

Beauties of the Truth

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Thought to be Harmonious with God's Plan of the Ages
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The Plan of the Ages— A Review by Joseph Rotherham

Joseph Rotherham, the translator of the Emphasized Bible which many Bible Students use frequently, was the editor of a journal titled The Rainbow. In Volume 23, 1886, appeared his 10-page review of the first Volume of Millennial Dawn, The Plan of the Ages. Though Rotherham held some of the conventional misinterpretations concerning the nature of man, the Trinity, Rev. 20:5, and the identity of the Antichrist (and he criticized the book on those points), he evidently did embrace a hope of future probation after death for the unsaved. Perhaps readers will be interested to see a few excerpts.

"This is a notable book—bold, broad, and breezy; very refreshing after the stereotyped dogmas and platitudes which pass current in the theological world. It is a book for men and not for children ...

". . . The one leading thought of this book . . . in a single word ... is RESTITUTION or RESTORATION: Restoration, sharply and constantly distinguished from Universalism. The author is not a Universalist, nor anything near it. With him the second death is total and final. From it there is no redemption and no recovery. But he is a restorationist out and out. He holds that all men will rise from the dead - all be delivered from Adam's sin and all its consequences sooner or later—all be put afresh and individually on trial, under new and improved conditions, with a fair chance of obtaining eternal life—so that none shall fail of the prize save by his own inexcusable crime. He holds that this restoration of the race as a whole—distinguished from the little flock, the elect, the Church, the bride of Christ, who will have been previously raised from the dead and exalted to be sharers of Christ's own glory—will take place *during* the Millennial Age; *progressively*, if we mistake not, at any rate *within or during* the Thousand Years; and that at the close of that period, the incorrigible will be utterly destroyed for ever, and sin and sorrow thenceforward be no more. The author is strong upon the point that all loss through Adam's sin will be more than made up to every man through Christ. Adam was created perfect. Every man must be restored to the like perfection, and then decide for himself his eternal destiny....

"... It cannot be denied that there is to be a restitution; and very likely it is to be larger and grander than most of us have dreamed. For, though the word *apokatastasis* in Acts 3:21 might be satisfied by the rendering "due

accomplishment" (of the prophecies, that is), and so merely send us to the old prophecies to see what therein we can find to be fulfilled, yet still, when we get to the prophets, it is undeniable that they descry in the Messianic Age such an enormous amount of restoration than our poor systems can no way find room for it. If Elijah is to restore all things, depend upon it, it must be a restitution to Moses whose counterpart he is (Mal. 4). The only Messiah that Elijah knows must needs honour the Law before he delivers from it. So here is a great, even if only temporary, work of restitution to make room for. Then, again, there is the restoring of Israel, to her *saving shame* (Ezekiel 16); and if this includes her dead generations, as it surely must, who of us can find room for *that* in our "little systems," to say nothing of the restoring of Samaria and the restoring of Sodom itself; yes, of Sodom itself-for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it, and when we tremble at His word as we ought, and at the same time have an adequate apprehension of what fair interpretation really is, we shall blush even to begin to explain and mystify it away as we have done all too long. So that, up to this point, we can have no quarrel with Mr. Russell; nor can we doubt that there is much more of restitution in the Old Testament than even he has formally pointed out: *there*, in the sacred text itself, if we only knew how to read it . . .

“. . . The Chapter on 'The Permission of Evil' is alone more than worth the price of the whole volume, and is the fullest discussion of this great mystery, and the nearest approximation to a probably correct solution of it, with which we are acquainted."

Incidentally, Rotherham's criticism of Bro. Russell's treatment of Daniel and Revelation-"He goes in the beaten track. Babylon is Rome, and all the rest of it . . ." - is evidence that main-line Protestant thought had once been clear in the historical view of Revelation and the proper identification of Antichrist.

— *Contributed*

Lutron Anti and Antilutron

The word "ransom" appears in our English New Testament 3 times: Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45, 1 Timothy 2:6. But the Greek in each case is not the same. In Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45, the word rendered "ransom" is *lutron*, followed with the word *anti*. But in Timothy the Greek is one word, *antilutron*. Why this difference?

There is a slightly different thought in each place. The basic word *lutron* means "lit., a means of loosing (from *luo*, to loose), occurs frequently in the Septuagint, where it is always used to signify equivalence. Thus it is used of the ransom for a life, *e.g.* Ex. 21:30, of the redemption price of a slave, *e.g.* Lev. 19:20, of land, 25:24, or the price of a captive, Isa. 45:13." (Vine, *Expository Dictionary*)

The derivation of the word is helpful. "Lu" is from *Luo*, as Vine comments, meaning "to loose." *Tron* is not a word of itself, but its meaning in other words is exemplified in some English words using that Greek suffix, like "electron," and "positron." An electron is that (particle) which has an electric charge, a positron that (particle) which has a positive charge. Lu-tron therefore is "that which looses"- the basis of loosing, the price of release.

