

The Berean

*A Christadelphian Magazine devoted to the exposition
and defense of the Faith once for all delivered
to the Saints; and opposed to the dogmas
of the Papal and Protestant Churches!*

**The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue
talketh of judgment. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his
steps shall slide—Psa. 37:30-31.**

Please send ecclesial communications to:

Bro. Jim Phillips, 592 PR. 3004, Lampasas, TX. 76550 USA

Assisted by bro. Fred Higham

Email: jkphil2222@yahoo.com

***In this issue: XXI.—"That the Kingdom which he will
establish will be the Kingdom of Israel restored, in the
territory it formerly occupied, namely, the land
bequeathed for an everlasting possession to Abraham
and his Seed (the Christ) by covenant."***

Editorial	302
The Kingdom of Israel Restored by John Thomas	310
Waiting for the Consolation of Israel by Robert Roberts	323
Restoration of the Ancient Kingdom of Israel by Robert Roberts	330
Questions Relating to the Kingdom of God by Robert Roberts	336
The Kingdom of God Particularized by John Thomas	342
Hints for Bible Markers by Beryl Snyder	360

**...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and
searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."**

CHRIST IS COMING SOON AND WILL REIGN ON EARTH

Editorial

Clause 21 of our Statement of Faith focuses on the Bible prophecies which testify that God will establish the Kingdom of Israel, in the land now known as Palestine, and that the center of that Kingdom will be the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. What we are seeing today, is not the establishment of the Kingdom, as Israel pounds Hamas in the Gaza strip, formerly the land occupied by the Philistines, but a precursor to the world rising up against Israel, to conquer her.

It was essential that Israel be reestablished in the Holy Land, in order for the prophecies of Ezekiel and Zechariah to come to pass. Before the Northern Hosts could descend upon the mountains of Israel to punish Israel for its disobedience, and make them amenable to Christ's divine rule, Israel first had to be on the mountains of Israel.

Ezekiel prophesied of a valley of dried bones, coming together bone by bone to become a great nation. Truly this has happened. Experts may disagree on when the bones began to come together, but certainly we can see, through the Zionist conference of 1897 the early stages of this coming together. The Balfour declaration of 1917, the freeing of Jerusalem from Turkish rule in the same year; the victory of Britain and France over the Turkish Empire in 1919 were more bones coming together.

Then came Jewish persecution in Europe under the National Socialists of Germany and the Fascists of Italy driving more Jews back to Israel. And this was followed by the British giving up their mandate in the Middle East in 1947, the United Nations declaring Israel a state in the same year, followed by Israel's victory in the 1948 war with the Arab confederations.

What we are witnessing today are those skirmishes necessary to further the anti-Semitism and cause more Jews to return to Israel. Anti-Semitism is up over 100% in the United States. And at the end of May, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned the American President Joe Biden, that conflict with the United States may be inevitable, if the US brings the Iranian Peace agreement back to life. As we have mentioned before, the original peace agreement required the US to defend Iran's nuclear installations, while Israel cannot possibly allow Iran to have nuclear installations.

So, something has to change. Perhaps Israel will have a change in government, making them more amenable to a nuclear armed Iran, or

perhaps the American government will change. Either way, the Tarshish powers will in the end, be set for the defense of Israel, though they may waver along the way, giving God the reason to subject them to the defeat prophesied in Ezekiel, at the hands of the norther hosts.

The Israeli Palestinian Conflict, May 2021.

With the Israelis and Palestinians in both civil war, and a war in Gaza, it might be good to take a look at what is behind the conflict. And it is safe to say that what is behind the conflict is the change in US Presidents. There were a few flareups that threatened the peace during the Trump administration, such as when President Trump moved the US embassy to Jerusalem, acknowledging Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, which was nothing on the scale of what we are seeing today.

Perhaps the most important factor in the Palestinian uprising, is President Biden restoring the money sent to the Palestinians, which President Trump had cut off. This is one of the factors in the Palestinians having the money to carry out the war. Palestinian funds had dried up due to the terms of the Abraham accords, (where participating nations agreed to stop funding Palestinian terror), the US cutting off of funds, and Iran (the greatest sponsor of terror in the region) having been sent into virtual bankruptcy by President Trump's breaking of the Iranian Peace Agreement (the JCPOA) and reinstituting crushing sanctions.

Under President Biden, two of those resources have been restored, the US now giving the money to the Palestinians which they need to carry out the war. The BBC reports President Biden's return to the US policy of funding the Palestinians this way:

From the BBC, April 7, 2021 on the restoration of funds to Iran: "US President Joe Biden's administration plans to provide \$235m (£171m) of aid to Palestinians, restoring part of the assistance cut by Donald Trump.

"Mr. Biden wants to "restore credible engagement" by the Palestinians in long-stalled peace talks with Israel. Palestinian leaders accused Mr. Trump of being heavily biased towards Israel. They rejected a peace plan he unveiled last year that envisaged recognising Israeli sovereignty over Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank and the Jordan Valley, and Jerusalem remaining Israel's 'undivided capital'.

"Israel occupied the West Bank and East Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war. Most of the international community considers the

settlements illegal under international law, though Israel disputes this.”

