

GOD BECAME A SINNER

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In preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we regularly declare that Jesus was God's Innocent Lamb, and thanks to God, that is exactly the truth. Personally, that is to say, in His own person, there was never the blight of sin. From His youth up until He cried from the cross, "**It is finished,**" there was naught in Him that displeased the Father.

He was personally innocent and therefore was a perfect, sin-free sacrifice. Yet, the Scripture says, "**...and the Lord hath LAID ON HIM the iniquity of us all.**" (Isa. 53:6) And again in II Cor. 5:21, "**For He (God) hath made Him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.**"

A prophet came and taught us that to preach the innocence of Jesus is only half-way to the real truth of the Gospel. We must also preach his TOTAL GUILT before God. When the Scripture says the Lord "**LAID ON HIM THE INIQUITY OF US ALL,**" that is not just a saying. This Christ, this God-Man, actually became a SINNER in the eyes of the Father. Throughout His earthly life, the Lord Jesus had a two-fold relationship to the Law; PERSONALLY INNOCENT, but OFFICIALLY UNDER ITS CURSE. If Jesus was not judged guilty, then we are still in our sins and no debt has been paid.

In Rom.8:3, the Scripture says, "**He put on the likeness of sinful flesh.**" This is our proof that sin was TRANSFERRED to Him even as He was being formed in the womb. He BORE sin all through the days of His flesh. The Scripture

and the Prophet teach that Jesus, who was God, actually became a SINNER when He chose to bear our sins!

QUOTE: THE KINSMAN REDEEMER, 11-24-63, PAGE 27, "...God became a SINNER, took our sins upon Him. Knowing no sins, yet was a SINNER because our sins were PLACED UPON HIM. He became me that I might become Him. He became a SINNER that I might become a Son of God. He became a SINNER that you might become a Son of God." (End of quote)

The powerful revelation that Brother Branham is presenting here is that the Father was not punishing an INNOCENT PERSON. Therefore, we are to understand that Jesus Christ was actually, and in a very real sense, made to be SIN, and therefore became subject to all its penalties.

There is no way we can explain the terrible indignities that Christ endured during His life and then at the Cross, until we recognize that from the manger to Calvary, He was standing in the stead of His People, that He was bearing their sins and suffering the due rewards of their iniquities. As the Prophet said, "God became a sinner!"

The Scripture says that, "**No good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly.**" But we, as God's People, did the very reverse of walking uprightly. We

forsook the way of God's laws and followed a course of self-will, and that not just occasionally, but constantly. As a result, many good things were withheld from us. Again, Jeremiah said, "**Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.**" (Jer. 5:25) Therefore, when Jesus came as our sin-bearer, Divine Justice required that He should be deprived of many "**Good things.**"

As prodigal sons and daughters, we forfeited all rights to even as much as an earthly abode, and when Jesus came, suffering in our place, He had not so much as a place to lay His head. Because man sinned in Eden, God pronounced the following curse upon him, "**In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.**" Therefore, we see Jesus toiling in the carpenter shop for bread. Because we failed to "**Love our neighbor as ourselves,**" we find Jesus experiencing the hatred of men. Because we are guilty of gluttony, He was made to hunger. Because we have been intemperate in drinking, He thirsted. Because we have misused our money, He was penniless. Because we have denied Him, He was denied. The Atonement of Christ was not just limited to His single act of dying on the Cross. But, as when Christ is said to have been "**obedient unto death,**" we are to understand that this included the whole period of His life.

Anywhere we behold Him in Scripture before men, we are to know that He was occupying the place of us sinful people. He was bearing our reproach, and as our sin-bearer, He was receiving from God what was our due. The Father completely identified Christ Jesus with His guilty people. What took place here on Earth was but the verdict of the High Court of Heaven where it had already been decided that the Creator and Law Maker, Himself, would pay the price of keeping, then fulfilling, His own *law of death* to set us free.

Examine His appearance before Caiaphas and Pilate. How is Pilate's unjust treatment of Jesus to be accounted for? Why should God require His Son to be mocked by submitting to a trial that was a reversal of Justice? There is only one answer we can find. It was Christ the SINNER who was arraigned for sentence. He was judicially reckoned by God to **"be among the transgressors."** (Lk. 22:37)

Though personally sin-free, Divine Justice demanded that He should be dealt with as deserving of death. In the mind of God, Jesus had been judicially made a SINNER. The Father made Jesus to be answerable for every sin we would ever commit. He was actually GUILTY in the stead of us, and reaped throughout His life and death what we should have reaped.

The sentence pronounced by the human judges was but the sentence which had been passed by the Divine Judge upon the sin-bearer, *which sin-bearer was He, Himself!* Jesus hid not His face from shame and spitting. Why not? Because as guilty wretches that is what our sins deserved. When before His accusers He was **"dumb"** making no reply to the charges against Him, it was because He was standing in the place of us guilty sin-

ners. Therefore, there was nothing He could say in His defense. He knew He had been judged guilty in our stead!

