

Beauties of the Truth

A Forum for the Publication of Scriptural Viewpoints
Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages
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The Wandering of Hagar

And Abraham ... took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba” (Genesis 21:14).

Sometimes in scripture we have occasions where God approves of actions that we might not think to be very kind. A frequent target of Bible critics concerns the direction God gave to the Israelites to eradicate the Canaanites: men, women and children. Yet a careful analysis of any such situation will reveal God's eternal love for all his creatures.

An instance of this, though not comparable to the war against the Canaanites, may be found in the life of Abraham. It concerns the putting out of Hagar and her son Ishmael from the household. This might seem to be unkind and a rejection of his parental responsibilities. But the circumstances do seem compelling.

Ishmael was the first child born of his loins. The presence of Ishmael in the household after Isaac was born created competition between the two. Perhaps it would be better to characterize it as animosity. According to the Jewish Talmud, when Isaac was five years old something happened that required painful but necessary action:

“Ishmael, the son of Hagar and Abraham, was very fond of hunting and field sports. He carried his bow with him at all times, and upon one occasion, when Isaac was about five years of age, Ishmael aimed his arrow at the child, crying, “Now I am going to shoot thee.” Sarah witnessed this action, and fearing for the life of her son, and disliking the child of her handmaid, she made many complaints to Abraham of the boy's doings, and urged him to dismiss both Hagar and Ishmael from his tent, and send them to live at some other place.”¹

If this tradition is true, you can understand the reaction of Sarah to this behavior. Ishmael was in his late teens by this time and even this pretence had the overtones of a death threat. She could no longer permit Ishmael or his mother to remain in the home. So Abraham put them out.

“And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba.

And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lifted up her voice, and wept.

“And God heard the voice of the lad: and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation

“And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went, and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink. And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer. And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt” (Genesis 21:14-21).

The key to understanding this and many other narratives in the scriptures is to remember that God overruled the circumstances in order to create a picture of future events. While real people with real motivations and full freedom of choice are involved, our wise God is able to move the outworking of history to teach us prophecy! Here are a couple of texts where the Apostle Paul teaches this very lesson:

Romans 15:4 — “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

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1 Corinthians 10:11 — “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [types, Strong’s 5179]: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” These are general principles that help us to see the deeper lessons in the Hebrew Scriptures. But in the case of Hagar, we have the plain declaration of Paul that it is an allegory, that is, a type:

“Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Galatians 4:24-31).

Here is a summary of the types given by the Apostle Paul:

Hagar = “Mt. Sinai” = “Jerusalem which is now with her children” = The Old Law Covenant

Ishmael = The nation of Israel — children of the Law

The casting out = The disinheritation of the nation from the spiritual promises of the Gospel Age because of pride

THE CASTING OUT

We can trace this casting out of Israel to the words of Jesus: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matthew 23:37-39).

The whole context of Jesus’ message here underscores both the need and fairness of his judgment. It is after showing the hypocrisy of the national leaders and their unfitness for further blessings that our Lord Jesus uttered the words “your house is left unto you desolate.” The “house” here is the **national** house. And the desolation of that house betokens a suspension of covenant relationship with Jehovah God. Favor was to be removed until they individually or nationally acknowledged Jesus Christ.

This should not have come as a surprise to the Jewish leadership! God was very clear in their law (Hebrew, *Torah*) about the blessings that would come with faithfulness to him and the cursing that would come from unfaithfulness.

In Leviticus 26, Verses **1-13** describe what God would do if they were faithful. Verses **14-39** describe what God would do if they proved to be unfaithful.

We see this again in Deuteronomy 28: Verses **1-14** state what God would do if they were faithful. Verses **15-68** state what God would do if they proved to be unfaithful.

Consequently, the prophetic words of judgment in their Law began to come upon the natural seed of Abraham. But even in their cast-out condition, the overruling love of God still operates. Consider some of the details of the casting out of Hagar.

In Genesis 21:14 we read that Abraham gave Hagar bread and a bottle of water. This may not seem like much, but remember this is a picture. Abraham represents God. What did God give the cast out nation of Israel for their sustenance? It must be the same thing that he had given them all along! Namely the truths and prophetic promises contained in the Law, Prophets and Psalms.

