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## The Offerings for Sin.

“Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death bath NO more dominion over Him. FOR in that He died, He died unto (for) sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto (for) sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Romans 6:9-11.

It is evident that not all people who love the Lord and understand a good measure of His plan of salvation are able to grasp the deep significance of the doctrine of the Sin Offering. The main difficulty seems to be that the teaching that the Lord's true people are accepted 'of God as the secondary offering for sin, as they sacrifice in the steps of Christ, is taken as repudiating the value of Christ's sacrifice. So strongly is this idea held by some that they have withdrawn from the fellowship of brethren with whom they agree on most other teachings of the Bible. Others go so far as to conclude that it is blasphemy to claim that the true Church is a sacrifice for sin. In the article below it is hoped that the Scriptural presentation will be appreciated by our readers, namely, that the value of Christ's sacrifice, being applied to the Church class and household of faith only, during this Gospel Age, and not any merit of the Church itself, constitutes these members of Christ's body, "holy, acceptable to God, a living sacrifice." (Rom. 12:1.) Once this thought is grasped from the Scriptures, and personal objections are put aside, it will be seen that Christ's sacrifice is not at all lowered but rather exalted by this understanding of the sin-offerings, in that His merit is the means whereby God accepts the Church as holy, and thus a fitting sacrifice for sin, inasmuch as it is God's good pleasure to so arrange His plan, as shall be seen hereunder.

THE subject of the offerings for sin is one by which we are reminded at once of the terrible consequences as a result of "sin entering the world, and death by sin," and while our purpose is not to dwell particularly on the introduction of sin into the world and examine the dire results therefrom, but rather to emphasise the wonderful provision to take away sin from off the face of the whole earth, yet it is fitting to note the extensiveness of this evil, for by so doing, we realise more fully the effectiveness of the remedy God has provided, as expressed by the little poem:

“To wipe away of sin each trace,  
To make of earth a perfect place,  
With glory everywhere.”

While, then, our text in the 6th of Romans explains in few words the offerings for sin, in the previous chapters of this same Epistle we find that St. Paul covers the whole subject of the introduction of sin, and how God, without violating one of His great attributes, can effect a lasting remedy that will not only bring blessing to the human race, but also great' glory and honour to His holy name throughout all eternity.

In the first chapter of this Epistle, Paul shows how quickly the entrance of sin into the world brought man down to the condition of the brute beasts — “When they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened; for the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and deity; so that they are without excuse.” By one man, sin entered the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. Yes. “death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.” All were not put on trial similarly to Adam, yet “when they knew God they glorified Him not as God”; “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.”

## All The World Guilty Before God.

Paul then passes on to Israel and reviews their standing before God under the Law Covenant, yet, while stressing the great advantages that they had over the other nations of the world, in being God's chosen people and receiving His laws through Moses, the typical mediator, when he comes to the question of their salvation from Sin and death and hope of eternal life, he asks:— "What then? Are we better than they?--are we better than the Gentile nations whom God allowed to go their own ways? "No, in no wise: for we have proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under sin; as it is written, 'There is none righteous, no, not one.'"

The Apostle, in proving the point "that all the world stands guilty before God," teaches the same lesson as that revealed in the vision shown 40 St. John as related in Revelation, chapter 5. 'St. John beheld a sealed book in the hand of Him that sat on the throne, and the question was asked by the angel, "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?" And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the heaven 'was able to open the book, and to look thereon and John wept much because of this. The following scene also agrees so fully with Paul's statement—"And one of the elders said unto me, 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. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts and in the midst of 'the' elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain."

## Jesus The Ransom.

Here we have revealed "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," agreeing with Paul's words in Romans 3, where he declares that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the 'remission of sins that are past, through the forgiveness of God; To declare, at this time His - righteousness: that He might be just, and the 'justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.'"

Here, then, is God's wondrous means of providing salvation for a world of sinners lost and ruined by the fall—the giving of His only begotten Son to be the ransom or corresponding 'price for all mankind condemned in Adam. This platter is expounded fully in Romans, chapters 4 and 5, then when we come to the 6th chapter we find, not only the foundation, first principles of our faith and hope brought out, but also the deeper, spiritual truths that pertain to the outworking of this wonderful plan of salvation.

