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“In his humiliation justice was denied him”

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THE MAN BORN TO BE KING

If you saw the following advertisement in your local newspaper would you be interested in applying for the position:

— Position Vacant —

Man required for important position. Applicant must have administrative ability of a high order and a capacity to recognise and reward merit in others. Must understand principles of delegation of authority and be able to win and hold the confidence of those exercising authority thus delegated.

A quiet, reserved manner is important. Ability to deal with each and every member of the community. No person given to ostentation, or status-seeking, need apply. Patience, insight and integrity essential.

Intending applicants will be expected to undergo an elimination test. This test is divided into two parts:

First, as a person completely without status and without privileged position, he must assert the absolute authority of moral values to the point of confrontation with those who have established their power over the people by distortion, suppression and manipulation. His dedication to principle must be such as will enable him to meet adversity at all times with an indomitable spirit, and to accept apparent defeat in the same manner. Unpleasant experiences may be expected to follow from his activities, and he may expect to endure personal humiliation at the hands of the ignorant.

Second, in order to expose the false standards, false values, false principles and false fronts of those in opposition to him he will be required to undergo a similar humiliating experience on a second occasion at a different time and in a different place. The two experiences are actually part of one demonstration. The first will serve as an example and a warning, the second as a demonstration that his opponents have learned nothing by the first example. Between the two events those who opposed him will be masquerading as his representatives. The second experience will enable these persons, and their false standards, to be exposed finally and utterly.

Would you expect “Jesus Christ” to apply for this position? Construct an advertisement for yourself setting out the qualifications you would expect “Jesus Christ” to have according to church teaching. Contrast the result with the above. Are you under the impression that “Jesus Christ” is a name? It is simply a mixture of Latin and Greek which means “Anointed Yeshua.” Here is how your misconceptions arose —

WORDS AND IDEALS

Concepts such as justice, mercy, faith, integrity, righteousness and so on, existed in the minds of men long before attempts were made to put them down in writing. It was only after men tried to rationalise their ideals — to analyse their mental concepts — that it became possible to put these ideals into words.

Words are an imperfect medium for expressing such concepts. For instance, written law is one thing, justice, which law is an attempt to express, may be something quite different. Thus you have the expression: “I can buy justice.” This really means: “I have sufficient money at my disposal to be able to pay for the best legal brains available. With men of status to represent me, men who are able to find loopholes and technical points in even the best written laws, I am guaranteed immunity from complying with the law.” In such cases law works to defeat justice.

The Old Testament is written in words, words which, in places, endeavour to express the values and ideals of the nation of Israel. Probably the most noteworthy and specific instance is that of the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses endeavours to express certain fundamental ideals of Israel in a practical list of do’s and don’t’s. But the practical list reads like an itemised account which has to be paid rather than the expression of general ethical concepts and principles.

WORDS AND PITFALLS

There are very few direct words about “the messiah” in the Old Testament. There are some suggestive passages which indicate that one day a man will appear who, anointed by God for the task, will rule the world in righteousness. At the time he appears this man will restore the fortunes of Israel. A number of events seem to be associated with his appearing. Messianic prophecy as such, however, is practically non-existent, and is mainly derived from the suggestive force of these statements. This leads to a number of pitfalls for those searching Old Testament prophecy for their “messiah.” These pitfalls are as follows.

1. To focus on words and forget what value or ideal it is that the words are trying to express, thereby constructing a pedantic set of rules for “the messiah” to comply with,
2. To trust to events to guide one to “the messiah”, when quite obviously he must necessarily be possessed of certain qualities of character which should be discernible irrespective of the time or place at which he appears, (for if his qualities of character are not discernible on their own merits he could hardly be a worthy occupant of the position),
3. To select a set of values which “the messiah” must possess which are in conflict with the fundamental ideals and values of the Old Testament,

4. To use a Bible which is not in the original language, and includes mistranslations, thereby being removed two steps from the basic ideals.

Conventional “christian” sects and churches, as well as orthodox Judaism, fell victim to all these pitfalls, singly and in combination. Recent TV programs provide several very good illustrations of the principles involved. A team of Jehovah’s Witnesses looked, and sounded, like parrots on a perch as they thumbed the pages of their bibles and parroted off their thoroughly indoctrinated interpretations. Another time it was the Mormons, and on another several adherents of orthodox Judaism who insisted that the modern state of Israel needed more of their kind of religion before it could reach its fullest expression.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IDEAL

It was the function of Israel and of individual Israelites to project the values of God into the society of men. From the many there arose one, the ideal Israelite Yeshua Hanotzri. He was seen as possessing qualities and values which in Old Testament times had been connected with Moses, David, the nation of Israel, the Kingdom of Judah, the Egyptian bondage, the Babylonian captivity.... he recapitulated the life of Israel in his individual life. Essentially, Yeshua Hanotzri was a composite of values expressed in O.T. texts which were not “prophecies” in the accepted sense at all. This is quite clear in the opening chapters of Matthew.

The ideals of Yeshua Hanotzri were the exact reverse of what had been commonly expected. The Establishment based its opposition to him on its interpretation of specific Old Testament texts, and emphasised words rather than the value concepts which underlay the words. It was such opposition that brought the retort from Yeshua Hanotzri: “You search the scriptures and think that in them you have eternal life...” (John 5:39)

Events at the time of Yeshua Hanotzri did not seem to tally with those suggested in the Old Testament either. According to the New Testament such events were not as specifically stated in the Old Testament as the Establishment thought. Thus —

1. Some events, apparently singular, had two “fulfilments”, (the principle of compenetration),
2. Some events which apparently had no bearing on the appearing of the “messiah” actually did have a relationship because he recapitulated events and values of ancient Israel. (Composite events, composite values),
3. Some events were fulfilled in terms of a moral, rather than physical, significance.

Broadly, the New Testament said something like this:

Yeshua Hanotzri restored the fortunes of Israel, because he restored the nation’s moral integrity. The tribes of Israel, though scattered, were reunited in obedience to a common moral principle. But this principle was also like a fire, the fire of the Day of the Lord of prophecy, which burned the stubble of false values and false standards. And so on.

Should the reader of this pamphlet wish to acquaint himself with some of the paradoxes of messianic prophecy, he might consult Joseph Klausner’s “The Messianic Idea in Israel” or perhaps the article in the Catholic Commentary on the Holy Scriptures entitled “The New

Testament teaching on the Second Coming.” Alternatively, he might work the matter out for himself by tracing the “prophecies” cited in the New Testament back to their Old Testament setting. This throws up the pattern in which Yeshua Hanotzri, the unexpected messiah, fulfilled Old Testament “prophecies.”

ONE VALID CRITERION FOR MESSIAHSHIP

Refer back to the four pitfalls mentioned above.

Add to these pitfalls the further three paradoxes relating to events associated with the appearing of the “messiah.”

Do you think that church presentation of “Jesus Christ” is even remotely correct?

Do you think that the “messiah” can only appear under certain stipulated conditions?

There is only one criterion for messiahship. The man destined to rule the world in righteousness must be a man who possesses certain qualities of character.

All the rest of the criteria add up to nothing.