

April/69



"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night:
if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12

ASPECTS OF THE INCARNATION - 11

The plan for man's redemption was not an after-thought on the part of the Godhead. In "the counsel of peace"¹ the most marvelous thing that was ever to take place in earth or heaven was conceived. It was kept secret from times eternal till the news of man's disgraceful conduct reached heaven. Three times the Father and the Son consulted over the implementation of that plan which They had devised.² In these consultations, "the guilt of man was measured, the wrath for sin was estimated", yet Christ knowing all the steps necessary in His humiliation to make expiation for the sins of man, "announced His decision that He would take upon Himself the responsibility of meeting the conditions whereby hope should be extended to the fallen race."³

In describing for the angelic host what the plan for man's redemption involved for Him, Christ told them that "He would leave *all* of His glory in Heaven" and that in humbling Himself to the level of humanity, He would "become acquainted by His *own* experience with the various temptations" that beset man. He also told the angels that in taking "man's fallen nature. . . His strength would not be even equal with theirs."⁴ Truly, in the incarnation, we see Jesus made lower than the angels for the suffering of death.⁵

With our limited vision, and faithless survey, "we do not half appreciate the grandeur of the plan of salvation. He who was one with the Father stepped down from the glorious throne in heaven, laid aside His royal robe and crown, clothed His divinity with humanity, thus bringing Himself to the level of man's

feeble faculties."⁶ It is most difficult for us to conceive that the One who walked in the habilments of humanity did not do so as the Master and Lord of all that He surveyed; but rather He walked as a MAN among men. Even the miracles that He performed were not accomplished through a superior power resident in His human faculties; but rather from the exercise of faith - a faith that He came to reveal to man for man's use. This is illustrated in the stilling of the storm on Galilee. Wearied by a strenuous day of activity, Jesus slept in the stern of the boat. Not even the fury of the tempest which vented itself on the frail fishing craft disturbed Him. Only the fearful cry of the husky fishermen of Galilee aroused Him. Commenting on this experience, the Spirit of Prophecy states:

When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. But He rested *not* in *the possession of almighty power*. It was not as the "Master of earth and sea and sky" that He reposed in quiet. *That power He had laid aside*, and He says, "I can of Mine *own self* do nothing." He trusted in the Father's might. It was in faith - faith in God's love and care - that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God.⁷

(It is a simple fact that we need to recognize in understanding the incarnation that all "the miracles of Christ for the afflicted and suffering were wrought by the power of God through the ministration of the angels."⁸)

The plan of redemption was for man - an unfolding of the divine love for the undeserving creatures of the dust! The incarnation was for the purpose of entering into the experiences of man so that the baseness to which man had sunk might be understood, and that through a merciful High Priest man might be lifted in the scale of moral worth fully reconciled to God. Christ "humiliated Himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that He might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him."⁹ It is written:

When Christ was on earth, he stood as the representative of

humanity. He was on trial in behalf of man, and *the test was made in His experience* as to the possibility that humanity could overcome through divine power.¹⁰

The "divine power" by which Christ overcame was not that which was resident in the Divine Ego who came to dwell in a temple of flesh; but was that which was provided by faith in God.

We dare not forget that "Christ's overcoming and obedience is that of a true human being." We are prone to "destroy the completeness of His humanity" by attributing to "His human nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan." Christ did "not come to our world to give the obedience of a lesser God to a greater, but as a man to obey God's holy law." He did not reveal "what a God could do, but what a man could do through faith in God's power to help in every emergency."¹¹ Because of this - the demonstration of perfect righteousness in a fallen human nature like every child of Adam possesses - God can now demand "that every son and daughter of Adam, through faith in Jesus Christ, serve Him" in the human nature which he now possesses.¹² If the humanity which the Divine Ego accepted was any different from the humanity which man receives through earthly inheritance, then the demands of God would not be justifiable.

It is the translation of that Life lived over 1900 years ago into every day living of the 20th Century that will alone bring the full revelation of righteousness through faith, by which God desires to finish His work in the earth. It is because we do not understand, and thus fail to appreciate the humility of the Son of God that His virtues are not practiced in our experience. "Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, took our nature in its deteriorated condition. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend."¹³ Faith accepts the incomprehensible!

When we are willing to realize, believe, and accept the fact that the

humanity that our Lord accepted was a humanity made "in the likeness of sinful flesh", and that in that humanity for 33 years, He at every step, "condemned sin in the flesh,"¹⁴ then the promise made unto man become exceedingly glorious.

It reads:

The life that He laid down in humanity, He now takes up, and gives to humanity. . . . All who are one with Christ through faith in Him, by the agency of His Holy Spirit, He carries through *the science of that experience*, which is life unto eternal life.¹⁵

It is the science of that experience that we need; that we must have! It is the experience that the church needs. It is the message of 1888, which God so graciously gave to His people, and which needs to be revived in its fulness. It is in deed, Christ in us, the hope of glory.

¹Zechariah 6:13

²Ellen G. White, Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. I, p. 45

³Ellen G. White, Signs of the Times, November 16, 1904

⁴Ellen G. White, Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. I, p. 46

⁵Hebrews 2:9

⁶Ellen G. White, Review & Herald, December 11, 1888 Extra Edition

⁷Ellen G. White, Desire of Ages, pp. 335-336

⁸Ibid., p. 143

⁹Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, bk. i, p. 268

¹⁰Ellen G. White, Review & Herald, April 25, 1893

¹¹Ellen G. White, Our High Calling, p. 48

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, bk. i, p. 253

¹⁴Romans 8:3

¹⁵Ellen G. White, Ms., 131, 1897

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