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THOSE SIX QUESTIONS.

It is now eighteen months since we proposed six pointed doctrinal questions to three contemporaries who were teaching that Jesus was not our substitute in his death. We claimed that they used the scriptural words, "Ransom," "Redeem," "Bought with a price," etc., unfairly, and put upon them a private interpretation calculated to mislead some who were not well acquainted with the true meaning of these English words, or the Greek words which they translate. We suggested then that the full answer of these six questions would show to all just what our contemporaries did believe on the subject. One of these journals stated that the questions would be answered in due time, but has not yet answered them. Another (The Millenarian) proposed to answer in a year these questions, which a babe in Christ should be able to answer pointedly and scripturally at once and in brief space; and it has now completed the work, we presume, to its own satisfaction.

The third contemporary contented itself with quoting extracts from the answers of the second. And from the fact that it now seldom uses those texts which mention Ransom, etc., and throws discredit upon the inspiration of all the statements of the New Testament, we infer that it would no longer consider it necessary to answer, or to attempt to harmonize any of these with other New Testament statements. This we certainly think the more reasonable method of dealing with the subject. Either give words their proper import, or deny that they are inspired, and thereby take from them all weight by claiming that the writers of these scriptures had mistaken ideas on the value of Jesus' death.

We make some quotations from "The Millenarian's" answers to these questions. [R640 : page 5] In answer to the question, "Why did Jesus die?" it says:

"When this question is viewed from a physical standpoint, and we see Jesus exposed to crucifixion upon the cross, we are ready to decide at once that his [physical] system was not such as could long survive-- death was inevitable. This evidently was the case with Jesus; as much so as it would have been by any other human being, or as it was the case with those crucified with him."

"It is claimed that Jesus had a life free from the penalty of death;...that he could have resisted death with success, but gave his life for his brethren in this sense." [All italics are ours.]

This shows that the writer appreciated the question at issue. It also shows that he was "ready at once to decide" with the Jews on the outward appearances and AGAINST the testimony of Jesus' words; for Jesus declared: "I lay down my life;...No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." ([John 10:17,18.](#))

It continues:

"The great object of our Lord's mission was to teach the doctrine of a resurrection.... See the necessity of his own death and resurrection as a proof of his doctrine." "The great object of the mission and death of Christ being to give the fullest PROOF OF A FUTURE LIFE of retribution, in order to supply the strongest motives to virtue."

That Jesus' resurrection confirmed the promise of the resurrection of all, is true, but that the "object" of his death was to prove to mankind the possibility of a future life, is not true, and can find not one text of Scripture to support it. The incongruity of such a view must be apparent to all thinkers. If that was the object, does it not suggest a great waste of effort on God's part? That result could have been as fully accomplished by raising one of the Patriarchs or Prophets from the dead. Could not they, indeed, have served such an object even better, in that they would have presented the "proof" of a future life to millions who died before Jesus came.

But the weakness and falsity of such an argument is made still more apparent by its quotations from Scripture to sustain itself, as shown in the following extract from the same article:

"Hence the peculiar propriety of the Divine appointment explained by St. Paul ([1 Cor. 15:21](#)) That since by man came death by man should also come the resurrection of the dead."

There can be no question that such a Scripture used as a proof that Jesus died to illustrate the resurrection doctrine is very "peculiar"; so much so, that we cannot see how any reasonable mind could so use it. If Jesus merely gave proof of the possibility of a resurrection, then Paul

would be made to mean that Adam merely proved the possibility of death. It would suit the theory of our contemporary if Paul had said, Since by man death was proved, by man also the resurrection was proved.

What the Apostle declares, is, that by a man came death, not an illustration of it, and that by a man came resurrection --not an illustration of it, in one case more than the other. In our opinion that is a miserable theory which in sustaining itself, so blinds the intellect, that the meaning of so plain a Scripture could not be discerned; or else in spite of intellect and reason, would prostitute Scripture and distort the truth.

Is it not very "peculiar," too, that all the sacrificial types which pointed to Christ's work, pointed to and illustrated his death, and in no way illustrated his resurrection? Truly this is "peculiar," if this writer's theory is correct, that the very object of Jesus' coming was to illustrate and "prove" a resurrection. Does this writer conclude that Jehovah was ignorant of the "object" and caused typical shadows to be made which illustrated the wrong thing? We suggest that he go slower, and learn from Bible statements and illustrations, that Jesus "made his soul an offering for sin," and "died for OUR SINS."