## The Ransom, Not The Sin-Offering.

It is one thing to appreciate very fully God's great gift of our Lord Jesus to be the propitiation for our sins and for the sins of the whole world, but it is quite another to understand, to grasp and rejoice in God's method of taking away the world's sins by means of that satisfactory price provided by His dear Son.

It is respecting the application or use of the ransom price to which our subject particularly applies, and it helps greatly if we keep in mind the fact that the Sin-offerings signify how God, in His wisdom and good pleasure, has seen fit to make application of the blood of Christ so that each and every member of the human race may, in due time, receive all the benefits intended, though in God's plan, the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world.

## God's Plan Accomplished—In Due Time.

How often we have it brought out in the Plan of the Ages that God has a due time for everything, so this term, "in due time," explains many -difficulties, not only when we are first coming to a knowledge and appreciation of the truth, but also in regard to the deep things of God, of which the Sin-offerings is one.

The statement of John the Baptist as he introduced his disciples to the Lord is very familiar—"Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world," and at first thought one might say, "Yes, Jesus took away the sins of the world when He proved faithful unto death at Calvary"; but not so. It is one thing to provide a price that can release the world from its sins, but quite another to so apply that valuable thing to Justice that the condemnation is lifted. Yet how true John's words were—"The Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,"—that will take away their sins, in due time.

We have the same thought in John's Gospel respecting our Lord—"That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Again we must say, not so at the present time; the Lord has not lightened every man; yet the statement is true. "The true light that lighteth every man" — that will lighten, in due time, every man that cometh into the world.

Again, we have the statement of Paul's in 1 Tim. 2:6—"The man Christ Jesus gave himself a ransom 'for all, to be

‘testified in due time.’ Does not Paul imply here that Jesus paid to Justice a ransom or corresponding price on behalf of all mankind at His first advent? No, we do not think that is his thought. He had just previously stated, “God will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”—in due time. Just so his thought respecting our Lord’s sacrifice seems to be—Christ Jesus gave Himself to be a ransom for all, in due time; and which would also be testified or revealed to all in due time.

#### Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth.

It may be asked, how do we know that this is the true understanding of the matter? It is from the Scriptures as a whole that we find both typical and antitypical sin-offerings agreeing with this thought, though they are often not clearly understood by the brethren. There is a tendency with some, when they come to appreciate the great sacrifice of Christ at Calvary, to conclude that all sacrificing for sin was finished there; that by some means the corresponding price was paid to Justice on behalf of all mankind, and that it is really dishonouring His precious blood to think of further offerings for sin during this Gospel Age.

However, on this, as on all other matters of faith, the Scriptures alone must be our guide, and it is as we go to both Old and New Testaments that we find the subject of the Sin-offerings clearly expounded, which, when rightly understood, brings additional honour and glory to Christ and the great plan of redemption of which He is the centre.

It is necessary to add that there is no thought of ransom price in any other offerings for sin, than that of Christ, our Head. As stated previously, our subject has to do with the application of the valuable thing, -the ransom price, so that eventually, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

#### Type And Antitype.

Let us examine some of the helpful types of the Old Testament, which we may be sure have their fulfilment in the antitypes or realities, commencing with Christ. At the Passover in Egypt, this was a means whereby the children of Israel were delivered out of that land, and the shedding of the blood of a lamb was the central picture of the whole matter. At the appointed time a lamb without blemish was slain by each household of Israel, and its blood sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the houses was a means of protection for all the Israelites who were commanded not to go out at the door of their houses until the morning. (Exod. 12:21, 22.) It is well known that the lamb in Egypt pictured our Lord Jesus--the Lamb of God—and that type had special reference to the ransom, or corresponding price. The covering or protection of the blood over Israel pictured the covering of the blood of Christ over the household of faith of this Gospel Age, and Israel’s firstborn represented “the church of the firstborns” within the household of faith of this Gospel Age. This shows the application of the blood of the Lamb of God since His great sacrifice has been on behalf of the household of faith only, which includes the antitypical firstborns; justice is satisfied for the comparatively few of mankind only, during the Gospel Age.

