

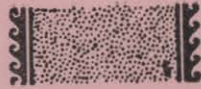
THE CHURCH OF
"PSYCHIANA"

(THE TEACHING WHICH IS BRINGING NEW LIFE TO A SPIRITUALLY DEAD WORLD)

ADVANCED TEACHING
NUMBER THREE

by

DR. FRANK B. ROBINSON



"PSYCHIANA"



LESSON NO. 8

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THIRD ADVANCED TEACHING

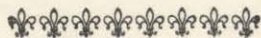
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LESSON NO. 8

BY

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Dear Friend and Student:

In Lesson Eight I want to throw out the sequence of this line of thought and continue our investigation as to whether the story of the God of the church members today is real or not. So in this Lesson I am going to deal in a very concise way with the reappearance and ascension of the Saviors and I am also going to go into the atonement and show its origin to be absolutely oriental or heathen. I might add that I am taking the book "Crucified Gods Galore" for considerable of this information and I suggest that each one of my Students secure a copy of this book from this office. It costs \$4.00 and is well worth while, I assure you.

REAPPEARANCE AND ASCENSION OF THE SAVIORS

Many cases are related by their respective sacred narratives of the ancient Saviors, and other beings possessing the form of man and previously recognized as men, reappearing to their disciples and friends, after having been consigned to the tomb for three days, or a longer or shorter period of time, and of their final ascension to the house of many mansions.

It is related of the Indian or Hindoo Savior Chrishna, that after

having risen from the dead, he appeared again to his disciples. "He ascended to Voiscantha (heaven), to Brahma," the first person of the trinity (he himself being the second), and that as he ascended, "all men saw him, and exclaimed, 'Lo! Chrishna's soul ascends to his native skies.'" And it is further related that, "attended by celestial spirits,---he pursued by his own light the journey between earth and heaven, to the bright paradise whence he had descended."

Of the ninth incarnation of India, the Savior Sakya, it is declared, that he "ascended to the celestial regions;" and his pious and devout disciples point the skeptic to indelible impressions and ineffaceable footprints on the rocks of a high mountain as an imperishable proof of the declaration that he took his last leave of earth and made his ascent from that point.

It is related of the crucified Prometheus, likewise, that after having given up the ghost on the cross, "descended to hell" (Christ's soul was "not left in hell," see Acts ii. 31), "he rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven."

And then it is declared of the Egyptian Savior Alcides, that "after having been seen a number of times, he ascended to a higher life," going up, like Elijah, in "a chariot of fire."

The story of the crucifixion of Quetzalcoatl of Mexico, followed by his burial, resurrection and ascension, is distinctly related in the "holy" and inspired "gospels" of that country, which Lord Kingsborough admitted to be more than two thousand years old.

Of Laotsi of China, it is said that when "he had completed his mission of benevolence, he ascended bodily alive into the paradise above." (Prog. of Rel. Ideas, vol 214.) And it is related of Fo of the same country, that having completed his glorious mission on earth, he "ascended back to paradise, where he had previously existed from all eternity."

It is related also in the ancient legends, that the Savior or God Xamalxis of Thrace, having died, and descended beneath the earth, and remained there three years, made his appearance again in the fourth year after his death, as he had previously foretold, and eventually ascended to heaven about 600 B.C. Even some of the Hindoo saints are reported in their "holy" and time honored books to have been seen ascending to heaven. "And impressions on the rocks are shown," says an author, "said to be of footprints they had left when they ascended."

It is related both by the Grecian biographer Plutarch, in his life of Romulus, and by a Roman historian, that the great founder of Rome (Romulus)

suddenly ascended in a tempest during a solar eclipse, about 713 B.C. And Julius Proculus, a Roman senator of great fame and high reputation, declared, under solemn oath, that he saw him, and talked with him after his death.

ASTRONOMICAL VERSION OF THE STORY

Let me state that, in common with most other religious conceptions, the doctrine of the ascension has in the ancient legends an astronomical representation.