Again we quote:

"That Jesus did not die in the room and in the stead of humanity, or in his death become a substitute for humanity in any sense, appears to us, in the light of observation and reason, to be a self-evident proposition. But in the minds of some the question may arise, why not upon this point appeal simply to Scripture and to Scriptural language instead of to reason and observation?"

Our reply is that we are in doubt of the meaning of certain texts, and to reason and observation we must appeal to learn what they do signify. For instance, when it is said that "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree," ([1 Pet. 2:24](#),) are we to learn that our sins legally and literally were transferred from us to him as is generally supposed? Or are we to learn that as a son and as a descendant of Adam he bore our sinful nature--the Adamic nature--upon the tree?"

Upon the above we offer no comment, but remind our readers of an article in the January, '84, TOWER, under the caption, "HIMSELF TOOK

OUR INFIRMITIES, AND BARE OUR SICKNESSES."

In replying to the third question of the series, "How did Jesus put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?" ([Heb. 9:26](#)), our contemporary says:

This position [of Z.W.T.] assumes that for, or on account of Adam's transgression, all humanity rests under death. This we consider, without any argument, accepting at once its claims. This position assumes further, which we believe to be correct, that this death is not the mere act of dying,...but the state of death, as the penalty upon Adam reads: "Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." Then the text under consideration contemplates the putting away of this condition. But...how is this state of death put away, "borne away," or "blotted out?" and "to this work, what relation does the sacrifice of Jesus sustain? ([Heb. 9:26](#)).

To the first question no other reply can be made, than that it must be brought about by a resurrection from the dead. To the second question --...The sacrifice of Jesus was not commercial, was not representative, but moral; therefore it was only a pattern to which persons or the world must conform." "Peter wrote of this work as the blotting out of sins....He did not here refer to the blotting out or putting away of the act of sin, or the fact of sin,...but to the penalty of sin--the death state."

In the above, mark well how the writer mis-states the question in order to prepare for the answer he wishes to force upon it. After pointing out the consequence of sin to be death, and in this agreeing with us and with Scripture, he attempts to exchange in the mind of his reader the consequence for the sin which produced it, by saying as above, "Then the text under consideration contemplates the putting away of this condition [death.] But how is this state of death put away, &c.?"

This text says nothing about putting away death, not a word; it treats of "putting away sin." Of course, when sin is put away or blotted out, its consequence, death, will be removed, as shown in OTHER Scriptures; but to remove the consequence of sin would not be the putting away or removal of the sin which produced those consequences. To illustrate: A man condemned

as guilty, is imprisoned. If his penalty be paid, his guilt atoned for, he may go free as a consequence; but the settlement of his guilt and the freeing in consequence are entirely distinct: for suppose he were to gain his freedom while still guilty, would he not be liable to reimprisonment? So, with the Great Judge. His "condemnation passed upon all men"--all are guilty, and all are under the penalty of that guilt-- death. But should any be released from the penalty of sin without their guilt being canceled, they surely would be liable again to the penalty, if justice could reach them. However none could possibly escape. But "thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift"--"The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"--for Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and "gave himself a ransom for all." Thus our release is permanent and final, because it is legally accomplished by the cancelling beforehand of our guilt. In a word, the release from death the penalty, is a CONSEQUENCE of the release from guilt which caused it. Our contemporary having wrested this Scripture to mean what it does not say, proceeds to use it in its distorted form, saying, "How is this state of death [R640 : page 6] put away?" "To this work what relation does the sacrifice of Jesus sustain?"

But even if its mis- statement of the question were considered, it would demolish his answer; for if the sacrifice of Jesus "was only a pattern" to which persons of the world MUST conform," then one of two conclusions must be true:--either all "persons" who lived before the pattern was made, are lost in death forever, or else the sacrifice of Jesus as a pattern was entirely unnecessary.

We now come to the question answered last in the Millenarian, and with which it concludes its answer to the series. The question is number five in the list, viz:--In what way was Jesus "a propitiation for our sins"? ([1 Jno. 2:2](#) and [4:10](#).)

We are at a loss for fitting words whereby to express our righteous indignation at the shameful deception attempted [R641 : page 6] in the answer of this question. We say attempted, because we hope that at least some of the readers of that journal were sufficiently critical to notice it.

