the important truth is impressed that the hope of our entering into glory with Christ rests upon the suffering by which He has redeemed us from sin that in the beginning took away our glory. It was not necessary for Christ to take human flesh in order to obtain glory. He had glory with the Father before He came to tabernacle in the flesh. This glory He had before the world was. It was given Him by the Father, and was based on the love of the Father for Him.

“And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Your own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.” “Father, I will that they also, whom Thou has given, Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou has given Me: for Thou loved Me before the foundation of the world!” John 17:5, 24.

The flesh of Christ, therefore, was not to be a means of obtaining glory for Him, but rather to serve as a veil to shroud, His glory, that through Him we might draw near to God.

This was the first lesson taught us in the type of the Scriptures. While Eden still remained on earth, though man had been driven from it, the glory of the Lord still revealed itself at the gate of the garden. The way of approach to that glory was through the blood of the sacrifice. “And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.” Genesis 4:4.

When the sanctuary was established among the children of Israel, the glory of the Lord dwelt in the most holy place. With unmistakable clearness the lesson there impressed upon the hearts of God's people was, that the one way of approach to the presence of that glory was through the blood of the sacrifice ministered in the sinner's behalf by priestly hands.

Now, Jesus having taken our flesh, and offered up Himself in our behalf, and become “a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle,” the lesson remains the same: We have “boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. And having a great Priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith.” Hebrews 8:2; 10:19-22, R. V.

At the gate of Eden, Cain, attempting to draw near by a way of his own, and refusing to approach through the blood of---the sacrifice, was not accepted, and went out from the presence of the Lord.

In the wilderness, the soul that “counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing,” and sought no approach to God through the blood, was cut off from among the people. “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” Hebrews 10:29.

It is a fearful thing to contemplate coming up to the day of our Lord's return without having made preparation of heart for that great event. If we have not then drawn near by the blood of the covenant,

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fearfulness will surprise us, and we shall be without shelter “from the wrath of the Lamb!” Revelation 6:16,17.

When the world shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, it will be altogether too late for those who have neglected their preparation, to prepare then to meet Him. Well will it be for those who then can say in their hearts, “I have heard Thee in a time accepted: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation!” 2 Corinthians 6:2. Well might we ask ourselves the serious question, and all the more anxiously as the tokens of that day are becoming increasingly impressive, “Who may abide the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appears?” Micah 3:2.

Now it is that having accepted Christ, and having drawn near through His precious blood, with much concern of soul, we should be careful to commend ourselves to God in all things. “Giving no offense in anything,” but “by pureness, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,” let us “walk as children of light,” “proving what is acceptable unto the Lord,” and having “no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness!” 2 Corinthians 6:3,6, 7; Ephesians 6:8, 10, 11. For it is a fearful, thing to fall, unsanctified by the blood of the Sacrifice, into the hands of the living God.

In the day of Christ’s Second Coming His shed blood will have a widely different meaning to the two classes of earth’s inhabitants who shall witness His appearing. Those who have disregarded its appeal and its power will see Christ at that time as the executor of great wrath, while those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb, and have received its power to cleanse and to keep them, will see Him as their great Deliverer. The appearance of Christ in that day will strike the hearts of millions with indescribable terror, but will bring to His own dear children joy inexpressible.

When He issues from heaven with all the celestial armies following Him, He will be clothed in vesture dipped in blood. On His vesture and on His thigh will be written, “King of kings, and Lord of lords!” Revelation 19:13, 14, 16. When the wicked behold Him, they recognize Him as the “Lamb.” They regard the day of His coming as “the great day of His wrath.” In that day they find unendurable the glory of the One whose blood they have scorned, and cry to the rocks and mountains to fall on them and hide them “from the face of Him that sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb.” Revelation 6:16,17.

What a contrast is that to the scene pictured for us by the revelator in the next chapter:

“After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kingdoms, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knows. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple: and He that sits on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” Revelation 7:9-17.

It is because that other great multitude, in which are “the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man” (Revelation 6:15), have neglected their own salvation that they are unable to endure the glory of the Savior at His coming.

It is a tragic mistake for men to think that they can make preparation for such an hour by depending upon their own good deeds for favor with God. Equally tragic is it for us to believe that having had our sins of the past remitted through the blood of Christ, we are required to develop a righteousness of our own which makes us acceptable to God now, and will assure us of Christ’s acceptance of us in the day of His coming. In reality, the only righteousness that is now, and will then be, acceptable to God, is the righteousness which we have by the gift of God, the righteousness of Christ which we have by faith. Our own righteousness never has been sufficient to win us God’s favor. Dare we trust it in the hour when we must stand in the full blaze of that coming glory?

