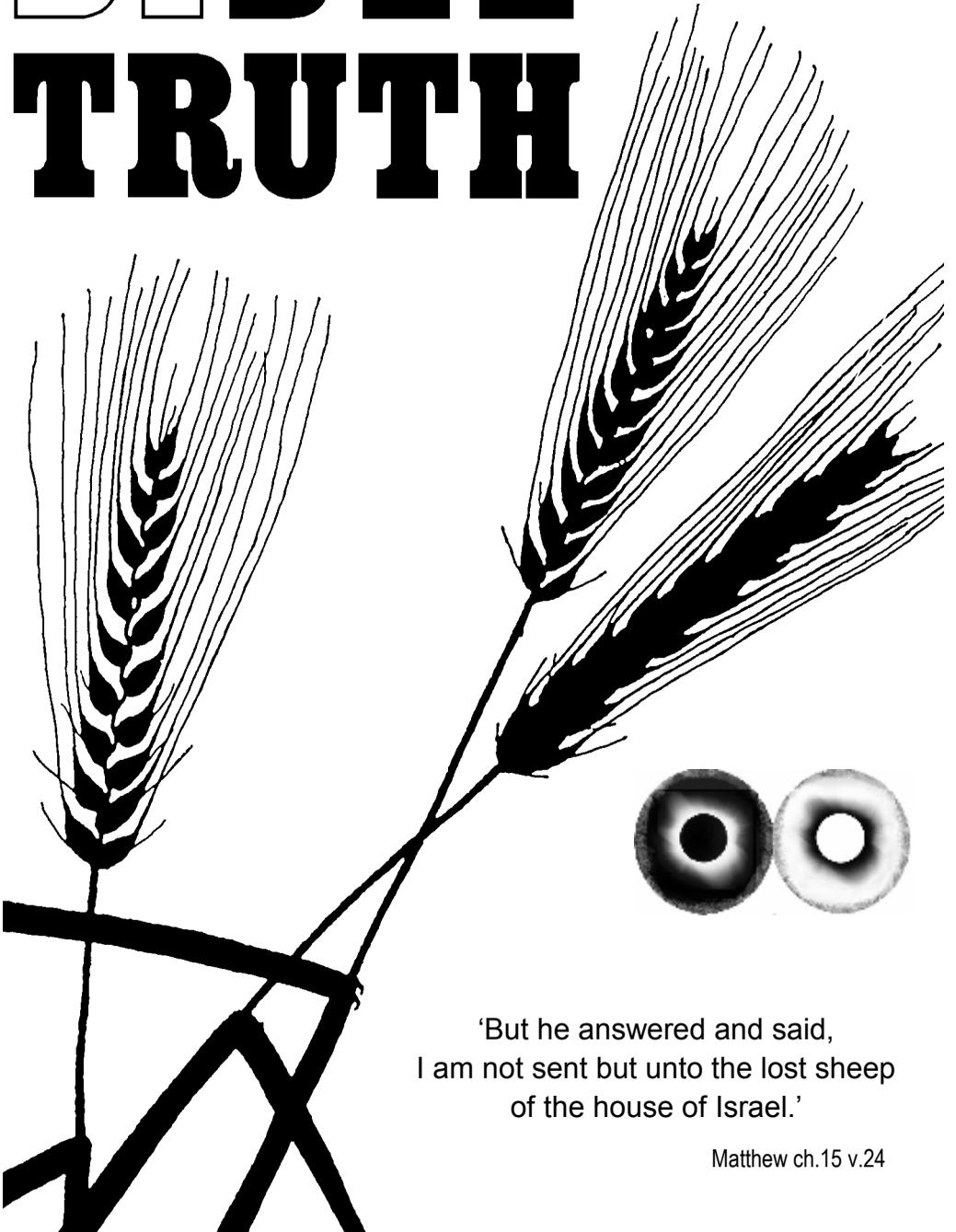


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'But he answered and said,
I am not sent but unto the lost sheep
of the house of Israel.'

Matthew ch.15 v.24

God was in Christ (Fragments 36)

by Ray Johnson

I have said in the past, the Bible from beginning to end is primarily about the Israel of God. The New Covenant as with the Old, allows those of other nations who wish to take part in the blessings of Israel to do so, but only small numbers have taken this privilege. It is my view that the true Israel peoples are principally made up of the Protestant Christian nations of the world, the rest comprising Roman Catholics, Moslems, Buddhists, Jews, etc., and amazingly most of the former have a cross on their banners.

Our God has not ceased to work in these last two thousand years but is still moving amongst His people Israel that they may be a blessing to all nations of the earth, putting wisdom into the hearts of His people, that they may be inventive and skilled enough to produce all these modern labour saving devices and having loving care for others bringing in hospitals, schools and other benefits to the nations since the Seven Times chastisement of Israel ended. God has also raised up His servants to explain and expound the Holy Scriptures; beams of light to shine in the darkness of the closing days of this dispensation. For though Israel came out of Rome in the Reformation, Rome after four hundred years is not yet out of Israel, for the return to the teachings and fellowship of the Apostles has not yet ceased; and advanced translations of the original scriptures are now at hand but few seem to take advantage of these blessings. Many though still have darkness for light and light for darkness, truth for error and error for truth and the word of God is made of non effect because of their traditions.

The title of this article is from a Scripture wrongly interpreted by the majority of denominations who say that God was reconciled to the world by the death of Christ, when the Scripture says that, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, God needed no reconciling, He so loved the world, it is the world that is in need of being brought back into a fellowship with God.