What a wonderful thing this is, that God should determine to choose out some from the human race and give them the privilege and benefits of being covered with the blood of Christ in advance of the multitudes of mankind, and for a ‘very special purpose, over and above anything we could have thought or asked. So, we see in this important type, the truth of the mystery hid from ages and dispensations, but now, during this Gospel Age, made manifest to the saints.

It is, however, from the further types of Israel’s day of atonement that we find the better sacrifices; for sin so completely, so beautifully and so clearly pictured, and it is to these that the great Apostle Paul makes special reference when expounding)\* realities, particularly in his Epistle to the Hebrews. How fitting that the Lord should give the Hebrew Christians ,these precious truths first of all, that it they, may realise how fully their law arrangements, were shadows of good things to come, and as we, also come into Christ, it is our privilege to be fully informed of these matters, if we are ready to receive that which the Lord has in store for us.

#### Increasing Light.

Have we ever felt, dear friends, in looking back over past years, how little we had understood God and His plan prior to receiving the truth, in a general way. No doubt we have; but have we also realised how little we have understood and appreciated God and His plan, even after receiving the truth in a general way? If so, we- are in a happy condition, because our hearts, and minds so filled with the greatness and goodness, of God, will be ready to receive more and more of His spiritual truths for our upbuilding as the under-priests in our special order or profession, of which our Lord is the great High Priest. When we have gotten rid of the errors, of the dark ages and come to love the Lord and His, truth with pure hearts, we are only beginning- to know and appreciate something of the goodness of \_our Heavenly Father. On the night in which He instituted the Memorial of His death, our clear Lord said, “This is life eternal, that they might-, know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ-whom Thou bast sent.” What a thought--”to know, Thee, the only true God.” Yes, and to-, obey Him; this is Life eternal. And as we come to^ know God and His wonderful plan, we find’, over and over again, “still

there's more to foil-, low." This is particularly so in the subject of the offerings for sin, in which some of the, grandest and deepest truths of the plan of God, are to be found. How the noble Apostle laboured to, expound these things for us, and let us endeavour to trace his thoughts, as he brings out the realities from the types of Israel's Atonement Day..

#### Typical Atonement Day.

The thought in the word "Atonement" is in itself a beautiful one. It signifies reconciliation; and so we find on that 24-hour day, set apart once a year, Israel was typically reconciled to God. And why be typically reconciled every year; why did not this reconciliation last? Because those offerings for sin were typical only, just as was the day—"In those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (Heb. 10:3, 4.) No, indeed. But why does the Apostle so clearly and definitely say, "the blood of bulls and of goats"? Because in the type both animals must be slain to complete the sin-offerings, and this pictures the important antitype.

#### Typical Sin-Offering—Bullock.

In the 16th chapter of Leviticus, we have Israel's day of atonement offerings for sin so fully explained. Aaron, the high priest, was instructed to be clothed in the holy linen garments, which in themselves are very significant, and the first of the sin-offerings is a young bullock—"which is for himself, to make atonement for himself and for his house." It will be remembered that in the type there were the high, priest, the, under-priests, and additionally the Levites from whom the priests were selected; so this bullock of the sin-offering was sacrificed on behalf of these only; himself—the members of the priesthood; and his house—the tribe of Levi.

The account in Levi 16:11714 reads—"And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin-offering, which is for himself and shall make an atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself: And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring, it within the vail; And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not: and he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and, sprinkle it, with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and- before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times." Here, we have a most wonderful picture of what was completed in-reality, forty days after the death of our Lord, not-, within the precincts of an earthly tabernacle, "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."--Heb. 9:24.

#### Antitypical Sin-Offering Jesus.

Undoubtedly, the bullock in this typical sin offering-pictured our Lord' Jesus as presented Himself a. perfect, living sacrifice to God, at Jordan. There, He was killed, in the sense that His humanity was placed on the altar—dead to His own will—fully submitted to God's will. As the high priest passed under the vail dividing, the Holy from the Most Holy, we have represented the actual death of our Lord at Calvary. The incense being sprinkled on the coals of fire before the mercy seat would picture the acceptableness of Christ's sacrifice before the heavenly propitiatory, and then follows the sprinkling of the blood on the mercy seat, not for Israel as a whole; no, but for himself; and his house.