The ordinary King James' version contains the word propitiation three times; two of these are proper translations, and one is improper.

The Greek word hilasmos is correctly translated "propitiation." It signifies-- That which satisfies or propitiates. It occurs only twice. (1 Jno. 2:2 and 4:10.)

The Greek word hilasterion rendered "propitiation" in [Rom. 3:25](#), is not a good translation. It should rather have been rendered Propitiatory. It signifies The COVERING on which propitiation is accomplished.

This Greek word occurs but one other time ([Heb. 9:5](#)) and is there more correctly translated "Mercy Seat," and refers to the golden lid which covered the Law, in the Ark, in the Tabernacle of the wilderness, ([Ex. 26:34](#).) which was the propitiatory covering, in type-- that on which satisfaction was presented to God, and where, as a consequence, mercy was dispensed. Really, however, the word signifies no more a mercy- seat than a justice- seat; it was both. We here quote both the texts in which this word hilasterion occurs, from Rotherham's translation.

"The ark of the covenant covered around on every side with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and the rod of Aaron that sprouted, and the tables of the covenant [Law]; but over-above it the cherubim of glory overshadowing the propitiatory." ([Heb. 9:5](#).)

"Whom [Jesus] God set forth as a propitiatory--covering through faith in his BLOOD." ([Rom. 3:25](#).)

In a foot-note to the last quotation of Scripture, Rotherham says: "This complex idea we get partly from the word hilasterion itself, partly (as used in the Septuagint) from its association in Hebrew legislation. The mind of an Israelite would be carried back to the central word Kopher: the living, covered, shielded, saved by the dying. Substitution is there [i.e., suggested in the word]; appropriation also, and acquittal --all emanating from the propitiousness of Jehovah."

Hoping that all can clearly see the distinctness and difference of these two Greek words, and yet their relationship, it becomes our duty to point out the deception attempted by our contemporary.

Our question contained words from [1 Jno. 2:2](#) and [4:10](#), which were in quotation marks. "A propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins," and our

contemporary started out with the correct words. But after a roundabout reference to popular opinions, he befogs his readers by saying of propitiation:

"It occurs in the apostolic writings three times. We shall call attention to the first occurrence, and then from this one to the others."

Thus in a manner well calculated to mislead the unsuspecting, the writer starts out to discuss [Rom. 3:25](#), saying:--

"The word propitiation as it occurs here [our italics] is from the Greek word "hilasterion."

And does the writer omit entirely the statement of the different Greek words in the two other places that the word "propitiation" occurs--the very text which he pretends to be answering? He does; and the only reference to them is at the close of the article, where he says:

"All this prepares us for an easy comprehension of the other occurrences [of the word propitiation], so much so that it is hardly necessary for us to write of them at all."

And he does not write of THEM at all. What perfidity is this, what deception and misleading, to attempt to confuse the English reader who has no knowledge of the Greek, by AN explanation of one word as a sample of a totally different one, and then, to make the deception complete, adding, "this prepares us for an easy comprehension of the other occurrences." Such treatment of Scripture is worthy of the Church of Rome. All should be on their guard against a theory which needs to resort to such false statements for support.

It is truly wonderful--the lengths to which men will go in support of this false doctrine--denying that the Lord bought them ([2 Pet. 2:1](#).)

From what we have above shown of the real meaning of these two words hilasmos and hilasterion, we trust that all may clearly see that Jesus was our "hilasterion" or propitiatory covering ([Rom. 3:25](#)); that is to say, he is set forth by Jehovah as the expression of his

propitiousness (his favor) in the forgiveness or covering of sins through faith in his blood--faith in his sin-offering.

And in order to be thus set forth as the one through which Jehovah's propitiousness is shown, it was necessary that he should first become our "hilasmos," our substitute, the satisfaction for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

In a word, then, "hilasmos" refers to that part of Jesus' work which is finished, (the sacrifice of himself,) while "hilasterion" refers to that work which results from the sacrifice. He now and ever will be the personal centre through and from whom, Jehovah's favor will be obtainable, because he became the [hilasmos] propitiation or satisfaction for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

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WE ANSWER FOR THEM.

