

“TIME” OF ISRAEL’S RESTORATION

PART II

ISRAEL’S RETURN TO THE LAND OF HER POSSESSION

By Arlen L. Chitwood

Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.

Moreover ye shall take no satisfaction [ransom] for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death.

And ye shall take no satisfaction [ransom] for him that is fled to the city of his refuge, that he should come again to dwell in the land, until the death of the priest [the high priest (v. 25)].

So ye shall not pollute the land wherein ye are: for blood it defileth the land: and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it (Num. 35:30-33).

In the camp of Israel there was only one high priest at any one time. At the time of the high priest’s death, he was succeeded by another from the Aaronic line; and the high priestly ministry in the Aaronic line continued in this manner, after this fashion.

Aaron ministered in the sanctuary in the earthly tabernacle, with blood, on behalf of the people. Jesus, on the other hand, is presently ministering in the heavenly sanctuary, with blood, on behalf of the people — a ministry patterned after the order of Aaron. And, as evident from Hebrews chapter five, along with other related Scripture, Christ’s present ministry after the order of Aaron *will not* continue indefinitely.

There is a day coming when Christ’s present ministry in the heavenly sanctuary will end. And the termination of this ministry, along with certain events which will occur relative to Israel in that day, was typified by the death of the high priest in the camp of Israel and events which occurred relative to

the slayer when the high priest died.

And these events, as they pertain to the slayer, have to do with two things in the antitype:

- 1) *Israel’s cleansing from defilement through contact with the dead body of the nation’s Messiah.*
- 2) *A restoration the Jewish people to the land of their possession.*

The Provided Ransom

The word *ransom* (Num. 35:31, 32 [translated “satisfaction,” KJV]) is from a cognate form of the word for “atonement” in the Hebrew text. The underlying thought behind “atonement” is *to cover*; and that is the same thought expressed by the “ransom” in this chapter. This ransom provided *a covering* — a covering from view, a putting away, a blotting out — of the previous capital act (an unpremeditated act). And once the ransom had been used, which could be *only after the death of the high priest*, the whole matter was *put away*. The person was then free to return to the land of his possession; and the near kinsman of the one slain could no longer have any claim on him whatsoever, for the matter had been *put away* and could never be brought up again.

(In the type, this ransom was connected with some aspect of the person and work of the high priest, or of other priests. For example, this ransom could not be used *until the high priest had died*. Then, this ransom had to do with *a covering* [with *atonement*] from defilement wrought through contact with a dead body. And such a work in Numbers chapter nineteen, where cleansing from this type defilement is dealt with, was performed by *a priest*.

The high priestly ministry of Aaron and his successors in the camp of Israel, whether in this or in other areas of defilement, was a work on behalf of *the saved*, not the unsaved. Their work was for those who had already appropriated the blood of slain paschal lambs, pointing to Christ and His shed blood at Calvary [the slain Paschal Lamb]. This succession of high priests ministered in this manner, on the basis of shed blood, typifying Christ’s present ministry in the sanctuary after this same fashion [a ministry for the saved, on the basis of shed blood].

Thus, that being dealt with in Numbers chapter thirty-five — portending a priestly work — has to do with *the cleansing of saved individuals from defilement*

[defilement wrought through contact with a dead body], not with issues surrounding the death of the firstborn [issues surrounding eternal salvation].

And the Jewish people, for two reasons, find themselves in a position today where they cannot avail themselves of this cleansing [cleansing from contact with the dead body of their Messiah]:

- 1) The Jewish people today are in *an unsaved state*.
- 2) The Jewish people, even if they were in a saved state today, could not presently avail themselves of the ransom [cleansing] because *of the nature of Christ’s present priestly ministry*.

Cleansing from all defilement during the present dispensation is brought to pass through only *one means* — through Christ’s present ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, on the basis of His shed blood on the mercy seat. Though Christ is not of the Levitical line, His present ministry is patterned after the order of Aaron’s ministry; and, because Christ is not of the Levitical line, if God were dealing with Israel on a national basis today, He could not deal with the Jewish people in relation to Christ’s present ministry in the sanctuary [else He would violate that which He Himself established].

The Jewish people, if they were being dealt with in relation to the priesthood today, would have to be dealt with in relation to that set forth concerning the priesthood in the Mosaic Economy [as will be seen through the covenant Antichrist will make with Israel during the coming Tribulation, when God completes His national dealings with Israel during Man’s Day]. The priest, within the Mosaic Economy, had to be of *the Levitical line*. And Christ is not of this line. Christ is from the tribe of Judah.

Thus, dealing with the Jewish people in relation to Christ’s high priestly ministry today would be *completely out of the question*. They could not go to Christ and receive cleansing, for the Mosaic Economy does not recognize a priestly ministry of the nature Christ is presently exercising [a non-Levitical ministry patterned after the order of Aaron, a Levite]. And any priesthood which the Jewish people themselves could enact today, from the Levitical line, would be completely non-*efficacious*.

However, note that Christ [though from the tribe of Judah] *can conduct* a ministry patterned after the order of Aaron for Christians during the present dispensation, for *Christians are not under the Mosaic*

Economy. Christians form part of *the one new man*, which is neither Jew nor Gentile [cf. Gal. 3:26-29; Eph. 2:12-15]. Thus, for Christians, Christ's lineage has *nothing to do with the matter one way or the other.*

But, before the Jewish people can enter into the picture as matters pertain to the priesthood and the ransom, seen in Numbers chapter thirty-five, Christ must *first* terminate His present ministry in the sanctuary and come forth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. And, as well, a new covenant [which will replace the old covenant] will be made with Israel at this time [Jer. 31:31-34].