Let’s consider a just a few of many examples of the symbolic “bread” and “water” that were given to Israel.

(1) Deuteronomy 18:15 — “The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken”

While certainly individuals of the Jewish nation recognized Jesus, there was not a national recognition. The leadership had a hardness of heart and self-inflicted blindness that corrupted their perceptions of Jesus. And most of the people went along with these evil leaders. However, this meant that the Jews then and for the next twenty centuries continued to look for Messiah. It was a hope that sustained them! And it is still a real hope for many today. Their Messiah, in the person of the glorified Jesus, will come for them to deliver them. Their blindness will be removed and they as a nation will finally see.

(2) Psalm 2 — This entire Psalm certainly speaks of a time when those who plot against God’s anointed King will be destroyed. The Jew would undoubtedly apply this to this future hope of having their Messianic King lead them to victory.

(3) Jeremiah 16:14,15 — “Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, The LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the lands whither he had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers.”

Pious Jews for centuries entertained the hope of going back to the Promised Land. This is one more of those promises that Jews held on to. “Next year in Jerusalem” was the hopeful expression they used for centuries. Also see Jeremiah 23:7,8 where the regathering is not only from the “north” but from “all the countries” God had driven them!

(4) Ezekiel 37:21-28 — “And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be



divided into two kingdoms any more at all: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore."

We add the above citation because of the reference to David. Every Jew was taught of the prosperity and ascendancy of the nation of Israel under King David. The return of David as King, a veiled reference to Messiah, along with a new covenant of peace and security, keep the faith of so many going strong.

All of these words and many, many others in the Hebrew Scriptures constitute the "bread" and "water" of Israel's sustenance during her cast off wandering.

It is interesting to note in Alfred Edersheim's work *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*,² his lengthy discussion as to how the Law and its associated traditions kept the Jews a national people in spite of their nearly 2000 years of wandering. This is unprecedented in history and shows the power of the Law for those long centuries.

Even though the Law sustained them, it was also responsible for the hatred the world had for the Jews because the Law made them a separated, "peculiar" people. But that same hatred united them in a way few other things could. Referring to this effect of hatred, Alfred Edersheim wrote further:

"That such should have been the case, and these widely scattered members have been united in one body, is a unique fact in history. Its only true explanation must be sought in a higher Divine impulse. The links which bound them together were: a common creed, a common life, a common centre, and a common hope."³

THE WANDERING IN THE WILDERNESS OF BEERSHEBA

Recall that Hagar and Ishmael wandered in Beersheba. The word "Beer-sheba" means, "well of the oath." A city of the same name was located on the southern frontier of Israel. That city also had an excellent supply of water. From this geography originated the expression "from Dan to Beersheba."⁴ It meant the entire land of Israel, from north to south.

Beersheba, because of its remoteness, seemed to be among the first cities to leave the true worship of God and to descend into paganism. It was therefore frequently cited as an example of unfaithfulness.

2 Chronicles 19:4 — "And Jehoshaphat dwelt at Jerusalem: and he went out again through the people from Beersheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the LORD God of their fathers." In this text the people in Beersheba had deviated from true worship. So Jehoshaphat brings them back to the God of their fathers.

Amos 5:5 — "But seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba: for Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought."

Amos 8:11-14 — "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again."

Again in these two excerpts from Amos we see Beersheba definitely associated with estrangement from Jehovah. With this in mind, it appears consistent in the allegory to associate the wandering of Hagar and Ishmael to the Diaspora of the Jews during the Gospel Age, a period of estrangement and disfavor.

THE PROVISIONS RUN OUT

As Ishmael was sustained during the wandering by his weakening mother, so a weakening Law Covenant sustained the Jews during the Gospel Age. How was it weakening?

Weakening from God's side. We note first of all that although the Law still lived for the Jews, in reality it no longer indicated a relationship with their God. They had ceased to be his "peculiar" people and no longer had blessings in basket and store as they had during the Jewish Age. Note this idea in Hebrews 8:13 — "In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away."