It will be remembered that when two months after our questions were suggested, no answers were offered by our contemporaries, we answered them for them, from what we believed to be their standpoint. It was then, however, thought by some that we did not fairly represent their views. So now we repeat our answers FOR THEM, putting them side by side with our gleanings from the only one of the number which even attempted an answer.

We hope you will carefully compare. We believe in a few words we did fully and fairly represent their ideas on this subject. We quote from our issue of April, 1883:

(1) Why did Jesus die?

Their answer: Because he was an imperfect man, and hence as liable to death as any other member of the Adamic race, and death passed upon all." (See [Rom. 5:12](#).)

We object and answer, that no cause of death was in him--"in him was life" and not death. In him was no sin, hence on him the punishment of sin-- death--could have no power. His death was a free-will sacrifice as our redemption price. He could have sustained life as a perfect and sinless man forever, but he "gave his life a ransom for many."

Paul substantiates our position, saying: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" ([1 Cor. 15:3](#).)

(2) "How does Jesus' death affect our sins?"

Their answer: It has no direct effect upon our sins. We die for our own sins and thus pay our own penalty. Jesus died for himself and thus paid for his imperfection (which they do not care to openly call sin.) The indirect effect of his death was, that he furnished us an example, or illustration of fortitude and endurance, etc., and thus his death was valuable to us only as an example of how we should suffer and die for truth and right.

We object and answer, that while it is true that Jesus' life and death were valuable examples, yet they were more-- much more than this, or else scores of Scriptures are meaningless and false. The prophets, who, because of their witness for and loyalty to truth, were sawn asunder, stoned to death, etc., and the Apostles, who were crucified and beheaded, etc., these all were valiant for truth, and full of faith, and are all good examples, and are so recognized in Scripture ([Phil. 3:17](#)). But where is it claimed that by their examples they redeemed or ransomed or bought us with their blood?

The penalty of our sin was death, and we could never have been freed from that great prison-house--we could never have had a resurrection to life had not some one done more than set us an example. The question would still be, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And the answer points out only the one able to deliver from the condemnation of death. "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "For to this end Christ both died, rose and revived that he might be Lord [Master --or have authority over] the living and the dead" ([1 Cor. 15:57](#) and [Rom. 14:9](#)). We answer this question then: HE BARE OUR SINS in his own body on the tree" ([1 Pet. 2:24](#)).

(3) How did Jesus put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?

Their answer:--By his example and teaching he taught men to put away sin for themselves, and thus, in a sense, it might be said that he put the sin away.

We object, that Moses and the prophets had taught men to abstain from sin; hence, if Jesus put away sin only by precept and example, he did no more than others. And, if it is true, that "In him was no sin," how could he be an example of how to put away what he did not have? But note, the question is a quotation from Paul ([Heb. 9:26](#)), and it reads that he put away sin, not by precept and example of his life, but "by the sacrifice of himself." Read the connections, and try to view the matter from the Apostle's inspired standpoint, and unless you think, as one of these contemporaries does, that Paul often [R642 : page 6] made mistakes and misquotations, you should be convinced of his meaning when penning these words.

Remember, too, that when Moses, as a type of Jesus, taught men to abstain from sin, he, too, did more--he typically made a sin offering--a sacrifice for sin. And the antitype not only taught purity, but did more--made himself a sacrifice for sin--the true sacrifice--"The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

(4) In what way did he give "himself a ransom (Greek, antilutron--an equivalent or corresponding price) for all"?

To this question they can give no answer except by denying the meaning of the word, which any one may see, by reference to Young's concordance. The significance of the original is very pointed. Jesus not only gave a price for the ransom of the Adamic race, but Paul says he gave an equivalent price. A perfect man had sinned and forfeited all right to life; Jesus, another perfect man, bought back those forfeited rights by giving his unforfeited human existence a ransom--an equivalent price. Read now Paul's argument ([Rom. 5:18,19](#)): "Therefore, as by the offence 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. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

(5) In what way was he "a propitiation (satisfaction) for our sins?"

This is another question which they cannot answer. They would like to declare that he was not a satisfaction in this sense, or not a

satisfaction in that sense, or not a satisfaction in some other sense; but the question, "In what sense was he a "satisfaction for our sins?" they cannot answer.

[See above that the Millenarian did not answer this text, but attempted to mislead its readers by substituting another.]