In the preceding respect, from the vantage point of the antitype, it is an easy matter to see why the high priest in the camp of Israel had to die before the slayer could avail himself of the ransom and return to the land of his possession. God had simply established and brought matters to pass after this fashion in the history of Israel in order to form a type, with a view to the antitype. Christ's high priestly ministry in the sanctuary has to terminate *first*. *Only then* can the slayer [Israel] avail herself of the ransom and return to the land of her possession.)

Thus, the ransom for Israel's capital offense has already been paid. Jesus paid this ransom at Calvary, shedding His Own blood — blood which is presently on the mercy seat in the heavenly sanctuary. However, although the ransom (providing atonement) for Israel's sin has already been paid, the nation cannot avail herself of this ransom or return to the land of her possession *until the antitype of the death of the high priest.*

Israel though must *first* experience her national Passover in fulfillment of Ex. 12:7 and Lev. 23:5 — through applying the blood which was shed 2,000 years ago. And this can occur *only* at the termination of Israel's present blindness (Rom. 11:25). Israel, as the two disciples on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24:13ff, *must continue in a blinded condition* until the resurrected Christ, by His personal presence at His second coming, opens the Old Testament Scriptures to the Jewish people's understanding in this respect (cf. vv. 16, 25-27, 31).

In that day, Israel's eyes will be *opened*; and a nation will be "born at once" (Isa. 66:8). The entire nation will experience the *birth from above at the same time* [when the Jewish people look upon the One Whom "they have pierced" (Zech. 12:10)]. And this will occur *only after* Christ terminates His present ministry,

departs the heavenly sanctuary, and comes forth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek. *Then cleansing can occur, allowing the ransom seen in Numbers chapter thirty-five to be accessed.*

It will be in that day — not before — that Israel will experience her national Passover, be able to avail herself of the ransom, and be free to return to the land of her possession. As long as Christ occupies His present position in the heavenly sanctuary, Israel *cannot* avail herself of the paid ransom and return to this land. Israel *must* remain in her present condition — blinded — throughout the present dispensation; and, according to related Scripture, Israel will not be removed from this condition until a few years beyond the present dispensation, at the end of Man's Day, at the end of the Tribulation.

(Insofar as Christians are concerned, Christ's present ministry in the heavenly sanctuary will terminate when the Church is removed from the earth into the heavens, at the end of the present dispensation. However, Christ's ministry in the sanctuary will apparently continue for others through the Tribulation, else the saved among the earth-dwellers would have no High Priest.

Christ though will not come forth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek, appearing to Israel after this fashion, until the end of Man's Day, the end of the Tribulation. And it will be only at this time that events surrounding the antitype of the death of the high priest in Numbers chapter thirty-five can occur.)

Availing Themselves of the Ransom

Also, the Jewish people one day availing themselves of the ransom in Numbers chapter thirty-five would have to do with the fulfillment of events set forth in the second and sixth of the seven feasts of the Lord in Leviticus chapter twenty-three — *the feast of Unleavened Bread*, which immediately followed *the Passover*, and *the Day of Atonement*.

"Leaven" points to that which is *vile, corrupt* (cf. Matt. 13:33; 16:1-12; I Cor. 5:6-8); and the fulfillment of this festival in the type had to do with a *cleansing of the house, a removing of all leaven from the house immediately following the Passover* (cf. Ex. 12:8-20; Lev. 23:6-8).

And in the antitype, it is the same. The fulfillment of this festival will immediately follow the fulfillment

of the Passover. It will occur immediately following Israel applying the blood of the slain Paschal Lamb, blood shed 2,000 years prior to this time. And because Israel had previously shed this blood, the entire house of Israel will be found in an *unclean* condition in that day, *an uncleanness which will have to be dealt with.*

Israel, in that day, will be found in this *unclean* condition through the nation's prior contact with the dead body of their Messiah. The house, resultingly, will be found *completely leavened*. *And the leaven will have to be removed; it will have to be put out, done away with.*

But, though all things associated with *leaven* will be put out of the house (fulfilling the second festival, the festival of Unleavened Bread), *cleansing* cannot occur until events surrounding the fulfillment of the sixth festival (the Day of Atonement). *Only then* will the nation be able to access the ransom, be cleansed of defilement through contact with the dead body of their Messiah, and be free to return to the land of their possession. *Only then* can the seventh and last festival be realized — the feast of Tabernacles, a time of rest at the completion of the previous six festivals, foreshadowing the time of rest awaiting the people of God (a seventh-day rest, a Sabbath rest), the Messianic Era.

This is where the account of the slayer availing himself of the ransom in Numbers chapter thirty-five, following the death of the high priest, is seen being fulfilled in the antitype (along with the fulfillment of that seen in Numbers chapter nineteen). *Israel in that day will be cleansed of this defilement, and the house will no longer be leavened.*

Accordingly, *only in that coming day*, only following cleansing from Israel's present defilement wrought through prior contact with the dead body of the nation's Messiah, will the Jewish people be free to return to the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and *only then* can the Jewish people realize their calling in this land, with God's promised blessings flowing out through Israel to the Gentile nations of the earth after the fashion which God intended when He called this nation into existence.

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