Of course, for individual Jews who accepted Jesus, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:4).

As far as God was concerned, though the Law still represented his perfect standards and still prophetically expressed portions of his Divine Plan. But Jehovah was simply not dealing with the fleshly seed of Abraham during the Gospel Age!

Weakening from Israel's side. As the Gospel Age approaches its finish, it is marked and continues to be marked by increasing godlessness in the world. This influence was felt also among the exiled Jews. More and more, godly faith and hope was replaced by the vain philosophies of men. Faith in oneself instead of God is more the norm for the Jew today. The growth of so-called Reform Judaism throws out long held doctrines of their Hebrew Scriptures and replaces them with "modern" ideas.⁵ Reliance on God and his promises remains in but a small faithful remnant.

The Old Law Covenant, pictured by Hagar, no longer has sustenance for Ishmael, the modern day seed of Abraham. She is fading and beliefs based on her are fading. This worldly Jewish class that has been growing for over a century now, is dying spiritually. The Law is so weak for them, that its influences in their lives is virtually gone. And since this class seems to be a majority, at least in the West if not also in the East, it may be said that the nation is dying as respects the provisions God gave for their sustenance.⁶

In the type this leads Hagar to abandon Ishmael. The account says that she "casts the child under one of the shrubs." This is a curious action since Ishmael is about 19 years old! What is probably happening here is that both are very weak physically. Hagar has the fortitude and motivation of a mother trying to save the life of her son. So she and he were undoubtedly hanging on to each other and supporting each other at this difficult part of the journey until finally an exhausted Hagar can support him no more. So she lays him under the shade of a bush or tree.

Convinced now that they will die, she cannot bear to see her son expire, so she removes herself some distance away — a bowshot — likely 50 or 60 yards. This would be far enough away not to see, yet close enough should her son cry out.

This separation between Ishmael and his mother represents the final separation of the fleshly seed of Abraham

from the Law Covenant. It is the final crisis in their relationship and perhaps corresponds to the time of Jacob's trouble when the survival of the nation is uncertain.

During the time of Jacob's trouble, Israel's extinction will seem imminent. Appeals to the promises of the Old Law will appear pointless. God will seem far away, all hope lost. Until ...

DELIVERANCE

... God speaks to Hagar. Though she has been weeping, it is not her cry that he hears! It is the "voice of the lad!" Hagar's cries had been for Ishmael. The Old Law Covenant has been speaking continually to Israel. But God's response is to the need of the lad, of Israel, and he reassures Hagar that Ishmael will be a great nation!

We read, "God opened her eyes." This saving time will be when the true prophecies of the Law are made clear and opened; when Israel will finally see the truth of what lay hidden in the Law.

Romans 11:25,26 — "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:"

Zechariah 12:10 — "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."

Ezekiel 39:29 — "Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD."

And with that, Hagar is shown a well! She gathers the water and quenches the thirst of Ishmael. For Israel in the antitype, the promises of the Old Testament now come forth with fulfillment and refreshment, as they have never seen! This well of water seems to represent the fulfillment of the original Abrahamic Covenant to bless the seed of Abraham. Remember that Beersheba means "well of oath." So the unilateral, oath-bound covenant made with Abraham will finally bless Israel. It is noteworthy too to see that the ultimate purpose of The Old Law Covenant will be accomplished, i.e. to lead all Israel to Christ (see Galatians 3:24). The New Covenant, the Covenant that replaces the Law Covenant, will write God's law in the hearts of the earthly seed of Abraham and ultimately all who join with Israel in the worship of Jehovah (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

THE RESTORATION

The conclusion of the experience is the blessing of Ishmael. He became an archer. A good archer hits the mark of the bull's eye. It is interesting that the word for "sin" means to "miss the mark." Sin will be taken away

from Israel and they will be enabled by writing God's law in their hearts to "hit the mark!" (also compare Psalm 127:3-5).