Having said that a planet was buried because it sunk below the horizon, when it returned to light and gained its state of eminence, they spoke of it as dead, risen again, and ascended into heaven. (Volney, p. 143.) What is the story of the ascension of Christ worth in view of these ancient pagan traditions of earlier religions?

ASCENSION OF THE CHRISTIAN SAVIOR

1. The different scriptural accounts of the ascension of Christ are, like the different stories of the resurrection, quite contradictory, and hence, entitled to as little credit. In Luke (xxlv.), he is represented as ascending on the evening of the third day after the crucifixion. But the writer of Acts (1.3) says he did not ascend until forty days after his resurrection; while, according to his own declaration to the thief on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise," he must have ascended on the same day of his crucifixion. Which statement must we accept as inspired, or what is proved by such contradictory testimony?

2. Which must we believe, Paul's declaration that he was seen by about FIVE HUNDRED BRETHREN at once (1 Cor. xv. 6), or the statement of the author of the Acts (i. 15), that there were BUT ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY BRETHREN IN ALL AFTER THAT PERIOD?

3. How would his ascension do anything toward proving his divinity, unless it also proves the divinity of Enoch and Elijah, who are reported to have ascended long prior to that era?

4. As these stories of the ascension of Christ, according to Lardner, were written many years after his crucifixion is it not hence probable they grew out of similar stories relative to the heathen Gods long previously prevalent in oriental countries?

5. As these gospel writers could not have been present to witness the ascension, as it must have occurred before their time of active life, does

not this fact of itself seriously damage the credibility of the accounts, and more especially as neither Mark nor Luke, who are the only reporters of the occurrences, were not disciples of Christ at the time, while Matthew and John, who were, say nothing about it?--another fact which casts a shade on the credibility of the story.

I want every reader of this Lesson, especially ministers, to remember that while I am disproving the Bible story with its "supernaturally revealed" story, in no sense am I denying the existence of God. What I am trying to do is to blast to atoms the present day accepted story as taught by the Protestant churches upon which story you and I are asked to depend for our present and final "salvation."

The story is not true--and I am trying to submit evidence that it is not true, and I am submitting such evidence. And the evidence is incontrovertible. At the same time it is not to be surmised for one moment that I do not believe in God. I know my own religious experience and it is very SWEET I assure you. This experience came entirely outside of "church" teachings, and this experience, with its insight into the REAL Realm of God, is that which causes me to show so effectively that the Bible story of "God" and "Salvation" is not true. When the story is universally discarded, as it rapidly is being discarded, then the TRUE LIGHT will be seen.

THE ATONEMENT---ITS ORIENTAL OR HEATHEN ORIGIN

There were various practices in vogue amongst the orientalist, which originated with the design of appeasing the anger, and propitiating the favor of a presumed to be irascible deity. Most of these practices consisted in some kind of sacrifice or destructive offering called the "atonement." But here let it be observed, that the doctrine of atonement for sin, by sacrifice, was unfolded by degrees, and that the crucifixion of a God was not the first practical exhibition of it. On the contrary, it appears to have commenced with the most valueless or cheapest species of property then known. And from this starting point ascended gradually, so as finally to embody the most costly commodities; and did not stop here, but reached forward till it laid its murderous hands on human beings, and immolated them upon its bloody altars. And finally, to cap the climax, it assumed the effrontery to drag a God off the throne of heaven, to stanch its blood-thirsty spirit, as evinced by Paul's declaration, "Without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin." Rather a bloody doctrine, and one which our humanity rejects with instinctive horror.

We will trace the doctrine of the atonement briefly through its successive stages of growth and development.

