

THE SECOND DEATH

The term death signifies destruction, extinction. We see it about us on every hand and have the inspired record of its cause in the Apostle's words, „Sin entered into the world, and *death* by [as a result of] sin.” Rom. 5:12. True the word death is sometimes used in a figurative sense, but behind all these is the *actual* death from which all figures are drawn; the death which „passed upon all men in that all are sinners.”

The term „*second* death” is specific and cannot refer to a figurative use of the word death. When anything is called a „second” it recognizes one, and only one preceding it, of the *same kind*. If the expression second death refers to a second *figurative* death, it would imply that there was but one figurative death before it. This we know would be nonsense; for any word can be used in a thousand figurative forms. It must therefore refer to *actual* death, not figurative. It recognizes but the one death preceding it, the first death. The penalty of failure under the second trial is *thus* brought strikingly in contrast with the penalty of failure under the first trial.

The „second death” is specially mentioned in connection with the closing scenes of the Millennial Age; and if from that standpoint we look backward to see what death it relates to, or repeats as a second, none could reasonably stop with any of the figurative uses of the word death. All, we think, must see that it refers back to the calamity (death) which entered into the world and passed upon all men because of Adam's failure when on trial as our representative.

Adamic death—the loss of existence and all right thereto—was the *first* penalty, the result of failure under the *first* trial of mankind for life. The second death is pointed out to us in Revelation as the *second* penalty, the result of failure during the *second* trial of the world, of a class not worthy of a place in the „book of *life*.”

None are prepared to understand the book of Revelations except those who understand clearly the general plan of God, the plan of the ages. Only these can see that God judged the world *once* representatively, and because of its failure condemned it; how then he redeemed or purchased mankind out of *that* condemnation and death, and made provision for a second trial for all, under the one who was his agent in their redemption. As it is written, „He hath appointed a day [period] in the which he will judge [give *trial* to] the world, in righteousness, by that man whom he hath afore ordained, Jesus Christ.” If God has appointed such a day or time of trial, it must be another, a

second trial, for Scripture assures us of the first (Acts 17:31; Rom. 5:12,17-19), and the penalty of that failure we see all about us.

Those who will have *another* trial must in some way get free from the condemnation or sentence of the first trial (death), else a second trial would be useless. God cannot admit that there was any injustice in that first trial, and cannot *set aside* his own sentence. If it was just and right, to set it aside would be unjust and wrong; and a new trial, while the sentence of the first trial is firm, uncanceled, would be only a mockery, for it could not reverse the first sentence of the righteous Judge.

But God has made provision for the canceling of the sentence of death, (extinction,) which came upon all through Adam by providing a *ransom* for all, whereby all may have a second trial, in which the one who redeemed them will be the judge, ready and willing to grant every needed aid to those desirous of availing themselves of this second offer of life. While very few indeed come to this knowledge and second trial in the present time, *all others* shall be brought to it in the Millennial age, because such is God's plan, and full provision for it has been made both in the *ransom* for all, and in the appointment of a time or age for judging all.

Every trial must reach a conclusion and have a sentence. The first trial in Eden, ended with a sentence, as we read, „Sentence came on all men to condemnation.” (Rom. 5:18. Diaglott.) The second trial is to have a sentence also. The few who in the Gospel age come to a *full knowledge* of the truth are on their *second* trial. If they obey the truth they are counted worthy of life, and their names will be written in the book of life, and will be confessed before the Father and the holy messengers, while those who *sin wilfully* after they have come to a full knowledge of the truth, who despise the favor of the ransom after having been justified and sanctified (Heb. 6:4-6 and 10:26,30), are sentenced as unworthy of life; and this being their second trial, the sentence is to the „second death” as distinguishing it from the first sentence which came upon all men as the result of the first or representative trial.

While during the Millennium when the world is getting its second trial, some of the conditions will be different from the present, yet the *main* conditions or tests of the trial will be the same as now.

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That is to say, the *world* will then be on trial to prove who are worthy of life (the second life—restitution) and who worthy of death (the second death—final extinction).

Life was the original *gift* of God to his creatures. Representatively he then *tried* them. In Adam's disobedience the first trial, the first or original gift of life was forfeited, lost, for all, and death (the

first) came upon all. Through another representative all were *redeemed* from the first condemnation, the first death sentence, justified to life *again*—a second or restored life. A second trial is granted to every man to prove (this time *individually* and not representatively) which are worthy to retain God's gift (life) everlastingly, and who are unworthy of it. This is the second offer of this gift of life (second life). This time it is offered *through* Jesus Christ our Lord, who as the Father's faithful agent gave himself for our *ransom*: and those found unworthy of this second life, under this second trial are sentenced to death—the second death.

The failure in the first trial was the result not of imperfection; for God created man „upright,” „very good,” „in the image of God,” but it was the result of lack of experience, lack of knowledge. This lack of knowledge, God was ready and willing to supply the place of, for he proposed to give man the benefit of *divine knowledge* through laws and instruction. But as God had foreseen and saw good to permit, man chose to make an experience of his own by disobeying divine counsel. God has redeemed all from that first transgression and its condemnation and granted another, a second trial, knowing that some after their bitter experience in disobedience, will in the second trial choose life, by choosing to be obedient to all his just and loving arrangements and laws.

The second trial is final. There is no hint of another redemption for any who in the second trial are found worthy of the second death, unworthy of the second or restored life. On the contrary we are assured that any who spurn this second offer of life need hope for no more favor; for „Christ dieth no more,” death shall never again have dominion over him;—he is death-proof, immortal, now. A third trial is never suggested in Scripture; consequently there could not be a *third death*, and none is mentioned. Furthermore, none who have reasonable minds and comprehend the subject fully, could expect a third or more trials; because the second is arranged on so comprehensive a scale as to leave no use for more. The Millennial age will furnish *full KNOWLEDGE* and *full ABILITY* to all. „The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” (Hab. 2:14.) The weaknesses of heredity will no longer weigh men down; it will no longer be a true proverb, „the fathers ate a sour grape [of sin] and the children's teeth are set on edge. But then it shall be, that he that eateth the sour grape (sinneth), *his* (own) teeth (only) shall be set on edge. The soul [being] that sinneth [*wilfully* and deliberately against full light and ability] IT SHALL DIE.”—See Ezk. 18:20 and Jer. 31:29,30.

It should not need much argument to convince any reasonable being that the *second* trial for the second or redeemed life is here referred to, and not the *first* trial in Eden,* on account of which we are born in sin, shapen in iniquity, and come forth to a few short years of dying and groaning. It clearly refers to the trial of the world in the Millennial age, the second trial; and it shows, as we have already seen, that in that trial some will be found worthy of the second life, and that the wilful sinner will share in the second death, the penalty upon all failing under the second trial; the

conditions of which could not be more favorable than they have been arranged for.

*In this as in other connections it should be borne in mind that the Jewish people, their covenant of life by obedience, etc., was only typical of the world, including themselves, in the second trial under the New Covenant which theirs typified.

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