We are told that Ishmael dwelled in the wilderness of Paran. Paran means "abundance of foliage" or "caves" depending upon the reference source. Israel will have an abundance of blessings and God said he would "make him a great nation." It is interesting that Ishmael had twelve sons which became twelve tribes (Genesis 25:13-17). This is, perhaps, another connector and identifier to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Lastly, we notice that Ishmael's mother took him a wife out of Egypt. This is the only time where Hagar is identified by the word "mother." We suggest that by this action she now represents a different covenant, namely the New Covenant. Through the New Covenant the Gentile world, pictured by Ishmael's Egyptian wife, will come into harmony with God through a relationship with Israel!

Isaiah 60:3 — "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

We rejoice that Divine Providence has left us this exciting type of Israel's experience. Though it is a very brief picture, it is amazing that there is so much detail.

"Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her: That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees. As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem" (Isaiah 66:10-13).

— Br. David Stein

(1) H. Olano, *The Talmud: Selections*, [1876], page 50.

(2) Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Book 1, pages 66, 67, Wm. B. Eerdmans, November, 1971.

(3) Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Book 1, pages 75, Wm. B. Eerdmans, November, 1971.

(4) See examples of this in Judges 20:1, 1 Samuel 3:20, 2 Samuel 17:11, 24:2,15, 1 Kings 4:25, 1 Chronicles 21:2, 30:5. It is also interesting that the distance between the two was 144 miles! (see Easton's Bible Dictionary)

(5) Reformed Judaism embraces a variety of beliefs, one may find among them atheism, denial of an individual Messiah, pro-choice in abortion, homosexual rights, no original sin, and the creation account in Genesis as symbolic. See www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/2001/06/What-Reform-Jews-Believe.aspx

(6) It is not suggested that there isn't a faithful remnant. But that faithful remnant is not dealt with in this picture. The picture seems to be intended more to describe the prevailing condition of the majority of the nation, a situation seen many times in Israel's history.

Michael Nekora

November 4, 2011

Bro. Michael Nekora, well known to nearly all our readers, completed his term in the "School of Christ" and passed to his service above, on the evening of November 4, 2011, as the clouds parted near sunset.

Bro. Nekora served as one of the founding editors of *Beauties of the Truth* in October 1990 and continued to serve as a thoughtful and insightful editor for the next 17 years. His life here ended at home, where he had received hospice care in his last weeks.

Bro. Nekora was a tireless servant of the brethren. We will miss his crisply prepared lessons, presented with enthusiasm. A favorite passage of his from Shakespeare extolled the virtues of Mercy.

"The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blest: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes. Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes the throned monarch better than his crown. His scepter shows the force of temporal power ... But mercy is above this sceptered sway; It is enthroned in the heart of kings; It is an attribute of God himself; And earthly power doth then show like God's when mercy seasons justice." This quotation closed one of Bro. Nekora's well remembered lessons.

Bro. Nekora leaves to us an example of responsible application to his duties. When he accepted an assignment, a project, a task — and he accepted so many — one could count on his faithful and timely fulfillment. When these were done, he would seek others, in order to serve the spiritual interests of the brethren.

His responsibilities have been distributed to many brethren, each to shoulder a little, to help fill the void he leaves. He has now entered into rest. His labors have ended, but "his works follow after."

Financial Report

666.84	Balance January 1, 2011
3,575.13	Donations
- 3,004.45	Expenses
1,237.52	Balance January 1, 2012
515	Current Subscribers

The Sacrificial Ritual of Ezekiel 43

Understanding Leviticus chapter 16 has blessed Bible Students for well over 120 years.¹ It is interesting to note that Ezekiel 43:18-27 has many of the same symbols and overall tone. We believe it is another picture of the Antitypical Atonement Day sacrifices of the Gospel Age, as it is a ritual that takes place immediately before the activation of Ezekiel's Temple, which is a Millennial Age picture. The differences between Ezekiel 43 and Leviticus 16 are particularly interesting. Ezekiel in overview shows:

Verse 18 — The offerings for the Altar

Verse 19 — The Sons of Zadok offer a Bullock for a Sin-Offering, Day 1

Verse 20 — The procedures for the Bullock's blood

Verse 21 — Burning the Bullock outside the Sanctuary

Verse 22 — The Goat for a Sin-Offering, Day 2

Verse 23, 24 — The Bullock and Ram for a Burnt Offering

Verse 25, 26 — Seven Days of Sin-Offering Goats

Verse 27 — At the end, on the 8th day, the Altar is ready to receive the peace offerings of the people.