The idea seems to have started very early in the practical history of the human race, that the sacrifice and consequent deprivation of earthly goods, or some terrestrial enjoyment, would have the effect to mitigate the anger, propitiate the favor, and obtain the mercy of an imaginary and vengeful God. This idea obviously was suggested by observing that their earthly rulers always smiled, and became less rigorous in their laws, and milder in their treatment of their subjects, when they made them presents of some valuable or desirable commodity. They soon learned that such offerings had the effect to check their cruel and bloody mode of governing the people; so that when their houses were shaken down, or swallowed up by earthquakes, the trees riven by lightning, and prostrated by storms, and their cattle swept away by floods, supposing it to be the work of an angry God, the thought arose in their minds at once, that perhaps his wrath could be abated by the same expedient as that which had served in the case of their mundane lords--that of making presents of property. But as this property could not be carried up to the celestial throne, the expedient was adopted of burning it, so that the substance or quintessence of it would be conveyed up to the heavenly Potentate in the shape of steam and smoke, which would make for him, as the Jews express it, "a sweet-smelling savor." Abundant and conspicuous is the evidence in history to show that the custom of burnt-offerings and atonements for sin originated in this way.

The first species of property made use of for burnt-offerings appears to have been the fruits of the earth--vegetables, fruits, roots, etc.,--the lowest kind of property in point of value. But the thought soon naturally sprang up in the mind of the devotee, that a more valuable offering would sooner and more effectually secure the divine favor. Hence levies were made on living herds of cattle, sheep, goats, and other domestic animals. This was the second step in the ascending scale toward Gods.

And here we find the key to open and solve the mystery of Jehovah's preferring Abel's offering to Cain's. While the latter consisted in mere inanimate substances, the former embraced the firstlings of the flock--a higher and more valuable species of property, and quite sufficient to induce the selfish Jehovah to prefer Abel's offering to Cain's, or rather for the selfish Jews to cherish this conception. In all nations where offerings were made, the conclusion became established in the minds of the people that the amount of God's favor procured in this way must be proportionate to the value of the commodity or victim offered up--a conviction which ultimately led to the seizure of human beings for the atoning offerings, which brings us to the THIRD stage of growth in the atonement doctrine. Childred frequently constituted the victim in this case. The sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter, as related in Judges xi. 30, and other cases cited by Bible writers, Isaiah xxxii. 25, and modern Christian authors, prove that this practice was in vogue among "God's holy people."

One step more (constituting the FOURTH stage of development) brings us to the sacrifice of Gods. The climax is now reached; the conception can go no higher. The ancient Burmese taught that while common property in burnt offerings would procure the temporary favor of the ruling God, the sacrifice of human beings would secure his good pleasure for a thousand years, and cancel out all the sins committed in that period. And when one of the three Gods on the throne of heaven was dragged down, or VOLUNTARILY CAME DOWN (as some of the sects taught), and was put to death on the cross as an atonement for sin, such was the value of the victim, such the magnitude of the offering, that it "atoned for ALL sin, past, present and future, for all the human race."

The Hindoos, cherishing this conception, taught that the crucifixion of their sin-atonement Savior Krishna (1200 B.C.) put an end to both animal and human sacrifices, and accordingly such offerings ceased in most Hindoo countries centuries ago. Thus far back in the mire and midnight of human ignorance, and amid the clouds of mental darkness, while man dwelt upon the animal plane, and was governed by his brutal feelings, and "blood for blood" was the requisition for human offenses, originated the bloody, savage and revolting doctrines of the atonement.

Another mode of adjudicating the sins of the people in vogue in some countries anterior to the custom of shedding blood as an expiation, was that of packing them on the back, head, or horns of some animal by a formal hocus pocus process, and then driving the animal into a wilderness, or some other place so remote that the brute could not find its way back amongst the people with its cargo of sins. The cloth or fabric used for inclosing the sins and iniquities of the people was usually of a red or scarlet color--of the semblance of blood. In fact, it was generally dipped in blood. This, being lashed to the animal, would of course be exposed to the weather and the drenching rains, would consequently, in the course of time, fade and become white. Hence, we have the key to Isaiah's declaration, "Though your sins be (red) as scarlet, they shall become (white) as wool." (See Isaiah, i. 18.) And thus the meaning of this obscure text is clearly explained by tracing its origin to its oriental source.