The other source now restored to Palestinians for the war effort comes from Iran, through President Biden’s efforts to restart the JCPoA. As President Biden appears to be willing to accept any terms to restart the JCPoA, this has allowed Iran to regain trade momentum, particularly through a more unfettered trade relationship with Europe, Russia, and China. China is the largest purchaser of Iranian Oil and has been regularly active in trading armaments for oil, evidenced by the US intercepting weapons from China, sent to an Iranian client state, Yemen.

Washington Post, 5/10/21: “In a statement, the 5th Fleet said the weapons included ‘dozens of advanced Russian-made anti-tank guided missiles’ and ‘thousands of Chinese Type 56 assault rifles,’ as well as hundreds of Kalashnikov machine guns, sniper rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

“‘That the US Navy seized another shipment of Iranian weapons bound for Yemen should come as no surprise,’ Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) tweeted Sunday, referring to a 2013 seizure of Chinese weapons.”

Now, while this provides the means for the Palestinians to carry out this intifada, or “holy war,” it is not the motive. The motive has to do with the politically divided state of Palestine. Palestine is divided into two regions, a portion east of Israel above the Dead Sea on the west bank of the Jordan River between Israel and the nation of Jordan, and the Gaza strip between Israel and Egypt.

In 2005, the Palestinians elected Mahmoud Abbas, of the Fatah Party (the party started by Yasser Arafat) to be President. The Hamas Party, in 2007 rebelled against Fatah’s rule, and set up its own government in Gaza. Apparently fearing that he would lose any future election for representatives, as well as the presidency to Hamas, President Abbas has suspended all elections since that time. President Abbas is now in the 16th year of his four-year appointment.

President Abbas had promised the Palestinians in January of this year, that they would have elections on May 22nd. But apparently fearing that Fatah would be soundly defeated by Hamas in the elections, President Abbas announce in the end of April, that the elections would be suspended, because Palestinians in East Jerusalem would not be allowed to vote by the Israeli government. The truth is that the Israeli’s had not blocked the Palestinians from voting but had refused to allow the Palestinians to officially operate in any way, which included setting up

voting stations in East Jerusalem, and other Jewish controlled regions of the West Bank. The suspension of elections was creating a huge problem for President Abbas among the Palestinian population.

A court appeal begun in 1972, concerning the ownership of property in Jerusalem, was finally coming to a head. The history behind the contended property was this:

Newsweek, by Carolyn Glick, (prominent Israeli author, and close associate with Benjamin Netanyahu): "In 1875, the chief rabbis of Jerusalem purchased buildings in the neighborhood and registered their purchase with the Ottoman—and later, British—authorities. In 1948, with the Jordanian conquest of the neighborhood, the buildings were listed under Jordan's "Register of Enemy Property" and leased to local Arabs. After Israel liberated and unified Jerusalem in 1967, the Jewish landowners registered their buildings again with the Israel Land Authority and began a process that has dragged on ever since of attempting to restore sovereign control over their properties. The Arab tenants, for their part, recognized the Israeli Jewish ownership of the buildings in a 1982 lawsuit. But in the ensuing 39 years, they have appealed every court ruling requiring them to vacate the premises.

The legal process for appeals having now ended, Israel was finally ready to return the six houses to their legal owners. The Fatah Party has seized on this issue to rally the Palestinians in an attempt to increase their support among the populace. The Hamas Party feels they must join in the Fatah Party sponsored intifada, in order to show themselves as dedicated to the destruction of Israel as the Fatah Party, so they do not lose their popularity should elections be announced.

The Palestinians claim the ruling unfair, in that Israeli law allows Jews to reclaim land taken from them in 1947, but that Palestinians are not allowed to reclaim land they owned prior to 1947. The Israeli position is that the Palestinians were given the right to return to their land in 1947, immediately following the war. They refused to return (no doubt under heavy pressure by Arab leaders who wanted the refugee camps set up as a propaganda tool and a constant source of anti-Israeli soldiers) and therefore they abandoned any claim to the land.

Meanwhile the United States dawdles under President Biden's leadership in so many geopolitical arenas. Many political commentators see the flare up on the Middle East to be entirely Russian driven, as President Putin continues to test the new American President. Having successfully faced down the American President in Ukraine, (as we outlined last month) and having now launched a remarkably successful cyber-attack

on American infrastructure, shutting down the largest gasoline pipeline in the United States for a week, Russia appears to be challenging the United States to stand beside Israel, or further lose face in the region.

As hundreds of Afghans who supported the United States in their war against the Taliban are already being slaughtered in the shadow of the United States abandonment of their allies to the viciousness of the militant Moslems, Russia appears anxious to let Israel know that they are the next state to be abandoned.

Reuters News Service May 15, 2021: “Two brutal attacks this week laid bare major weaknesses of the U.S.-Taliban troop withdrawal pact: nothing in it obliges the Taliban to prevent such massacres and the Afghan government’s ability to thwart them will only wane as U.S. troops pull out.”