DAY 1

The prophecy of Ezekiel's Temple begins in Ezekiel chapter 40. We are given a great deal of detail regarding the structure itself. It concludes with a description of the great Altar in Ezekiel 43:13-17, where we are given the instruction necessary to put the Altar into service. As is always the case, it is sanctified with sacrifices offered by priests. In this account, the priests that are qualified to do it are the sons of Zadok in verse 19.

“And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord GOD, a young bullock for a sin offering.”

Who is the “seed of Zadok?” During the reign of David and Solomon there was a particularly faithful priest of that name. His faithfulness is recounted in 2 Samuel and 1 Kings. So we associate his name with faithful priestly service. Consequently, those of the “seed of Zadok” we understand are likewise faithful in the office of priest. Add to that the fact that Zadok means “righteous.” This is another indicator of the righteousness and faithfulness of the class intended.²

We suggest that the seed of Zadok represent **The Christ**. This is the royal priesthood with Jesus as our High Priest with all the faithful members of his mystical body. It is they who carry out the sacrifices of the Gospel Age and are permitted to minister unto God. This perspective also explains the specific absence of the High Priest in this picture.

The first sacrifice of the ritual is a bullock for a sin-offering. This corresponds to the first sacrifice of the Atonement Day sacrifices. Verse 20 continues the instructions:



Ezekiel, the Prophet

“And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it.”

We associate the bullock with the sacrifice of Jesus just as we do in Leviticus 16. It is a powerful animal with a great deal of fat. This depicts the perfections of the man Jesus and his fullness of zeal for his heavenly Father. The sanctifying blood of the bullock is to be applied to various places on the Altar. This is a little different than on Atonement Day where the blood is sprinkled on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant. Here the focus is on the Altar. The horns, corners, and border of the Altar are all covered with blood indicating an empowerment of the Altar. That the bullock is slain first, tells us that the whole process depends upon this initial sacrifice. Jesus is preminent in the Divine Plan. Any acceptability that the church has is due entirely to our Forerunner and the value of his sacrifice.

Verse 21 — “Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary.”

We have another similarity here with the Atonement Day as the body of the sin-offering bullock is to be burned without or outside of the sanctuary. We suggest the same lesson that the sacrifice of Jesus was not appreciated by those in the world, i.e. outside of the sanctuary class.

DAY 2

Before we go on to the next sacrifice, note that there is no separate burnt offering associated with the bullock. It seems to stand alone. We think the significance of this comes into focus when we look at the burnt offerings that are required for the subsequent sin-offerings.

Verse 22 — “And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock.”

Here we have the second sacrifice, the goat. This corresponds to the Lord's Goat sacrificed on the Atonement Day, and is a picture of the church. In Leviticus 16, the High Priest does the same thing with the blood of the Lord's goat as was done with the blood of the bullock. It is the same case here. The goat's blood is used to cleanse the Altar in the exact same manner as the blood of the bullock had done. This demonstrates the close association the church's sacrifice has with that of our Lord in the cleansing and empowering of the Altar.

Verse 23, 24 — “When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish. And thou shalt offer them before the LORD, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the LORD.”

We now reach the point of the first burnt offerings. There are two: a bullock and a ram. This is different than the Atonement Day ritual where a ram for a burnt offering was offered after the sin-offerings, after the scapegoat was dealt with and after Aaron had changed into the garments of glory and beauty. Whereas here, two burnt offerings are required immediately after the blood of the goat is applied to the Altar.

Burnt Offerings, as types, represent how God accepts the sacrifices, that is, he accepts them “wholly,”³ not in part. Everything placed on the altar is consumed and ascends unto heaven. How God accepts a sacrifice also includes symbolic references to the covenants or legal basis to accept the sacrifice. For example, the choice of a ram reminds us of the ram accepted in place of Isaac when the Abrahamic covenant was fully completed by Abraham’s obedience in offering his son. In Ezekiel 43 we have both a ram and a bullock. So we conclude that the legal/covenant basis for the acceptance of the goat, i.e. the church, is the Abrahamic covenant⁴ and the sacrifice of Jesus, the bullock!