When the priestly work of atonement which Christ is now performing for us in the heavenly

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sanctuary closes, human probation will end, and that will be prior to the Second Coming of Jesus. In the period between the close of probation and Christ's second advent there will be no intercessor for man. Spiritual darkness will envelop the unsanctified of earth, for the Spirit of God will then have been withdrawn from them.

With the restraint of the Holy Spirit removed from the wicked, the inhabitants of the earth will be plunged into a time of great trouble. During this time we must live before God without an intercessor. Some have the mistaken idea that then the righteous must depend on the perfection of their own lives to stand until Christ appears. This is in no sense true. The apostle John has made it clear that we shall have boldness in that day, not by anything of our own, and not by anything they have done, but by being in God and having God in us. "He that dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment." 1 John 4:16, 17.

We have boldness now through the blood of the Sacrifice. We shall have boldness then through the same precious blood. The power that has redeemed us, is the same as that which will keep us, now, and then, and forever. It is not of ourselves, but all of Him who has loved us and washed us in His own precious blood. Now and to all eternity He is our substitute and surety and Savior. When in the eternal world we reign with Him, His head and hands and feet and side will witness to the fact that the power which has redeemed us and made us kings and priests unto God reached us in the crimson tide which flowed from His wounded side in the dark day of His humiliation. Throughout those eternal years, when His glory shall cover the heavens, and His praise shall fill the earth, when His brightness shall be as the light, "bright beams" will come "out of His side," and there, forever, will be "the hiding of His power." Habakkuk 3:3,4, margin.

"That pierced side whence flowed the crimson stream that reconciled man to God,-there is the Savior's glory, there 'the hiding of His power.' 'Mighty to save,' through the sacrifice of redemption, He was therefore strong to execute justice upon them that despised God's mercy. And the tokens of His humiliation are His highest honor; through the eternal ages the wounds of Calvary will show forth His praise, and declare His power. Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God. In the city of God 'there shall be no night.' None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning, and shall ever be far from its close. The glory of God and the Lamb, floods the Holy City with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day." - "The Great Controversy," pp., 674-676.

All this is for us through the righteousness of Christ alone. We should be constantly watchful against any spirit of yielding to the belief that because God has graciously pardoned our past, we therefore stand in the merits of our own cleansed life. Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians, urges Christians to "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh!" Our aim must be rather to "be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead!" Philippians 3:3, 9-11.

The assurance of the coming glory and the hope of its bringing to us "exceeding joy," send us always to Calvary. There is the place of confidence and assurance for all the future, for with the blood there shed, Christ our great High Priest is passed into the heavens, and before the Father is declaring His righteousness for us. Robed in that righteousness, thus declared to be ours, we shall not be ashamed before Him at His coming; for "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever!" Isaiah 32:17.

During the time of waiting for the return of our Lord, God gives to His children the earnest of the Spirit. This He places within us, where we are able to feel its impulses, sense its influence, and understand its moving. Paul, in speaking of this, wrote. "Now He which established us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts!" 2 Corinthians 1:21,22. Again in Romans 8:16, he wrote: "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God!" R. V.

That which the Spirit witnesses to in us is our son ship through the gift of Christ's righteousness. We know that we are the children of God because the Spirit of God bears testimony in us to that fact. This is the earnest of our heir ship, "our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." Ephesians 1:14. Have we this witness of the Spirit to that important fact? Do we have this "earnest of the Spirit in our hearts"? Is "the Spirit Himself" bearing "witness with our spirit, that we are the children of

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God"? Romans 8:16.

There is a vast difference between an outward profession and the witness of the Spirit with our spirit. There is a world of difference between mere pious hope and "the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Regardless of the profession that we make, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3.

It is the new birth that makes possible the witness of the Spirit. It is not necessary for a man to be born again to make a mere outward profession of goodness. It is not necessary for us even to die to sin to make such a claim. All that we need to do in that case, is to make over the old life until it can sustain an appearance of goodness. But that will never bring "the earnest of the Spirit" into our hearts. The best and the highest that the Spirit can do for us under those circumstances is to convince us of sin and warn us of judgment.

There must be sincere "repentance toward God and there must be earnest "faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ."