‘... return unto me; for I have redeemed thee.’

Isaiah ch.44 v.22

As a young Christian I was taught, ‘If it is in the Bible preach it, if it is not then don’t’. In those days we were instructed,

‘... to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. ... All scripture is

given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.'

2 Timothy chs 2 v.15 & 3 v.16

The Scriptures are completely sufficient in themselves, if we add to these Scriptures we not only incur the penalty of Revelation ch.22 v.18 but it also distorts, confuses and veils the truth that could be revealed. If what we accept is not from heaven, that it cannot be found in scripture, we are obliged to ask where on earth or under the earth has it come from? Isaiah ch.53 v.9 records,

'And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth'.

The Lord Jesus Christ suffered two types of death, one when He Who was rich became poor that we through His poverty may be made rich, by leaving His throne of glory and coming down to where we are dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians ch.2 vv 1-5), and the other when He died on Calvary's tree and was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea. This is the anti-type of the sin offering, the bullock was slain, its blood was put on the horns of the altar and the rest was poured out underneath, its fat and certain innards burnt on the altar and the rest of the carcass was burnt without the camp.

The Lord Jesus suffered a type of death by coming down from the glory, peace and splendour of heaven into this vale of suffering and sorrow, becoming a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, laying His life (blood), His strength and passions on the altar of God's plan and purpose and then ending His earthly life outside the camp (Hebrews ch.13 vv 11-12). When this is seen it makes clear the life that was laid down and taken again (John ch.10 vv 17-18), this was the glory He had with the Father before the world was (John ch.17 v.5). His earthly life, the blood ('For the life of the flesh is in the blood:' (see Leviticus ch.17 vv 11 &14) was shed at Calvary and was not retaken, that was the price required to redeem Israel from the Old Covenant. When He was raised He said to His disciples when they saw Him, '... a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have' (see Luke ch.24 v.39), His was the only perfect sinless blood there ever has been and had the power to redeem. The rest of mankind will lose their life blood because the soul (life), that sinneth it shall die. This was a sacrifice to remove sin so there would be no barrier between God and His people. He not only redeemed them but He nailed to the cross the enmity, the Law of commandments contained

in ordinances (Ephesians ch.2 v.15), thus ending the Old Covenant and bringing in the new which was far better (Romans ch.7 vv 2-4). For what the Law could not do wherein it was weak through the flesh God sending His son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the Law may be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit (Romans ch.8 vv 3-4). It is obvious that the Law could not produce the character the Lord required, but instead, in many cases, proud hard hearted religious people who crucified the Lord of glory and persecuted His followers. Consider the contrast between these arrogant and merciless teachers of law and the King of glory, who was meek and lowly in heart and kept the law as it should be kept (Romans ch.13 v.10). Whereas the New Covenant, where faithfully followed, produces loving and caring humble folk, for true faith leaves no room for self pride or glory.

God was manifest in the flesh, the man Christ Jesus was the image of the invisible God and the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Him bodily. Great is the mystery of Godliness. We have very little given us in the Scriptures to enlighten us but to quote two sayings of The Lord Jesus to shed light on the God who came right down to redeem His people Israel and be the Saviour of the world. The Lord Jesus said to the Scribes and Pharisees, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad', to which they replied, '... Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?' the Lord Jesus told them clearly, '... Before Abraham was, I am' (John ch.8 vv 56-58), the words spoken to Moses by the creator God. The second is the time the Lord Jesus said to the same people, if I with the finger of God cast out demons (Luke ch.11 v.20), Moses received the tables of stone written with the finger of God. The One who said '... I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;' (Isaiah ch.44 v.24). This sheds a little light for me on the God that was in Christ, the One who came right down to where we are in this fallen human nature and dwelt with us for thirty-three and a half years.

I may be unable to understand just how the great, mighty and invisible God became united in the man Christ Jesus but I know that divinity and humanity were fused together in Him and that He who was Spirit and Soul became Spirit, Soul and Body, the image and likeness He is creating man into (Colossians ch.1 v.15).

The birth of Jesus Christ had to await the appointed time so that the agreement with Israel could be abolished by His death. He was made of a woman that He would be a human being able to be tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He was made under the law, to redeem those who were under the law. He was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death.

Jesus Christ was also born that He might be the first born among many brethren, for God was through Him bringing many sons unto glory, the plan and purpose of the creation of God. But the Lord Jesus was the only begotten son, all the rest are sons by adoption but nevertheless are under the discipline of God.

If we judge ourselves we should not be judged, but when we are judged we are chastened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world. Whom He loves He chastises and scourges every son whom He receives. No chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those which are exercised thereby (1 Corinthians ch.11 vv 31-32 & Hebrews ch.12 vv 6 & 11).

Who are these loved ones?

‘Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.’

Isaiah ch.28 v.9

All must advance from the first principles of the oracles of God and go on to perfection (Hebrews chs 5 v.12 & 6 v.1). They have to come out from among those who have entered through the ‘broad gate’ and are walking the ‘wide way’ and enter through the ‘straight gate’ and walk the ‘narrow way’.

‘...come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, ... and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.’

2 Corinthians ch.6 vv 17-18

The Apostle Paul exhorts us to,

‘Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour’.

Ephesians ch.5 vv 1-2

‘Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’

Luke ch.12 v.32