SEVEN DAYS FOLLOWING

We noted earlier that there were no burnt offerings associated with the sacrifice of the bullock. The absence of a bullock for a burnt offering is understandable. If the bullock burnt offering brings us back to the sacrifice of Jesus, the original bullock sin-offering, it would be redundant if it were seen following that first sacrifice. It would be almost like saying “Jesus sacrifice is acceptable because of Jesus’ sacrifice.” **Our** sacrifice is acceptable because of Jesus’ sacrifice. But Jesus’ sacrifice is fully and totally acceptable as is.⁵

Verses 25-26 — “Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish. Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves.”



A goat was offered each day for seven days.

Here we have a significant departure from the Atonement Day type which had but one goat for the sin-offering. Here there are seven goats, one each on seven successive days. The emphasis here is on the entire time of the Gospel Age in its seven stages. At each stage of the church, there continues faithful sacrificing on the part of the antitypical priests. It is acceptable sacrificing, as indicated by the successive burnt offering on each day.

THE EIGHTH DAY

Verse 27 — “And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord GOD.”

We reach the end of the sin-offerings on the eighth day. Now the Altar is ready to receive the free-will peace offering of Israel. This betokens the end of the Gospel age of sacrifice with the full and final acceptance of the sacrifice of **The Christ**.

That this should occur on the eighth day is quite beautiful. Eight represents newness of life. Jesus was resurrected to the divine nature on the eighth day! (The day after the Sabbath.) That is the thought here. **The Christ** is now glorified, in possession of the divine nature and ready to begin the reign of righteousness of the Mediatorial Age. Israel first and all mankind will then have an Altar on which to willingly present themselves in full consecration, not unto death, but unto **Life**. The way of access is open and the blessings will begin.

This inauguration of the Altar on the eighth day can be noted in one more parallel found in Leviticus chapters 8 and 9. The consecration of the Aaronic Priesthood took seven days. Then, regarding the eighth day, we read this in Leviticus 9:1-4. “And it came to pass on the eighth day ... for to day the LORD will appear unto you.”

After the sacrifices were offered, the high priest came out and blessed the people. The meaning here is the same as we saw in Ezekiel 43 and fits the Ezekiel sequence well.

As we leave Ezekiel chapter 43 and move to chapter 44, the emphasis now shifts to the activities of Christ’s Kingdom.

Why does the Lord prepare this picture which is similar in many ways to the Leviticus 16 type? The Atonement Day pictures pertain to the daily sin-offering experiences of Jesus and the Church. There are many very personal and intimate lessons for the New Creation there. In the Ezekiel type, we see Christ and the church more collectively, as a group doing the faithful work of sacrificing in order to bless Israel and all mankind in the Kingdom. This perspective works quite beautifully as a component of the Ezekiel Temple vision.

— Br. David Stein

(1) See *Tabernacle Shadows*, pages 72-74.

(2) We see this name in the ancient King-Priest of Salem, Melchizedek, whose name means “King” (*melchi*) of “Righteousness” (*zedek*, or as we see it here, Zadok).

(3) It is interesting to note that the Greek word for whole burnt offering is “holocaust” — for example, *holokautomata* in Hebrews 10:6,8.

(4) More particularly, it is the “Sarah Feature” of the Abrahamic Covenant that is symbolized here by the burnt offering of the Lamb. CT Russell provides an excellent description of this in the Question Book, pages 169,170, “Covenants — End of the Sarah”

Question — Does the Sarah Covenant come to an end when the spiritual seed is born?