Had the high priest ceased with that sin offering, Israel outside in the Camp would never have had their sins typically removed,

#### Price Paid For Church Only.

So we see in the great antitype that Christ, on His ascension to God, appeared not for the world ;n general, but for us—the members of His body, and household of faith generally. Does this mean that the world's sins are not yet cancelled on the heavenly propitiatory? Yes, it surely does. How often the Apostles point out—"the whole world lieth in wickedness." But in speaking of the "us" class, says—"Ye are bought with the precious blood, of Christ"; "Who gave Himself for our sins that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." (1 John 5:19; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; Gal. 1:4.)

What a wonderful privilege it is to know God's will in this matter, as again expressed by the Apostle—"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself A peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:13, 14. ) Let us note the particular point, that it is for this peculiar or specially called out people that Christ has thus far done so much. It may surprise some to know how many times this thought is brought out in the Scriptures but all can look up the references for themselves; two, more. texts will, suffice here—"And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yefi in your sins: Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. " (1 Cor. 15:17, 18.) Why does the Apostle mention those only who are "fallen asleep in Christ?" Because the world of mankind, having had no application of the

blood of Christ, were not in his mind at that time. Lastly, ‘we refer to our Lord’s own words in the memorable prayer on the last night of His earthly sojourn—”I pray not for the world, but for them that Thou hast given Me.”

But, what about the world in general; did not “God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”? Yes, indeed, and let us look again at the typical picture, which we know was arranged by the Lord, even to the smallest detail, that it might correctly prefigure all that was to take place in ‘the antitypical or’better sacrifices of this Gospel Age.

#### Secondary Sin-Offering In Type—The Lord’s Goat.

In Lev. 16, following the offering of the bullock by the high priest “for himself and his house,” we read—”Then shall he (the high priest) kill the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people and bring his blood within the vail, 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.” The particular point to note about this secondary sin-offering is, that it was offered “for the people”—on behalf of Israel generally, as a sin-offering for them—this goat being one of two especially provided by the congregation of the Children of Israel. With this type completed, the people of Israel generally, in addition to the priesthood and house of Levi, had their sins typically removed for the twelve months ahead, and the question is, how is this fulfilled in the antitype?

As we have seen that the typical priesthood and house of Levi typified the royal priesthood and --household of faith of this Gospel Age, so Israel, out in the Camp outside the Tabernacle and Court altogether -- would picture the world of mankind. As Israel’s sin-offering was an animal separate from, yet following the one offered for the priests and house of Levi, does it follow in antitype that there is a secondary sin-offering following that of Jesus, whom we have seen .has appeared in heaven for the antitypical priests and household of faith only? Yes, we believe this is very definitely taught in god’s Word, our verses in the 6th chapter of Romans being one of the references on this matter.

#### Secondary Sin-Offering In Antitype-The Church.

The bullock in the type pictured our Lord and as everything done with the bullock’s blood was done also with the goat’s, it is very clear that the class being called out during this antitypical Atonement Day, and “planted in the likeness of Jesus’ death,” constitutes (because “accepted in the beloved” and being members of Christ) the second part of the better sacrifices which in due time shall take away the sins of the world, or rather shall release from Adamic condemnation all who desire to be reconciled to God. Those who are unappreciative of .the gracious means whereby they may be delivered from sin and death must die the second death.

And \*hat does’ it mean to be planted together in the likeness of death” — the death of Christ. It surely means that as-our Lord’s, death was a sacrificial one, this must also be so, in the case of those members who follow His steps— the antitypical goat class which follows the antitypical ,bullock.

#### Head And Body Dead For Sin.

In Isa. 53, we have the words—”Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin,” and this is undoubtedly the Apostle’s thought in Rom. 6:10, respecting our Lord—”In that He died, He died unto sin once,” or rather “for sin” as a sin- offering. Then, in the following verse, we have the members of Christ shown as the secondary antitypical sin- offering—”Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto (for) sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” It is very clear that the Apostle had this deeper thought in mind here. As our Lord had no sin to put away, he could not have meant that Christ died unto sin in this sense. No, it was as an offering for sin that Jesus died; so, if His followers are likewise to be reckoned dead, it must also be for sin, with them; they having previously had their sins covered with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, so that they could appear holy, and be acceptable sacrifices to God through Jesus Christ.

