

CHOOSE LIFE OR CHOOSE DEATH

We showed in the October '86 issue that the offer in the next age to the whole world, was typified in the offer of life or death made to Israel through Moses the typical lawgiver, which because of the weakness of the flesh they were totally unable to comply with.

Now some one wants to know whether we think that any would *choose death*, when a full opportunity is granted to all in the next age, of taking their choice. We answer that if the question were put to them in that form, Whether do you choose life or death, all would undoubtedly choose life; but it will not be put in that form. In that trial, *obedience* will stand for life and *disobedience* for death. So it is now: a thief does not choose imprisonment nor does a murderer choose the gallows; but in knowingly and *wilfully* choosing those crimes they virtually are choosing the known penalties. Those who will accept of God's plan and choose well-doing will be choosing *life*, and those who choose otherwise will be *choosing death*, the declared and sure wages of sin.

Those who shall experience the second death will doubtless not be expecting it. By disbelieving God's plain statements with reference to it, they will doubtless deceive themselves. Such are ever deceiving others and being deceived themselves, and doubtless the goodness and favor of God manifested toward them so long (during the Millennium) will lead them to believe as some now conclude, that God either could not, or would not „cut off” wilful sinners. The statement is, that they will be deceived (Rev. 20:7,8.) by following the same deceiver who beguiled Eve and who now seeks with the same lie to deceive the virgin of Christ—the Gospel Church. Doubtless his deception then as now will be based upon the same lie, „Ye shall not surely die.”

WHAT IT INVOLVES

Error is far reaching; one error serves as a foundation for another, and so it is with this one, „Ye shall not surely die.” Looked at from one standpoint some might say that it could affect *other* doctrines little whether we claim that *all* will be saved everlastingly, or that a comparatively small number will be cut off in the second death. But such do not see the full logical outcome of the proposition; for the doctrine of the *everlasting* salvation of all,* in spite of the wills of some, proves either that God is so loving, that he cannot and would not execute his just sentence, „The soul that sinneth it shall die,” or else that though desiring to carry out his sentence he is unable to destroy the [souls] beings that he has created.

*Be it remembered that the TOWER has constantly taught the *salvation of all* from the first death, their redemption and recovery by Christ from *all* that was lost in Adam, that thus rescued or saved *all* shall be brought to a full knowledge of the truth and then by obedience prove themselves worthy of everlasting life or by disobedience prove that they merit second death.

If God is *unable* from either of these causes to destroy in the second death, then he was unable to destroy in the first death, for the same reasons. And *if* unable to destroy them, or in other words, if they were not lost in the first death, then the Bible teaching that our Lord Jesus gave himself a *ransom* for all and thus saved the lost, is false; for *if* God could not (from any cause) destroy them, they were not lost and consequently were not redeemed.

Look at it again from another standpoint and we will reach the same conclusion; namely, that the *everlasting* salvation of all, stands logically opposed to the doctrine of the *ransom*. And it is for this reason that those who deny the ransom always sooner or later claim universal everlasting salvation.

None will question from the account of the Scriptures, that in the trial of the next age there will be some wilful sinners (Jer. 31:28-30; Isa. 65:20; Matt. 25:41,46; Rev. 20:12-15; 21:8,27; and Ezek. 20:29.). And these being on as fair and full a trial as Adam was, and with greater experience, will be as culpable as he, and as worthy of condemnation to death under the law, „The soul that sinneth it shall die.” And since it is recorded that „Christ dieth no more,” it follows

::R0912 : page 5::

that not *one* of such condemned ones can be redeemed or *ransomed* as Adam was. And it logically follows that *if* God can excuse sinners and clear or acquit the guilty without a *ransom* [corresponding price], then, where the guilt will be even greater than Adam’s, because of greater knowledge by experience, then God’s

::R0913 : page 5::

ways were not equal when he inflicted death as the penalty upon Adam and all his children, refusing to release them from its condemnation until he himself had provided the ransom. And if God can and will *excuse* many wilful sinners in the next age without a ransom, He *could* have forgiven the one sin of Adam without a ransom. Seeing this to be the logical conclusion of the theory of everlasting salvation of all, four out of five of its advocates deny the ransom, and the remainder must choose the one or the other position as soon as they come to see the two sides of

the question and their bearing upon each other. We recognize the fact that God's dealings with our race in the past, in condemning sin and sinners, is his one unalterable law, which for the security and good of his creatures he will not permit even himself to set aside, and that when he would save mankind from the Adamic sin and penalty it must be by providing a *ransom* [a corresponding price] for the sinner, in the death of our Lord Jesus. This rule being unalterable it follows that the wilful sinner in the second trial will be condemned to death—the second death. And since divine Justice and Love could not grant more favorable conditions than they will have enjoyed, any further trial would be useless; and being useless, will not be granted. Hence there has been no *ransom* provided for those condemned in the second trial; and no ransom being given, their recovery from it is impossible.

Further, notice that if the total number of those out of harmony with God in the end of the Millennial age, and therefore (by believing his lie) deceived by Satan into outward opposition (Rev. 20:8.), be but *ten thousand* out of all the billions then tried and tested finally, *their ransom* would cost the sacrifice of *ten thousand* redeemers, just as surely as the sin of *one* man cost the death of *one* as his *corresponding* price—each wilful sinner requiring one to pay his price and to redeem him. And then all this would be useless, since they could have no more favorable opportunity in a thousand trials, than God promises to all in the second trial.

In conclusion then, The second death like the first is a penalty for wilful sin. It means the taking away of the gift of God, the taking away of life because not used in accordance with his will for the creature's good and the Creator's glory. In neither is the penalty completed in the process of dying, but in the sinner's *remaining dead*—without life. Had the penalty been completed in the dying, so that the culprit might then be awakened free from condemnation, no ransom would have been needed, for each sinner in *dying* would pay his own penalty. But no, the penalty was real and lasting; for six thousand years sinners have died and remained dead; and none have been able to escape the verdict of the Great Judge. There is only *one hope* of deliverance. It is based on the Bible testimony that Christ died for our sins, and redeemed us from sin and its penalty, death, by paying our penalty. And this is man's hope of release from the first sentence in due time. So surely as a ransom was needed from the first penalty, one would be no less necessary from the second death penalty. But that trial being complete, no ransom should or has been provided; hence the second death is final and irrevocable.

Let us be on our guard, lest, As the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, our minds should be corrupted [warped, twisted] from the simplicity which is in Christ. Note this simplicity: Life, God's gift to man, lost through sin—death passed upon all. Christ Jesus, God's gift, became a man and paid man's ransom, or *corresponding* price—he died for our sins and the sins of the whole world. God raised him from death to a higher nature and commissioned him to dispense the favor which

his death secured for all, and has appointed the Millennial age for that great work of giving men *another chance for life*, under the same perfect, divine law which condemned and sentenced Adam; and the law, unchanged, still declares death to be the wages of sin, and life the wages of righteousness, and thus puts the lie upon all such statements as that „Ye shall not surely die.”

=====

— March, 1887 —