In God's mind, the charges that were laid against His Christ by the Sanhedrin were not false because He was actually and literally representing those who were guilty. It would be an insult to God's moral government to think that He would permit a perfectly innocent man to endure the sufferings and the sentence which Jesus received. His own infallible Word says, **"When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh even His enemies to be at peace with him."** (Prov. 16:7) Jesus was guilty of our sins.

In the eyes of God it was no innocent person that stood before Pilate. It was the SINNER who was on trial, standing there in the person of His sinless substitute. It was our sin-bearer making a real appearance before the Judgment Seat of God. Because our Substitute was playing a dual role, personally innocent but taking the part of His criminal people, God had Pilate to declare, **"I find no fault in Him."** Nevertheless, He condemned Him to death, thus showing forth His dual role.

QUOTE: THE TOKEN, PAGE 15, "What if you had committed a crime and was to be tried in a federal court, and you knew that if they found you guilty, that you were going to die.....you knew you were guilty and you must die if you don't get some attorney to represent you who can get you out of the thing....But still there would be a question whether this attorney could change the judge's idea, or change the jury....Still there would be a question, can he do it?"

But in this case, the judge himself becomes our attorney. God became man....and took the justice of His own Law in His own hands

and paid the price of it Himself. How much more secure could we be?" (End of quote)

The prophet is saying that God is PERFECTLY SATISFIED with the debt that was paid for our sins. How so? Because He made the Holy Law Himself, then came to Earth and kept every jot and tittle of it, then died to forever settle our sin-debt. The debt is eternally settled; the case against us is dismissed. Where, then, is room for the condemnation that the enemy brings us daily? **"There is therefore now no condemnation...."** (Rom 8:1)

What we are seeking to show is that the sufferings and death of Christ Jesus PERFECTLY SATISFIED the demands of Divine Justice on behalf of His People. The deep humiliation to which the Son of God was subjected, and being made **"in the likeness of sinful flesh"** was a judicial sentence imposed upon Him by the Father, yet voluntarily submitted to by HIMSELF. Jesus was God in flesh, therefore, God Himself paid our debt. How then could He ever charge us again?

This is where the powerful revelation of ONE PERSON in the Godhead comes to full fruition. The Father's plan was to pay our sin-debt HIMSELF, and not that one should be sent in His place. God became man in the form of Jesus Christ, and completely satisfied Himself that every sin of every child of His had been fully paid for. The cup of woe put to His lips at Bethlehem was never removed until He paid for the last sin that we would ever commit. How could we be anymore secure when the Judge Himself satisfied the debt?

He experienced every kind of suffering. He tasted poverty in its severest form. He was born in a stable, owned no property, and was

dependent upon the charity of others. (Lk. 8:3) He suffered reproach in all its bitterness. The vilest accusations and the most cutting sarcasm were hurled at his perfect character. He was taunted with being a glutton, a wine bibber, a deceiver, a blasphemer and a devil. He was called a bastard child. (John 8:41) Therefore, we hear Him crying, **“Reproach hath broken My heart.”** (Ps. 69:20)

He experienced temptation in all its evil force and was the victor over it in every circumstance. Above all of that, He bore the full brunt of the WRATH OF GOD so that He was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. (Matt. 26:38) He was in **“an agony”** (Lk. 22:44) and finally **“forsaken of God.”** (Matt. 27:46)

What is the explanation for the unparalleled sufferings? Why was His most perfect obedience followed by these terrible punishments? David declared, **“Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken.”** (Ps. 37:25) Why then was the Righteous One abandoned by God? Only one answer is possible. Only one answer fully meets all the scriptural facts. In order to fully stand in the place of us who had offended God. Christ was obliged to receive the sins of us all upon His precious shoulders. In so doing, He actually became a SINNER, and was treated as such by the Father.

He chose to discharge all of our liabilities and this involved being actually charged with our guilt and becoming a SINNER. As the sin-bearing substitute for His People. Christ was *justly* exposed to all the dreadful consequences of God's wrath. In the Book of Job, the question was asked, **“Whoever perished being innocent?”** (Job 4:7) The Bible answer is that no innocent person ever came under God's wrath. Therefore, before His wrath

could fall upon Christ, the sins of His People must truly be *transferred upon Him*. This is exactly what the scriptures declare.

In Lev. 16:21, the scapegoat was a remarkable type of our Christ. **“And Aaron shall lay both of his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions with all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.”** And, so too was it plainly prophesied, that when Jesus came the Lord would **“Lay upon Him the iniquity of us all.”** (Isa. 53:6-12) the expression in Rom. 8:3, **“Made in the likeness of sinful flesh”** clearly shows that our sins were to be transferred to Christ Jesus. Not only had He been **“Made in the likeness of men,”** but also that He had been made **“In the likeness of sinful flesh.”** How else can we explain the fact that in Luke 2:21 He was circumcised on the eighth day just as all male babies born into sin? So too was the ceremonial **“purification”** of His mother (Luke 2:22) and her presentation of a sin offering (Lev. 12:2-6) in perfect keeping with the fact that though He was PERSONALLY INNOCENT, yet He came into the world having been judged GUILTY by the Father.