In the inward change brought about by the Holy Spirit in the new birth, these two elements are at work. Both represent a new attitude toward God on the part of the sinner, and both are absolutely essential to the witness of the Spirit within us. Neither one without the other will give us peace with God, or bring us the assurance that we are God's children. To repent ever so truly will not bring us peace and assurance, unless faith reaches out and obtains for us the righteousness of Him who did only those things that please God. On the other hand, faith in Christ cannot possibly bring us the witness of the Spirit unless there has been true repentance for sin.

Those who love the world, and at the same time claim to love Christ cannot have the witness of the Spirit that they are the children of God. The manifestation of a critical, selfish, un-Christ like spirit, is clear evidence that we do not have the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. If we cherish any sin, the Spirit will not bear witness that we are children of God, but will convince us that we are sinners. It will not give us assurance of peace, but will warn us of judgment, and speak to us: of, coming wrath. If sin in us is preventing the witness of the Spirit, then nothing but true repentance and faith toward Jesus can make it possible for the Spirit to testify that we are right with God. It is "he that believes on the Son of God" that "bath the witness in himself!" 1 John 5:10.

We are drawing near to that great day when Jesus shall come in all His glory with His holy angels. Let us, while it is still the day of salvation, repent of our sins, and turn with believing hearts toward the Lord, for "glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming, and whose names are written in the book of life." – "The Great Controversy" page 634.

"God is waiting to bestow the blessing of forgiveness, of pardon for iniquity, of the gifts of righteousness, upon all who will believe in His love and accept the salvation He offers. Christ is ready to say to the repenting sinner, 'Behold, I have caused your iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.' The blood of Jesus Christ is the eloquent plea that speaks in behalf of sinners. This blood 'cleanses from all sin.'

"Christ's love for His children is as tender as it is strong, and it is stronger than death; for He died to purchase our salvation, and to make us one with Him, mystically and eternally one. So strong is His love that it controls all His powers, and employs the vast resources of heaven in doing His people good. It is without variableness or shadow of turning-the same yesterday, today, and forever. Although sin has existed for ages, trying to counteract this love and obstruct its flowing earthward, it still flows in rich currents to those for whom Christ died.

"It should not be difficult to remember that the Lord desires you to lay your troubles and perplexities at His feet, and leave them there. Go to Him, saying: 'Lord, my burdens are too heavy for me to carry. Wilt Thou bear them for me?' And He will answer: 'I will take them. With everlasting will I have mercy upon thee. I will take your sins, and will give you peace. Banish no longer your self-respect; for I have bought you with the price of My own blood. You are Mine. Your weakened will I will strengthen. Your remorse for sin I will remove.'" - "Testimonies to Ministers," pp. 517-520.

The years of our pilgrimage here below have not been long, but they have been intensely bitter. Six thousand years have thus far been given to man, but they have all been darkened by sin. That which God ordained unto life and unalloyed happiness, has been found to be unto death through sin. But a glorious day is approaching, in which the hearts of God's children will forget their pain, and joy inexpressible will possess them forever. Until then the sweetest and truest things of earthly existence must end in separation and tears.

But blessed be God for the vision which His holy word has brought to us of a new earth, from

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which the former things are passed away. There the tabernacle of God will again be with men, and He will dwell among us, and be our God. Then He will, have wiped away forever all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death. Cruel to the uttermost have been the separations that we have had to endure at the hands of death, but, thank God, they are to end. For "He that sat upon the throne" has said, "Behold, I make all things new." "He which testifies these things said, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

"LET NOT YOUR HEART BE TROUBLED"

TWO thousand years have passed by since the angels sang of peace on earth and good will toward men. In that hour Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, but from that time until now, the earth has known comparatively little of the peace that Jesus came to bring. Wondering in their hearts, the shepherds, to whom the angels sang on that night, said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." Luke 2:15.

Doubtless those believing shepherds, though they found only a babe in a manger, expected that peace and good will would then spring up in the hearts of men, and they would see and enjoy the fruits of that peace of which they had so wonderfully heard. For they "returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them"

But not in their day was the peace that passes understanding to settle down upon the life of this earth, or the strivings of sin to cease. Disobedience, the fearful thing that had brought death to men, was yet to rule in the affairs of the world till sin itself should be put away through the sacrifice of the Prince of Peace.

More than seven centuries before those shepherds were born, God had spoken the yearning that He felt for His people, saying, "O that thou had hearkened to My commandments then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the, waves of the sea: thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before Me." Isaiah 48:18, 19.