Does this imply that there must be a secondary antitypical sprinkling of the heavenly mercy seat, or propitiatory, to make satisfaction for the sins of the whole world? Yes, it surely does, but it will again be the valuable ransom price of Christ, that is at present in His members, that will clear the guilty world of mankind before the seat of Justice. Before that time every member of the Church of the firstborns, which includes the Bride ,and the Great Company, must have finished their course, the blood then being available for the sins of all natural people, and will be applied on their -behalf. This secondary antitypical sprinkling cannot take place, then, until the close of this Gospel Age, and this point helps us greatly to determine where we are on the stream of time.

## The Garments In Type And Antitype.

Turning again to Lev. 16, we find that after the two animals for the sin-offerings are killed and their blood, sprinkled in the Most Holy, also the scapegoat dealt with, it says in verse 23--. "And Aaron shall come into the tabernacle of the congregation and shall put off the linen garments, Which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there: And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments"; that is, his usual garments of glory and beauty. And what does this mean? Has 'this picture been fulfilled as yet?

In the type Aaron pictures our Lord, the High 'Priest of the new order of priests, the Royal priesthood, and the linen garments were worn by the typical high priest during the sacrificing and sprinkling of the blood of the animals offered for sins, and until the scapegoat is dealt with. This represents our Lord in His sacrificial robes during the whole of this Gospel Age and until the Great Company has finished its course; and, as in the type, it was only after all the offerings were completed that the garments of glory and beauty were worn by the high priest, (the linen garments and those of glory and beauty could not be worn at the same time) so, it is fitting that Christ, in the antitype, could not be wearing the garments of the sacrificing High Priest and also those of glory and beauty that He will put on when His reign begins. We know that God's plan is working out in harmony with His Word, and we may be sure that this type at the close of Israel's Atonement Day was just as true as the typical sin-offerings themselves.

Therefore, dear friends, if we believe, and there seems not the least reason to doubt but everything to confirm, that there are some members of Christ still being sacrificed on earth, it must follow that our Lord is still clothed in the linen garments, as the sacrificing High Priest. This is implied very fully by the Apostle's reference to our Memorial—"As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till he come."

### Reign Follows Completion Of Church's Sacrifice.

The garments of glory and beauty will be put on at a later time—when all the sacrificing is over—and will be worn not only by our Lord, the great High Priest, but also by the members of His Body, and then His millennial reign will begin, but not before. There are no Scriptures that we know of to imply that our Lord is reigning in the heavens while He is sacrificing on earth; He must still be wearing the linen garments in anti-type, on the other side of the veil, while one of His members is being sacrificed on earth. All the lines of chronology must not be permitted to interfere with the spiritual truths pertaining to the hidden mystery—the taking out of the members of the Body of Christ who are counted in with our Lord and have part in the sin-offerings on behalf of the world of mankind.

Much more could be said respecting how the type of Israel's Atonement Day has been, and is being, fulfilled during this present Gospel Age, and another thought may be added here. It is generally understood that the incense offered with the blood of the bullock, in type, pictured the acceptableness of Christ our Head—His perfect offering on the heavenly propitiatory. But with the goat's blood no incense was used—the perfume would still remain in the Most Holy from the incense of the bullock's offering. So, in anti-type the Lord's people have no acceptableness in themselves as offerings for sin, on behalf of the world of mankind, but, covered by the acceptableness of Christ they are privileged "to fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the Church"; that is, that God has predetermined that there should be this Body of Christ, to participate, first of all, in the sufferings of the Anointed, and later in the glory that is to follow. It will be seen, then, from this standpoint, how much depth there is in the many Scriptures pertaining to our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ, being made conformable unto His death, and just how this really must be apart from, and in advance of, the world's release from sin altogether.

How favoured are all those drawn of God during this acceptable time, accepting His call to son-ship, having the privilege of being offered as the members of Christ, being broken with Him, drinking His blood, if so be, that proving faithful they may also be associated with Him in His throne, putting on the garments of glory and beauty and dispensing the blessings to all humanity during the Millennial reign in the age to come. "So Christ was once offered (the Head at Jordan and the members at Pentecost, to be consummated at the close of this Age) to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin (without a sin-offering) unto salvation." (Heb. 9:28.)