Answer — Yes. To my understanding, the Sarah feature of the covenant will come to an end when the promised seed shall have come to its fullness. The Sarah Covenant did not come to an end when Jesus reached the plane of spirit glory, representing Isaac in the picture, but it did come to an end before Rebecca was united to Isaac. Rebecca represents the church class, and their union represents the union of Christ and the Church, and at the time when Isaac and Rebecca were united, Sarah was dead, for we read that Isaac took her into Sarah, his mother’s tent, representing that the Church, typified by Rebecca, will take the place of this Sarah Covenant, and the Church will be the power through which the Lord will bring to pass the blessing of the New Covenant, which will bless all the families of the earth. The Sarah Covenant brings forth the seed, and the Church operates in connection with this and will bless all families of the earth” (Q169, 1909).

(5) Something similar may be seen in the wave offerings described in Leviticus 23. The first wave offering of barley is presented on Nisan 16 and it is offered as a sheaf of barley. The second wave offering is two loaves of wheat baked with leaven and is waved on Pentecost. The first, representing Jesus, is acceptable as is. The second, representing the church, is NOT acceptable in its native form, but has to be processed. It is ground to flour and baked with leaven, a symbol of sin. Of course leaven is destroyed in the baking process, but only then is the end product, the two loaves, acceptable to be a wave offering to the Lord. The fact that two loaves are made suggested the two parts of the church, the little and great company.

For Liberty

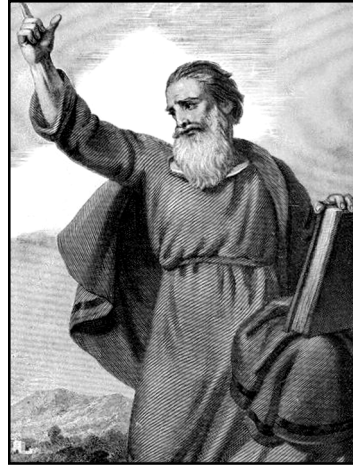
“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty”
(Galatians 5:13).

The doctrine of Christian Liberty is a broad one with many wonderful lessons. To this list we may add a nice note found in W.E. Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. Under the topic of **Freedom** we find this gem thought:

“The word is twice rendered “freedom” in the RV of Galatians 5:13 (KJV, “liberty”). The phraseology is that of manumission from slavery, which among the Greeks was effected by a legal fiction, according to which the manumitted slave was purchased by a god; as the slave could not provide the money, the master paid it into the temple treasury in the presence of the slave, a document being drawn up containing the words “for freedom.” No one could enslave him again, as he was the property of the god.”¹

This reference to manumission is a delightful one. While we can’t be positive that the Apostle wanted us to make the connection, it is unlikely that the Galatian brethren would have missed it, being in the Greek world of Asia Minor as they were.

We see a clear application to our vow of consecration. We are born in bondage to sin and death and cannot of ourselves escape it. As we read in Psalm 49:7:



Paul, the Apostle

“None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:”

In the context of Galatians, Paul is more particularly speaking of the bondage of Jews under the Law of Moses, the Law Covenant. For example:

“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world” (Galatians 4:3).

“Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children” (Galatians 4:24, 25).

But his lesson is that Christ makes free! “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Galatians 4:31). “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2).

Even the Gentile Christians who were not in bondage to the Law enjoy the liberty of Christ being redeemed from the world and the errors of the world. “Because the creature [creation] itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Romans 8:21). All of this happens as a result of consecration, the presentation of oneself unto God to follow the footsteps of Jesus (Romans 12:1).

Relating this back to the story told by W.E. Vine, we see that the church is specially invited during this Gospel Age to follow the example of Jesus and like him live a life of sacrifice. However there is the problem of our enslavement. We cannot pay the cost of our salvation and get out of slavery! Here Jesus steps forth and offers the value of his own life to cover the cost of our redemption.

That price is paid into the “temple treasury,” that is, into the hand of Divine Justice (1 Peter 1:18,19). This is akin to the Master in the story paying for the freedom of his slave. We are thus redeemed from the Adamic curse. Since we have consecrated our lives to God and it is accepted through Jesus, we become property of Jehovah God!

This is a redemption that can never be lost. We are forever free from the slavery of Adamic sin. How we live our lives subsequently is another matter and a further judgment will come. But we have been “manumitted” forever. We have a **liberty** which can never be taken from us.

(1) *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*, W.E. Vine, M.A., Fleming H. Revell Company, 1966, page 131.