

To Whom Do You Present Yourself?

As we turn to the scriptures, we find a treasure trove of God's communication with his creation. From the Pentateuch, (Greek term applied to the first five books of Moses), or the Hebrew Torah, denoting "to guide or teach" according to Leviticus 10:11, saying, "that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which Jehovah hath spoken unto them by Moses": through the history of the Judges, Kings, and Prophets, the world has a record of nearly four-thousand years of biblical history, along with God's laws, protection, and interaction with a people, of whom God chose to bring the Messiah into the world. These writings, along with the New Testament scriptures, have been compiled in what is called the "Bible," from the Greek *Bibila* meaning originally "books." Whereas the Jewish scriptures spoke of a Messiah to come, the New Testament affirms the glad news, or gospel, that in Jesus of Nazareth God fulfilled his promise, which was given in the Law of Moses and the prophets, of a Savior and salvation.

When the Messiah (Hebrew), or the Christ (Greek), came, he declared, or explained the Father, as recorded by the Apostle John, saying, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18), and revealed the true nature of man's dreadful condition before God, and God's provisions to save man, saying, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). It is from these writings that man can come to know his condition before God. The Apostle Paul said, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Howbeit, I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet: but sin, finding occasion, wrought in me through the commandment all manner of coveting: for apart from the law sin is dead. And I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died; and the commandment, which was unto life, this I found to be unto death: for sin, finding occasion, through the commandment beguiled me, and through it slew me. So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good. Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good;—that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:7-13).

The Apostle Paul dealt with the matter of sin, and its consequences in a very simple analogy, saying, "Know ye not, that to whom ye present yourselves as servants unto obedience, his servants ye are whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But thanks be to God, that,

whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness” (Romans 6:16-18): being free from sin, i.e., no longer practice it, thus, “But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life. For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:22-23).

The plan of salvation through which mankind can be reconciled to the Father is a work of God, presented to all mankind, because God loved the world, i.e., He did that which was in man’s best interest, at a very high cost: “he gave his only begotten Son.”

Remember the words of the Lord, saying, “It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you. And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...” (John 16:7-8). Won’t you submit to the teaching of God, and be “obedient from the heart to that form of teaching” whereby you can be delivered? ret