And there are many other texts in the Christian Bible which might be elucidated in a similar manner by using oriental tradition, or oriental sacred books, as a key to unlock and explain their meaning. We have stated above that some animal was made use of by different nations to convey the imaginary load of the people's sins out of the country. For this purpose the Jews had their "scapegoat," the Egyptians their "scape-ox," the Hindoos their "scape-horse," the Chaldeans their "scape-ram," the Britons their "scape-bull," the Mexicans their "scape-lamb," and "scape-mouse," the Tamalese their "scape-hen," and the Christians at a later period their SCAPE-GOD. Jesus Christ may

properly be termed the scape-God of orthodox Christians, as he stands in the same relation to his disciples, who believe in the atonement, as the goat did to the Jews, and performs the same end and office. The goat and the other sin-offering animals took away the sin of the nation in each case respectively. In like manner Jesus Christ takes away the sin of the world, being called "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." (John i. 29.) And more than two thousand years ago the Mexicans sacrificed a lamb as an atonement, which they called "the Lamb of God"--the same title scripturally applied to Jesus Christ. The conception in each case is, then, the same--that of the atonement for sin by the sacrifice of an innocent victim.

The above citations show that the present custom of orthodox Christendom, in packing their sins upon the back of a God, is just the same substantially as that of various heathen nations, who were anciently in the habit of packing them upon the backs of various dumb animals. If some of our Christian brethren should protest against our speaking of the church's idea of atonement as that of packing their sins upon the back of a God, we will here prove the appropriateness of the term upon the authority of the Bible. Peter expressly declares Christ bore our sins upon his own body on a tree (see 1 Peter ii 24), just as the Jews declared the GOAT BORE THEIR sins on his body, and the ancient Brahmins taught that the bulls and the heifers bore theirs away, etc., which shows that the whole conception is of purely heathen origin. And hereafter, when they laugh at the Jewish superstition of a scape-goat, let them bear in mind that more sensible and intelligent people may laugh in turn at their superstitious doctrine of a scape-God.

These superstitious customs were simply expedients of different nations to evade the punishment of their sins--an attempt to shift their retributive consequences on to other beings. The divine atonement more especially possessed this character. This system teaches that the son of God and Savior of the world was sent down and incarnated, in order to die for the people, and thus suffer by proxy the punishment meted out by divine wrath for the sins of the whole world. The blood of a God must atone for the sins of the whole human family, as rams, goats, bullocks and other animals had atoned for the sins of families and nations under older systems. Thus taught Brahminism, Buddhism, Persianism, and other religious systems, before the dawn of Christianity. The nucleus of the atoning system is founded in the doctrine. "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin" (Rom. v.9)--a monstrous and morally revolting doctrine--a doctrine which teaches us that SOMEBODY'S blood must be shed, somebody's veins and arteries depleted, for every trivial offense committed against the moral law. Somebody must pay the penalty in blood, somebody must be slaughtered for every little foible or peccadillo or mortal blunder into which erring man may chance to stumble while upon the pilgrimage of life, while journeying through the wilderness of time, even if a God has to be dragged from his throne in heaven, and murdered to accomplish

it. Nothing less will mitigate the divine wrath.

Whose soul--possessing the slightest moral sensibility--does not inwardly and instinctively revolt at such a doctrine? We would not teach it to the world, for it is founded in butchery and bloodshed, and is an old pagan superstition, which originated far back in the midnight of mental darkness and heathen ignorance, when the whole human race was under the lawless sway of their brutal propensities, and when the ennobling attributes of love, mercy and forgiveness had as yet found no place, no abiding home, in the human bosom. The bloody soul of the savage first gave it birth. We hold the doctrine to be a high-handed insult to the ALL-Loving Father, who, we are told, is "long-suffering, in mercy," and "plentiful in forgiveness," to charge HIM with sanctioning such a doctrine, much less with originating it.