Through all the years of His, life, He who, came to give peace and to bring good will to men, met little else but ill will in the attitude of men toward Him. Near the close of His life, He said sorrowfully to those who had left all to follow Him, "in the world you shall have tribulation," but immediately He added, "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." John 16:33. "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27.

He was about to leave His disciples in this world, knowing that the world that He came to help would hate them for no other reason than that they were His. "If the world hate you," He said, "you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." John 15:18, 19.

But "let not your heart be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for You. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." John 14:1-3.

Trouble there is to, be for us in this world. That cannot be avoided. But the hearts of God's children may be a domain of untroubled peace and confidence in the midst of the troubled life of this world. The basis of this peace is the hope of His glorious appearing. It was necessary that He go away. There was a great work of priestly mediation for Him to do before He could come again, but His return is sure. "If I go," He said, "I will come again." The fact, of His going is the pledge of His return.

He has now been gone almost two thousand years. The hearts, of His waiting children have often grown weary. The hope of the promise has sometimes faded. The hatred of the world has, intensified, but the longing of His children to be at rest is still very real. But, thank God, neither the lapse of time nor the attitude of men has been able to change the promise, and the yearning of His children to be with Him still finds comforting assurance in the words, "Where I am, there you may be also." "Yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." Hebrews 10:37.

The hands of time have seemed to move slowly, but at last in the march of events, we have been brought to the margin of the eternal world. That great shoreless eternity that we soon shall enter will be

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filled with all that the promise of our Lord is purposed to bring to us. Though “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him,” yet the eternal things of the promise are all infinitely more real than anything that we have ever sensed on earth.

The hope of the gospel of our returning Lord came to us, not in word only, but also in power and in much assurance, and we became followers of our Lord, having received His word with joy in the Holy Ghost. In the power of that word we have turned from the hopes and purposes of this world to wait for the Son of God from heaven. Let us therefore watch unto prayer, that we may be found ready in the day of His appearing.

In the meantime the Lord is a refuge for our storm-beaten hearts. He is a tender shepherd, guiding us over all the rough places in the pathway, and bearing us in His bosom up the steeps that we never could ascend unaided. He is a tower of strength for the strengthless, and a fountain of never-failing courage those that are downcast and well-nigh defeated. All this He is to us moment by moment, hour by hour, and day by day, that He may bring us to the eternal bourn that He has gone to prepare for us. That work of preparation will be complete when, through the sacrifice of Himself and His ministry in that heavenly sanctuary, He shall have put away sin forever.

He has gone away, but, blessed be His name, in thought and purpose and presence He is still with us. He is acquainted with our grief. He has borne our sorrows. While understanding the willingness of our spirits, He knows the weakness of our flesh, and in the most trying of our experiences His assuring words reach us. “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. In the secure haven of this His promise, then, our hearts may rest untroubled, for He that has promised is faithful, and is soon to bring to us a glorious fulfillment of all His good word to us.

Therefore, waiting ones, “let the peace of God rule in your hearts,” “for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and you yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding; that when He comes and knocks, they may open unto Him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He comes shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that He shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.” Colossians 3:15; Luke 12:32, 35-38.

In the hour of His own great trial, the thought of coming again to receive His own comforted Christ’s heart. “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” He said, but His mind was fixed upon “the joy that was set before Him.” Even when the high priest and his associates manifested their intense hatred of Him in that mock trial by which they condemned Him as a blasphemer, His thoughts were on the moment when He would receive us to Himself. The powers of evil appeared, to have the mastery at that moment, but the faith of our Redeemer did not fail. He was not discouraged. Beyond that hour, which He already had described as being the hour of His enemies and of the power of darkness, He looked to the time of His coming again, and said: “Hereafter shall you see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Matthew 26:64.

The world hated Him without a cause. It will hate us because we love Him. The way of preparation to meet Him leads farther and farther from the ways of the world as His coming draws near. It is to be expected, then, that in the world we must still have ever greater tribulation; but be of good cheer, He who is coming has already overcome the world, and when He appears, it will be to rule with power. “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory.” “Then shall the King say. Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” Matthews 25:31, 34.

Therefore while we still wait in this troubled world for the coming of our King, let the peace of God rule in our hearts, for this is our heritage in Christ Jesus. His words of committal and appeal are for us at this time as fully as they were for His disciples long ago. Again He says to His children, precious in His sight beyond all else that this earth holds, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives: give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”