"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death bath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died for sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed for sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

In Thy due time, our Heavenly Father, shall be known  
Thy gracious plan, which now is hid Except unto Thy saints alone.  
O glorious day, when Thine All-wisdom, justice, power and love,  
The whole creation shall approve!

En His due time, O blessed Jesus, Thou shalt see  
The travail of Thy soul, and shalt Be satisfied eternally:  
Thine agony on Calvary—the price that Thou didst give,  
Shall cause the dead again to live!

In God's due time, O pilgrim on the "narrow way,"  
Thy painful journey ended, darkest  
Night shall turn to brightest day;  
Thine every trial. then, thine every tear, shall prove a gem  
To beautify thy diadem!

In His due time, O weary, groaning, sin-cursed Earth,  
The Lord will wipe away thy tears,  
And bring the promised "second birth":  
And there shall be no pain, nor any death in that blest day  
When sin and sorrow flee away!

In His due time angelic choirs shall sing again  
In grander strain that heavenly message,  
"Peace on earth, goodwill toward men!"  
And every knee shall bow, and every loving heart confess  
The Christ let comes to reign and bless!

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## Harvest, Winter, Sabbath.

THE harvest work of which our Lord speaks so fully in Matt. 24 is the culmination of the selection of His “Little Flock” of consecrated followers, which began at His first advent in the calling of His band of disciples.. All down the. Gospel Age numbers have been added to this “people for God’s name,” and in the time of harvest “the dead in Christ” are raised, and the remaining members on earth are gathered into the heavenly garner, in preparation for the reign of peace which is to follow.

It is important that the harvest work be clearly understood, and the Lord has given ample instruction for all who will prove their value as true “wheat” and be gathered into the garner within a certain period of time. As in the case of the Jewish harvest those who were in the religious systems of the day and failed to respond to the Lord’s message were burned up as “chaff” (Matt. 3:12), so in the close of the Gospel harvest, those in the religious systems who do not respond to the harvest message must go through “great tribulation,” a fiery time of trouble with which this age will end, and be revealed as “tares.”—Matt. 13:30; 24:21.

It is to this wheat class—”My people”—that the Lord has been calling through His Word and by His spirit for many years now, to flee from the present systems of Christendom, which have become worldly institutions and have been cast off from favour.—Rev. 3:14-22; 18:1-5. This “flight” from Babylon (mother and daughter systems) must be undertaken before the “four winds” are let loose (Rev. 7:1-3) by all worthy of the name “My people,”—”that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

Flight is to be made not from one denomination to another, but the instruction is “flee into the mountain,” i.e., the kingdom of the Lord (Matt. 24:16) , and being translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, He has provided the harvest feast for all such—”For wheresoever the carcass (the food, meat in due season) is, there will the eagles be gathered together”—Matt.24:28. And so it is, God’s people are found gathered together in twos or threes or larger numbers, rejoicing in the truths provided only for this class by their Lord who has returned unseen by human eyes, to conduct this harvest work before the great time of trouble and later the bringing of peace to the earth. (Rev. 14:1416.)

The importance of making flight from the systems of Babylon during the harvest of the Gospel Age is impressed again by the Lord in His exhortation—”But pray yet that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day”(Matt. 24:20.) These terms “winter” and “sabbath day” are not to be taken literally, but rather our Lord was referring to periods of time which would be very unfavourable, yea, impossible for flight from the systems He has cast off.

The “winter” would refer to the great time of trouble, when the “four winds” of Rev. 7 are let loose, bringing about a great tempest amongst the restless masses of mankind — “the sea and waves roaring” (Luke 21:25) — resulting in “the heaven” (ecclesiastical systems) passing away with a great noise . . . the earth also (present order of society) and the works that are therein being burned up.” (2 Pet. 3:10.) No wonder the Lord exhorts His people to flee to Him, to His kingdom before the “winter.” During a literal harvest time there is plenty of food obtainable as the grain is gathered into the barn, but how different it is when winter sets in. So in the harvest of this Gospel Age there is abundant provision of spiritual food for the sustenance of all the Lord’s people who are courageous and answer His call to leave the lukewarm Laodicean systems of to-day, but with the coming of the winter period the opportunity of feasting on the harvest truths will be past. “The harvest is past, the summer (time of favourable opportunity) is ended, and we are not saved (as members of the Church)” is recorded by the prophet Jeremiah 8:20, as representing the Great Company, who, though unworthy to be the Bride of Christ, receive a lower spiritual inheritance following the washing of their robes through great tribulation. (See Rev. 7:9-17.)

