

Zion's King Shall Reign Victorious! - 20

Jesus insisted that it was God's will that he must be baptized - "to fulfill all righteousness" - Matthew 3:15. Whereas sinning is behaving contrary to the will of God, righteousness is performing it. Simply accepting what God says is viewed by God as righteousness - "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" - James 2:23.

Jesus was born "the Son of David," by his birth to Mary - Matthew 1:1 & 18 and "the Son of God" by the operation of the Holy Spirit on Mary - Luke 1:35. Despite this fact, Jesus is called "the Man Christ Jesus" - 1 Timothy 2:5. By his descent through Mary Jesus was a member of the fallen human race, and so was a mortal man, seen in the fact that he died on the cross.

•Consistently with this fact, Jesus experienced the same infirmities as those he came to save - "... he too shared in their humanity... he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. 18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted" - Hebrews 2:14-18.

Unlike those who are saved by his sacrifice - 1 Corinthians 5:7, Jesus "overcame" sin, and so was called "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" - John 1:29, "a lamb without blemish and without spot" - 1 Peter 1:19.

The fact that Jesus "overcame" is illustrated in the crisis when Jesus faced imminent arrest, shame, torture and death. Jesus knew that it was his Father's will that he submit to that ordeal, but he also felt the same abhorrence of it as any ordinary man would. So Jesus resorted to prolonged and repeated prayer for strength, crying to God,

•"Father, if it is Your will, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless NOT MY WILL, but Yours, be done." 43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him" by assuring him of "the joy that was set before Him" - Luke 22:42; Hebrews 12:2.

In his submitting to the cross, Jesus knew that as long as he lived with the fallen human nature which he had inherited through his mother, there would be a continuous battle of wills, between the will of God and the natural feelings associated with his physical nature. When Jesus earlier foretold his arrest, crucifixion and resurrection - Matthew 16:22, Peter seems to have taken it that Jesus was just having a bad day and imagining the worst outcome of his efforts, since the expectation of Peter and the others was that Jesus was soon to "restore the kingdom to Israel" - Acts 1:6. After reprimanding Jesus for being so negative, Peter received the shocking rejoinder from Jesus, "get behind me satan!" Peter was arousing the very feelings in Jesus that he wanted to avoid - to look for a way out of the painful path into which he knew God was sending him.

But Jesus chose to obey, because through that action he became the means of sinful mankind finding God's favour to extinguish his guilt, called "propitiation". This Jesus accomplished by making a public statement by the action of submitting to the crucifixion - as explained by Paul in Romans 3:25, "to declare his (God's) righteousness", in condemning sinful mankind to death.

This is the "faith in his blood," meaning the believer's acceptance of God's condemning of sin by death. This acceptance the believer declares when he submits to the symbolic burial of baptism, and because he vindicates God in this way, God forgives his sins. We have taken a long detour from the kingship of Jesus, but promise to get back on track next time, God willing.