By His own words he testified that He was born to suffer from His youth up. Ps 88:15, **“I am afflicted and ready to die from youth up; I suffer Thy terrors, I am distracted.”** How else can we account for the fact that Satan could attack Jesus Christ had He not been legally charged with our sins? Satan dare not attack God on His High and Mighty Throne. But on Earth, in a flesh body and charged with our sins, the door was opened for repeated attacks. Because Jesus came here as surety in our place He, by reason of God's sentence upon

Him, became subject to the attacks of Satan.

And so, we see that at this point lies one of the great mysteries that God revealed to our Prophet, William Branham. One of the chief glories and wonders of the Gospel is that not only was our Christ innocent, but He was also GUILTY in that He fully assumed our sin-debt and became answerable to every demand of the Father's Law against us. Had this not been the case, the Righteous God could never have RIGHTEOUSLY punished His Righteous Son. The Son must first be made guilty, and then punished.

On Earth, Jesus placed Himself in the Father's hands saying, **“Charge to me whatsoever they owe Thee, and I will satisfy their debt.”** Jesus had to take on Himself our GUILT before the Father could righteously punish Him for our sins. It is indeed remarkable to read in the scriptures that Christ actually *owned* our sins as being His. The 40th Psalm is one that contains the very words of Jesus Christ Himself, as we know from the quotes in Hebrews, Chpt. 10. In this Psalm, verse 12, He said, **“For innumerable evil have compassed me about; MINE INIQUITIES have taken hold on Me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head. Therefore, My heart faileth me.”** What a proof that our sins had been transferred to Him!

In another great Messianic Psalm (the 69th), We find Jesus saying, **“O God, Thou knowest My foolishness, and MY SINS are not hid from Thee.”** (Verse 5) How unmistakably do these words show that our sins had been reckoned to Him! They were not His because He had committed them, but because the Father had imputed them unto Him. 1 Peter 2:24, **“Who His**

own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree."

Whomsoever God punishes for sin, must be GUILTY of sin. Therefore, we read, **"For He hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin."** (II Cor. 5:21) God made our Christ to be LEGALLY GUILTY in our place, not in mere words, not just in a written statement, but in AWFUL REALITY. God inflicted punishment on Christ just as if he had been the Personal Offender. Now, we are innocent just as if we had kept all the Law. Zech. 13:7, **"Awake, O Sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts; SMITE the Shepherd."** Isa. 53:10, **"It pleased the Lord to bruise him, He hath put Him to grief; when thou shalt make His Soul an offering for sin."**

We have stressed the Prophet's statement over and over where he said, "GOD BECAME A SINNER," (KINSMAN REDEEMER, PAGE 27) and have tied it in with Scripture. When the revelation strikes us that the Great Judge Himself put a robe of flesh like unto ours and proceeded to pay every sin-debt that we owed, claiming our guilt as His own, then we will also understand how wrong it is not to claim, **"The Robe of Righteous-**

ness" that He paid such a terrible price for and offers us in Rom. 5:17.

Our natural mind would say, "You dare NOT claim such a thing as that," but our spiritual man says, "We must claim it or the suffering of Christ was in vain." (Gal. 2:21)

And so, we conclude that our total INNOCENCE depends upon His being made totally GUILTY AND THE PAYMENT He made because of it. We believe the Prophet unveiled to our eyes the very heart of the Gospel when He stated, God became a SINNER." By this we can plainly see the FAITH PRINCIPLE by which our righteousness comes. We were under the judgments of God, guilty, helpless, hopeless, but then our Father chose not to demand LEGAL RIGHTEOUSNESS from us, but rather to count it as ours through His own payment.

It was not that He did not have the right to demand legal righteousness, but rather that He did not do it. This then is GRACE brought into full view. Our hearts are prone to legality and unbelief, and with great difficulty are we brought to understand that God is FOR us. God is for His ELECT. We have failed, but He is FOR us. We are ignorant, but He is FOR US. We

have not yet brought forth much fruit, but He is FOR us. The sin-principle remains in our flesh, but God is FOR us.

If our hearts can surrender to the fact that God has been, and will eternally be FOR His ELECT, and will cling to His promise wherein He stated, **"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's ELECT,"** then are we delivered from Law into Grace. We will, in thanksgiving and praise, our of a heart full of love, strive with all our strength to keep His lovely Law, knowing that when we fail, we have an **"Advocate with the Father."** (I John 2:1)

What shall we say to these things? To doubt them is to deny them, and to deny them is the road to Tribulation. To question whether they apply to US is to question the Gospel that declared, **"Whosoever will, let him come."** (Rom. 10:13) Election is a fact, and so is the call to come made to all who have a DESIRE to come. We can let God be absolutely sovereign in Election, and yet, if we find the door opened by this same Sovereign God, with **"whosoever will"** written over it, then by all means quickly enter. It is the doorway to the Rapture. Amen!

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