The term “sabbath day” would not refer to a twenty-four-hour, seventh day of the week, but rather to a period of time, typified by the Jewish sabbath day. This period is generally understood by Bible students as referring to the seventh millennium during which Israel and mankind as a whole will be blessed with lasting rest and peace, which the term “sabbath” signifies. How fitting, then, that our Lord should say—”Pray ye that your flight be . . . neither on the sabbath day,” implying that when this period is ushered in, flight from the Babylonian systems would be out of the question, inasmuch as Babylon will have been thrown down during the “winter” time, which precedes the “sabbath day.”—”Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” (Rev. 18:21.)

If this be the correct understanding of our Lord’s words (our readers are exhorted to prove all things for themselves from the Scriptures) it will be seen that the harvest, winter and sabbath day refer to three distinct periods of time.

The harvest is for the complete gathering of the Gospel Church during the “days of the Son of Man,” corresponding to “the days of Noah” prior to the Flood. There would seem no doubt that we are at present very near the close of this period, and how important, therefore, that any of the Lord’s people still in Babylon, in any of its forms, should act quickly and flee

from all such associations, ere the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21) cut off all opportunity of being gathered into the Gospel garner, as "The plowman overtakes the reaper." (Amos 9:13.)

The winter time is for the purpose of ridding the world of everything out of accord with the Lord and His righteousness—the man-made systems, ecclesiastical, financial, political and social—"the removing of those things that may be shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." (Heb. 12:27:)

The sabbath day, following the severe winter time, is the period during which the elect Church shall be "priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6), bringing peace and happiness—"the desire of all nations"—to the chastened world of mankind, for their uplift and progress to perfect human life on the restored earth. Of this time the Apostle Peter says—"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens (Christ and His Church) and a new earth (new social order) wherein dwelleth righteousness."-2 Pet. 3:13.

Melbourne Christmas Convention.

The brethren in Melbourne wish to announce that their Annual Convention is to be held this year (D.V.) on December 23rd, 25th, 26th and 27th, with additional gatherings on the 29th and 30th. The assemblies are to be held in the Masonic Hall, 254 Swan Street, Richmond, and a hearty invitation is extended to all friends able to attend these gatherings in the Lord's name. The rich blessings of former years are again anticipated, by the Lord's grace, so those

friends making sacrifices to attend should feel well repaid. Further information is obtainable from the secretary—Mr. J. B. Hiam, 44 Heath Avenue, Oakleigh, S.E.12, Victoria.

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FRANK & ERNEST TALKS Geelong, 3GL, 222 M. Sundays 10 a.m. Sydney, 2KY, 294 N. 8.15 a.m.

Perth, SKY, 227                   , 4.45 p.m.

# Victory.

When I really am contented  
That my wish be set aside,  
When I cease from selfish longing,  
When I triumph over pride,  
When I'm really willing  
To be nothing, as they sing,  
But a broken, empty vessel  
In the service of the King ;  
That is victory.

When I calmly take unkindness,  
And as meekly bear a sneer,  
When I'm willing to relinquish  
All that earth is holding dear,  
When the falseness of some dear one  
Fails to waken in my heart  
Any bitter, hard resentment,  
Or to wing an angry dart ;  
That is victory.

When I cease to long for earth's love,  
Am content to be unknown,  
When I smile when friends neglect me,  
Happy in His love alone,  
When I lose myself in Jesus,  
And surroundings cease to be  
With their little jars and discords  
Able to discourage me;  
That is victory.

Lord, I cannot hope to triumph  
Over every form of sin,  
And to live but for Thy glory  
While my own will reigns within,  
So, I bring my will to Thee, Lord,  
Rule Thou me in all Thy ways,  
And the glory shall be Thine, Lord,  
And the honour and the praise;  
This is victory.

(Author unknown.)