There is no "mercy or forgiveness" in putting an innocent being to death for any pretext whatever. And for the Father to consent to the brutal assassination of His own innocent Son upon the cross to gratify and implacable revenge toward his own children, the workmanship of his own hands, rather than forgive a moral weakness implanted in their natures by a voluntary act of his own, and for which consequently he alone ought to be responsible, would be nothing short of murder in the first degree.

We cherish no such conception. We cannot for a moment harbor a blasphemous doctrine, which represents the Universal Father as being a bloody-minded and murderous being, instead of a being of infinite love, infinite wisdom, and infinite in all the moral virtues. Such a character would be a deep-dyed stigma upon any human being. And no person actuated by a strict sense of justice would accept salvation upon any such terms as that prescribed by the Christian atonement.

It is manifestly too unjust, too devoid of moral principle, besides being a flagrant violation of the first principles of civil and criminal jurisprudence. It is a double wrong to punish the innocent for the guilty. It is the infliction of injustice on the one hand, and the omission of justice on the other. It inflicts the highest penalty of the law upon an innocent being, whom that law ought to shield from punishment, while it exculpates and liberates the guilty party, whose punishment the moral law demands. It robs society of a useful man on the one hand, and turns a mortal pest upon the community on the other thus committing a two-fold wrong, an act of injustice. No court in any civilized country would be allowed to act upon such a principle; and the judge who should endorse it, or favor a law or principle, which punishes the innocent for the guilty, would be ruled off the bench at once.

Here, however, we are sometimes met with the plea, that the offering of Jesus Christ was a voluntary act, that it was made with his own free will.

But the plea doesn't do away with either the injustice or criminality of the act.

No innocent person has a right to suffer for the guilty, and the courts have no right to accept the offer or admit the substitute. An illustration will show this. If Jefferson Davis had been convicted of the crime of treason, and sentenced to be hung, and Abraham Lincoln had come forward and offered to be stretched upon the gallows in his place, is there a court in the civilized world which would have accepted the substitute, and hung Lincoln, and liberated Davis? To ask the question is but to answer it. It is an insult to reason, law and justice to entertain the proposition.

The doctrine of the atonement also involves the infinite absurdity of God punishing himself to appease his own wrath. For if "the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in Christ bodily" (as taught in Col. ii 9), then his death was the death of God--that is, a divine suicide, prompted and committed by a feeling of anger and revenge, which terminated the life of the Infinite Ruler--a doctrine utterly devoid of reason, science or sense. We are sometimes told man owes a debt to his Maker, and the atonement pays the debt. To be sure! And to whom is the debt owing, and who pays it? Why, the debt is owing to God, and God (in the person of Jesus Christ) pays it--pays it to himself. We will illustrate. A man approaches his neighbor, and says, "Sir, I owe you a thousand dollars, but can never pay it." "Very well, it makes no difference," replies the claimant, "I will pay it myself"; and forthwith thrusts his hand in his right pocket and extracts the money, transfers it to the left pocket and exclaims--"There, the debt is paid!" A curious way of paying debts, and one utterly devoid of sense. And yet the orthodox would have adopted it for their God. We find, however, that they carefully avoid practicing this principle themselves in their dealings with each other. When they have a claim against a neighbor, we do not find them ever thrusting their hands into their own pockets to pay it off, but sue him, and compel him to pay--if he refuses to do it without compulsion--thus proving they do not consider it a correct principle of trade.

But we find, upon further investigation, that the assumed debt is not paid--after all.

When a debt is paid, it is canceled, and dismissed from memory, and nothing more said about it. But in this case the sinner is told he must still suffer the penalty for every sin he commits, notwithstanding Christ died to atone for and cancel that sin.

Where, then, is the virtue of the atonement? Like other doctrines of the orthodox creed, it is at war with reason and common sense, and every principle of sound morality, and will be marked by coming ages as a relic of barbarism.