We answer, that this text is in perfect harmony with all Scripture. The Law of life (obedience) was broken by Adam, and both he and his posterity were condemned as unfit for life. Jesus became our ransom by paying our death penalty, and thus justifying us to life, which in due time comes to all, to be again either accepted or rejected. Yes, we are glad that the claims of the Law upon our race were fully satisfied by our Redeemer.

(6) In what sense were we "bought with a price?"

Their answer: Bought is not a good word; it conveys too much of the "commercial idea"; they would say, rather, Ye were taken, etc.

We object; by such false reasonings the Word of God would be robbed of all its meaning. Words are useless unless they carry some idea. What other meaning is there in the word "bought" than the "commercial idea"? It has no other meaning or idea in it. But Paul was a lawyer, and his teachings, more than any other Apostle's, are hard to twist; and in this instance he guards well his statement, by saying, not only that we were "bought," but he says it was with a price;" and then, lest some one should claim that the price was the ministry and teachings of Jesus, Peter is caused to guard it by adding--"With the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." ([1 Cor. 6:20](#); [1 Pet. 1:19](#).)

In conclusion, let us say in a few words, what they do think of the value and preciousness of the death of Christ. They believe and have privately expressed, and it is the covered import of their public teachings, which they do not yet wish to state boldly--not until they get false premises and conclusions engrafted first, as a basis on which to place it,--that Jesus' death no more paid your ransom price than did Paul's or than my death would; nay, put it stronger, that his death was of no value in redeeming us.

As before pointed out, this denial of the ransom we believe to be the great rock upon which the nominal Church is even to-day being dashed.

The doctrine of the substitution of Jesus, in settlement of the sinner's guilt and punishment, is being scoffed at among the "great preachers"; and the doctrine, so plainly taught by the Apostles, that the death of Jesus was the price of our release from death, is falling into discredit and disrepute among the "worldly great," and hence also among some who would like to be of that class.

The reason of this is evident: it is the story of the two extremes over again. Satan had engrafted on the Church the doctrine of eternal torment, and, to be consistent, led on to the thought that Jesus bore eternal torment for every man. This involved eternity of suffering by Jesus. This evidently was untrue; so it was explained, that when in Gethsemane and at Calvary, Jesus suffered as much agony in a few hours as all humanity would have suffered in an eternity of torture. Now, it does not take a very smart man to see that something is surely wrong in such a view of Jesus' substitution. [Either the penalty of sin is not eternal torture, or else Jesus was not man's substitute. One or the other is wrong, for Jesus is not suffering eternal torment.] It seems to be Satan's policy now to lead to the opposite extreme and deny substitution entirely.

Instead of casting away Satan's libel on our Heavenly Father's government-- the doctrine of eternal torment--most men seem to hold on to it, and roll it as a sweet morsel under their tongues, and discard the teachings of the Apostles relative to Jesus' death being our ransom price--the price or substitute for our forfeited lives.

Would that all might see the beauties and harmonies of God's Word. Man condemned to death--extinction; Jesus, man's substitute or ransom, died for our sins and thus redeemed or bought us back to life, which redemption will be accomplished by a resurrection to life. Jesus, as a man, is dead eternally; his humanity stayed in death as our ransom, and he arose a new creature--a spiritual [R642 : page 7] instead of a human being--put to death in the flesh, but quickened (made alive) in

spirit. "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him (so) no more."

Beloved, let us stand firm on the foundation of all hope--the ransom--and now, when the enemy comes in like a flood, be not afraid to act and speak for truth boldly if you would be recognized by him who lifts up a standard for the people. ([Isa. 59:19.](#))

We ask now the question: Did we answer correctly for them, or are they able to answer these questions in as few words differently? Or can they object to our answers, and taking each up singly, can they show that it is not their view plainly stated, so that all may understand?

But we must remember that one of our contemporaries, "The World's Hope," though it has never yet answered these questions as it proposed to do "in due time," claimed that in the above we had not presented its view fairly. On that account we published an article in which we made extracts from its columns, and answered them, showing that it either used words in an improper sense, or else denied its own teachings. As we are repeating the answers, we repeat, in the article below, our criticism of its denial, that our answers may be seen to be entirely fair and applicable; and further, because the subject increases in importance as we see that in these closing hours of the Gospel age, our adversary is using every effort to remove the faith of God's children from the rock foundation--the only foundation upon which any faith-building can stand, without destruction, the storms of this Day of the Lord.

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