Anti can appear either compounded in a word, or as a word by itself. "The basic idea of *anti* is 'facing.' This may be a matter of opposition, unfriendliness or antagonism, or of agreement.... *antiparerechomai* in Luke 10:31, 32, where the verb is rendered 'passed by on the other side,' i *e.*, of the road, but facing the wounded man; *antiballo* in Luke 24:17, where the *anti* suggests that the two disciples, in exchanging words (see R.V. marg.), turned to face one another, indicating the earnest nature of their conversation. The idea of antagonism is seen in *antidikos*, an adversary, Matt.5:25, *antichristos*, antichrist, 1 John 4:3, etc.

"There is no instance of the uncompounded preposition signifying 'against.' ... the idea is that of 'in the place of,' 'instead of,' or of exchange...."

Examples listed by Vine ("for" = anti):

"an eye for an eye" (Matthew 5:38)

"evil for evil" (Romans 12:17, 1 Thess. 5:15, 1 Peter 3:9)

"railing for railing" (1 Peter 3:9)

"for a fish ... a serpent" (Luke 11:11)

"for one mess of meat . . . his own birthright" (Heb.12:16)

"a shekel ... for thee and Me" (Matt. 17:27) ("That is to say, the exchange is that of the coin for the tax demanded from Christ and Peter, rather than for the persons themselves.")

"for a covering" (1 Cor. 11:15) ("Where the hair is a substitute for the covering.")

"The substitutionary meaning is exemplified in Jas.4:15, where the A.V. and R.V. render the anti 'for that'(R.V., mar"., 'instead of)."

("In Heb. 12:2, 'for (anti) the joy that was set before Him endured the cross,' neither the thought of exchange nor that of substitution is conveyed; here the basic idea of facing is present. The cross and the joy faced each other in the mind of Christ and He chose the one with the other in view.")

So our Lord states that his human life was to be given a *lutron*, "price of release," anti, "in the place of, or instead of," many.

Paul's expression in 1 Timothy 2:6 is different. The word for "ransom" is not *lutron*, but *antilutron*, and his word for "for" is not *anti*, but *huper*. *Antilutron* means a "corresponding price of release," or as Vine puts it, "a substitutionary ransom ... there the preposition is *huper*, on behalf of...."

To summarize:

Matthew 20: 28 Mark 10: 45	Ransom Lutron Price of release	For many <i>Anti</i> In the place of Or instead of Or in exchange for
1 Timothy 2: 6	Ransom <i>antilutron</i> corresponding price of release or substitutionary ransom	For all <i>Huper</i> On behalf of

A Covenant Sacrifice

As the years passed, and Abraham wondered about the birth of the promised heir, he queried the Lord for an assurance respecting his expectation. He no doubt wished to be certain he understood the promise correctly. God renewed his word, affirming that as the innumerable stars above, "so shall thy seed be." (Genesis 15:5)

God also instructed Abraham to perform what may seem a strange ritual. He directed that various animals be sacrificed, divided (except for the birds as Leviticus 1:17), and spread out on the ground. "And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram...." (Genesis 15:16, 17) Why this strange performance? Apparently God was condescending to a recognized custom of the time (as well as directing a type, on which perhaps more at a later date). When a solemn pact was made in ancient times the contract was solemnized, made binding, ratified, when the contracting parties walked between the pieces of a slain animal, the "covenant sacrifice" or "covenant victim."

Thomas Scott's commentary: "As the ratification of a covenant between the Lord and his servant was intended, the animals were divided asunder, the birds alone excepted: because the form of covenanting required, that the persons concerned should pass between the parts of the sacrifice: perhaps intimating, that he who broke the covenant, might expect in like manner, to be cut asunder by the avenging sword of justice. The Gentiles, as well as the Jews, used a form of this kind in confirming covenants and treaties; which custom might perhaps be derived by tradition from this transaction; or the Lord saw good, in this instance, to condescend as far as practicable, to a custom already established." (Note Abraham did not pass between the pieces, but that which represented the Divine presence did: the burning lamp. This was a unilateral agreement. God promised to do something. Abraham had no conditional part, having demonstrated his faith previously per Genesis 12:1-4.)

Another example of this practice is in Genesis 21:27. "And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave to Abimelech, and they two solemnized a covenant." (Rotherham) Rotherham's footnote on "solemnized a covenant" is "cut, because of the cutting up and distribution of the flesh of the victim."

Adam Clarke's comment: "the word is *Kareth Berith*-to cut a covenant, or rather the covenant sacrifice; for as no covenant was made without one, and the creature was cut in two that the contracting parties might pass between the pieces, hence cutting the covenant signified making the covenant."

