

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

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Our Lord used many things of nature to illustrate beautiful truths. One of his lessons is that of the vine and the branches. In Rev. 22:16 our Lord styled himself as "the root and offspring of David."

The root of the human family, Adam, was struck with the virus of sin thus bringing death to the root as well as to the branches. The Logos left his heavenly glory to be engrafted into the Adamic root. The life principle of our Lord was transferred. Mary supplied the human organism. Around the first of Oct., B. C. 2, the "angel of the Lord" announced to some shepherds in the field, "Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." - Luke 2

Jesus, though separate from sinners, became "the offspring of David". He was a "Branch" out of the roots of Jesse. (Isa. 11:1) At 30 years of age he consecrated to do the Father's will. Three and one-half years later he died. (1 Tim. 2:6) On the third day he was resurrected from the dead. (Col. 1:18) He ceased to be a "Branch" and became "the Root".

During this Gospel age branches of the condemned root may be made "clean". (John 15:2) When one has accepted "the Root" as the lifegiver and made a full consecration to God, he is justified to life and spirit begotten. He then becomes a branch in "the true vine". The heavenly Father, the husbandman, is desirous of much fruit. The branches bearing fruit must be pruned so more fruit may be brought forth. - John 15:3; Gal. 5:22, 23

The husbandman takes away those branches not bearing fruit. (John 15:3) This great multitude, "the virgins her companions" who follow, born of the spirit through great tribulation will be present at the marriage festivities as the bridesmaids but not as the bride of Christ. Psa. 45:13-15

Those who abide not in the true vine (John 15:6) fall away into sin (Heb. 6:4-8) or fall away from the faith which justified them. (Heb. 10:26-29) One dying the second death is left "neither root nor branch". - Mal. 4:1

The branches bearing fruit are privileged now to be "planted together in the likeness of his death" (Rom. 6:5) and in the first resurrection will "be like him." (1 John 3:2) These will

become a part of the "Root" and will share in blessing the Adamic root and branches by regeneration. The respondent ones will bear much fruit to God's praise. - Rev. 22:17

May we rejoice not only in the fact that our Lord came as "a Branch" but that now he is present as "the Root". The spiritual phase of the kingdom is being established. When the last members of "the Root" class have been tested, the earthly phase will be set up. 1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 11:17, 18