He goes on to explain that the Latin words of the Romans used for making contracts had root meanings of "cutting its throat," or "knocking it down" with a stone axe, from the custom of slaying a sacrifice to ratify the agreement.

A third scripture example of the custom is in Jeremiah 34: 18-20.

With the background of this custom, the Diaglott version of Hebrews 9:16, 17 makes good sense. "For where a Covenant exists, the Death of that which has ratified it is necessary to be produced; because a Covenant is firm over dead victims, since it is never valid when that which ratifies it is alive."

Chronology of Early Bible Student Movement

"Blessed is he that cometh to the 1335 days"

1868. Charles T. Russell (1852-1916), raised in a Christian atmosphere, had joined the church at an early age and been active in mission work. But the creeds became a stumbling block to him, because he could not harmonize their teachings (especially eternal hellfire) with his concept of a loving God. But just as the very foundations of his faith were being threatened, he stumbled upon an Adventist meeting seemingly by accident, and its message served to restore his confidence in the Bible. Thereafter he was careful to distinguish between man-made creeds and teachings of the Bible, and determined to return to his Bible study with more zeal than ever before.

1870. At age 18, Mr. Russell and a small group of associates formed a Bible class in Allegheny, Penna. He became convinced that they were living near the close of the Gospel Age, at which time the faithful watchers for the return of Christ would be given a clearer knowledge of the divine plan. The next five year period, in his own words, "was a time of constant growth in grace and knowledge and love of God and his Word." By 1872, he came to the realization that the atoning sacrifice of Christ would bring about the resurrection of all who had died and provide them with an opportunity for coming to a full knowledge of the truth and for gaining everlasting life.

In later years, Mr. Russell was to gratefully acknowledge the assistance in doctrinal matters which he received from Mr. George Stetson and Mr. George Storrs (the latter, editor of "The Bible Examiner,") in this early period. He wrote, "We were then merely getting the general outline of God's plan, and unlearning many long-cherished errors, the time for a clear discernment of the minutiae having not yet fully come."

1876. Mr. Russell was elected Pastor of the Allegheny Bible class and began to assume more of a leadership role. His warm, loving personality and kindly manner endeared him to the group and proved a great asset throughout the years of his expanding ministry.

Pastor Russell had always been grieved at the date setting practice of the Adventists and what he considered their crude ideas of the object and manner of the Second Coming. But his acquaintance with two Adventist-oriented writers now gave fresh insights into the subject of prophetic time. These were Mr. Nelson Barbour, editor of "The Herald of the Morning" in Rochester, N.Y., and Mr. J. H. Paton from Almont, Mich. They suggested that the time prophecies pointed to the year of Christ's *invisible* presence, when he would begin setting up his Kingdom on earth, gather his church and separate the wheat from the tares. Mr. Barbour convinced Pastor Russell from several lines of prophetic testimony that 1874 had seen the beginning of this work.

1877. Pastor Russell and Mr. Barbour jointly published *The Three Worlds and Plan of Redemption*, which combined the concepts of the ransom sacrifice of Christ, restitution blessings to follow, and time prophecy. Pastor Russell also became assistant editor of "The Herald of the Morning" with Mr. Barbour.

Pastor Russell called a special meeting of all the ministers in Pittsburgh and Allegheny to demonstrate that Christ had returned invisibly in 1874. Many attended, but none accepted the teaching. The following year, he published the pamphlet, "The Object and Manner of the Lord's Return," hoping thereby to dispel some of the "doomsday" aspects traditionally associated with the event.

1879. Doctrinal divisions caused Pastor Russell to withdraw support from Mr. Barbour and to begin publishing an entirely new journal, called "Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence." Pastor Russell was to remain editor of this monthly magazine (semi-monthly from 1892) until his death in 1916. It became the chief means of stirring interest in the doctrines of the divine plan and, in later years, of maintaining that interest.

1881. Pastor Russell published *Food For Thinking Christians* which carried an illustrative "Plan of the Ages" chart summarizing the various stages of God's plan of salvation. It was followed by *The Tabernacle and Its Teachings*, detailing sacrificial aspects of the life of Christ and his followers, drawn from types in the Old Testament.

Local congregations of Bible Students began to spring up around the country, supporting the work of the Watch Tower Society and electing Mr. Russell as their pastor. The largest groups were in Pittsburgh, New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles. Convention gatherings began to be organized in various cities, attended at first by hundreds, and in later years by thousands.

1886. Pastor Russell published *Millennial Dawn*, an enlargement of the earlier *Food For Thinking Christians*, and the work soon became the classic and mainstay of the movement. Its simple, easy-flowing style contrasted sharply with the complicated theological treatises of the day. It laid out the successive stages of God's purposes as revealed in Scripture, covering such subjects as: Time features, the program of blessing, the permission of evil and its value, ransom and restitution, the Day of Judgment, distinction between spiritual and human natures, the prophetic course of the kingdoms of this world, the great time of trouble, and the nearness of God's Kingdom upon earth. (The title of the work was later changed to *The Divine Plan of the Ages* and it became the first of six volumes under the heading of "Studies in the Scriptures.") Circulation eventually surpassed the six million mark, a phenomenal record for a religious work, attesting both to its value as a textbook and to the zeal of those promoting it.

A large group of volunteer workers gradually entered the work, enthusiastically distributing Watch Tower publications throughout the country at a minimal cost to the public. By 1886, the number of these colporteurs, or traveling agents of the Society, reached about 300.

1889. Pastor Russell published *The Time Is At Hand*, Volume Two in the "Studies in the Scriptures" series. This work concentrated on chronological and prophetic aspects of God's plan, summarizing studies of earlier devout students of the Bible, especially of the Adventist movement, and adding appropriate refinements and the fuller unfoldings just recently uncovered. Subjects discussed included Bible chronology, the first advent in prophecy, the Time of the Gentiles, the manner of Christ's return, earth's great jubilee, and the Antichrist system.

Two teachings were stressed in this volume which were quite unorthodox: First, that the invisible return of Christ, beginning in 1874, would be marked initially by an intense period of distress upon the nations which would give way to an unparalleled time of blessing under the Millennial Reign. And second, that the year 1914 would mark the end of the "Times of the Gentiles" lease of power and herald the earthly establishment of God's Kingdom. These two dates, 1874 and 1914, henceforth became cornerstones of the movement and elicited great excitement among the believers.

Summary. During his forty-year-plus ministry, Pastor Russell traveled more than a million miles as public lecturer, preached more than 30,000 sermons, and wrote books and tracts totaling over 50,000 pages. He

managed a world-wide evangelistic campaign that employed 700 speakers and at the height of his popularity, 2,000 city newspapers with a circulation of 15 million published his weekly sermons. By 1916, there were more than 1,000 Bible study classes around the world that had elected him as their beloved Pastor. But perhaps the highlight of his public witness work was the "Photo Drama of Creation," a unique slide and film showing with accompanying sound, far ahead of its day, depicting God's plan from earth's creation to its perfection in the Millennial Reign. Beginning in 1914, this production was shown throughout the U.S. and several foreign countries to large audiences totaling more than ten million.

Despite the disappointment in the partial failure of the 1914 hopes, when it had been expected that God's Kingdom would come, the Bible Student movement survived and many continued to rejoice in the blessings of increased knowledge which Pastor Russell's ministry had provided. Under his leadership, it was felt that a fresh flood of light had been directed upon the Scriptures which revealed and clarified many truths long hidden and misunderstood. Errors of the past regarding the inherent immortality of man, the relationship of the Father and Son, and the nature of eternal punishment gave way to these beams of advancing light. Contemporary Bible Students remain convinced that current crisis events of the world are verifying the predictions of the Bible relative to the "end times," and that we are on the threshold of a new era in which God will intervene to establish His long-promised Kingdom of blessing.

(The Bible Student Movement in the Days of C. T. Russell, James Parkinson.

Jehovah 's Witnesses in the Divine Purpose, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, pp. 14-68.

Thy Kingdom Come, C. T. Russell, pp. 88-89.

Watch Tower Reprints, "Harvest Gatherings and Siftings," C. T. Russell, Vol. 6, pp. 3820-3826.)

- Contributed

Shroud of Turin

The 40-member Shroud of Turin Research Project tentatively concludes the image on the shroud is of a scourged crucified man. The blood stains are real, but it is not possible for scientists to decide if the image is Jesus Christ's. Nonetheless, a former member of the team is co-author of a book claiming the long linen cloth is Christ's burial shroud.

The holy scriptures have something to say on the matter. When Lazarus arose from the dead his face was bound with a napkin separate from the grave clothes. Jo 11:44. In Jesus' tomb the napkin that had bound his head was found separate from the other grave clothes. Jo 20:7. Since a one piece burial cloth does not fit that description, the Turin Shroud is not Christ's. (Footnote – 1 Jo 19:40 also says Jesus' body was "wound" in linen clothes (plural), whereas the Turin shroud had been stretched lengthwise. "Similarly, the Greek m Mt 27:59 means rolled in a clean linen cloth; so Thayer.)

The shroud may be of some interest, however. It is another stark witness to the horrid Roman practice of torture and death by crucifixion.

- Contributed

We urge that the presentations of this journal be tried thoughtfully by all readers. "Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good." we do not necessarily endorse every expression of contributed articles appearing herein. Information on the authorship of any article is freely supplied on request. Address an correspondence to: Beauties of the Truth, 9159 via de Amor, Santee, CA 92071. Published through Millennial Morning.