“The Taliban has been careful not to attack U.S. and coalition forces, but have mounted more than 4,500 attacks in Afghanistan, a sharp increase in violence here, in the first 45 days after signing the agreement, according to data reviewed by Reuters. More than 500 civilians were killed in Afghanistan in the first quarter of 2021 as violence raged even after the pact was struck, according to the United Nations.

“A Western diplomat based in Kabul suggested the Taliban got the better of the United States in their deal.

‘The agreement between the U.S. and the Taliban is full of holes, while it clearly lays down the U.S./NATO withdrawal plan, it expects truly little from the Taliban side,’ the diplomat said. ‘It’s a nebulous deal where one side makes its intentions clear, but the other side makes no serious commitment.’

Such is the type of agreement Israel now has to fear. Noting how foolish the US was in restoring the money to the Palestinians to fund this intifada, Fox reports:

“House Armed Services Committee Member Rep. Michael Waltz, R-Fla., bashed Biden as well, telling Fox News on Monday that the ‘actual actions’ of the administration are ‘incredibly unhelpful’ even though their talk ‘sounds good.’

”‘They’ve given away all leverage right up front, and we’re seeing this is a theme with the Biden administration in terms of handing out cash hoping it fixes the situation,’ the congressman said. ‘So, they’ve already agreed to give hundreds of millions of dollars without any conditions.’

“Waltz noted that the Biden administration could have used the cash it gave away to leverage the Palestinian Authority to ‘denounce Hamas’ or change school curriculums that paint Israel as ‘evil.’”

Sadly (for Israel) President Biden appears to be listening more to the Socialist side of the Democratic Party. His actions in the four month since taking office, have been destructive to Israel, and pro-Palestinian. Again, from Carolyn Glick in Newsweek:

“Since its first days in office, the Biden administration has taken actions and issued statements to signal that it is replacing Trump's support for Israel with support for the Palestinians. President Joe Biden restored U.S. funding to the PA despite its unceasing support for, and funding of, terrorism. Biden also reinstated U.S. funding of United Nations agencies, such as UNRWA, that work with Hamas and disseminate Nazi-like anti-Semitism. Biden announced the U.S. intends to rejoin the UN Human Rights Council, an organization whose primary function is to demonize and condemn Israel.

“During the weeks leading up to the outbreak of Arab violence against Jews in Jerusalem, the Biden administration said nothing about the Palestinian incitement. On the contrary, in a series of statements by National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and State Department spokesmen, the administration adopted the anti-Semitic Palestinian narrative that the Jewish property owners in Sheikh Jarrah should be denied possession of their properties simply because they are Jews.

“In a stunning statement Tuesday, as Hamas rained down rockets on Israeli civilian targets and the Israeli military responded with surgical air strikes against Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad targets in Gaza, State Department Spokesman Ned Price drew a moral equivalence between Israel and the Palestinians. Price said: “Israel has the right to defend itself and respond to rocket attacks. The Palestinian people also have the right to safety and security, just as Israelis do.”

“The message Price sent to Hamas, Fatah and the Israeli Arabs assaulting Israeli Jews is that the U.S. is on their side. They can attack Jews and blame Israel and the Jews for their aggression, and the Biden administration will fund them, defend them and even adopt their anti-Semitic narratives. Palestinians are now certain they will be rewarded, not punished, for their aggression.

“So long as this remains the Biden administration's position, we can expect the latest Palestinian war against Israel to continue. Indeed, so long as this remains the administration's policy, the danger that the Palestinian war will escalate into a regional onslaught against Israel by Iran's proxies across Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen will only increase.”

But though his policies have been to embolden the Palestinians, and to discourage Israel, the socialist wing of his party too, has been critical of President Biden's response to the intifada, but for different reasons. Fox reports:

“On the flip side, firebrand Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich. — who has supported the boycott, divest and sanctions (BDS) movement targeting Israel — wildly claimed that the US is ‘enabling’ the violence in the region by giving Israel foreign aid and criticized the Biden administration for not declaring Israel is using the aid to ‘commit human rights violations.’

“‘U.S. taxpayer dollars should not be used to commit human rights violations. That needs to be said,’ Tlaib said Monday on MSNBC. ‘I have yet to hear anybody from the Biden administration declare that.’

“White House press secretary Jen Psaki told reporters Monday that the Biden administration has ‘serious concerns’ about the situation and pointed to the readout from national security adviser Jake Sullivan's call with Israeli national security adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat.”

And again, other socialist organizations supported by President Biden have also joined in on the side of the Palestinians.

“Prominent left-wing political groups jumped into the fray as well. Justice Democrats, a far-left group aligned with Ocasio-Cortez, renewed its push for Democratic legislation that would restrict how Israel can use American foreign aid.

“Black Lives Matter expressed solidarity with Palestinians against Israeli ‘oppression’ in an Instagram [post](#) Wednesday.

‘One cannot advocate for racial equality, LGBT & women's rights, condemn corrupt & abusive regimes and other injustices yet choose to ignore the Palestinian oppression,’ the BLM post said. ‘It does not add up.’”

As for the phone call that Secretary Psaki referenced, the Israeli Times reported this:

“Israel’s National Security Adviser Meir Ben-Shabbat pushed back when his US counterpart told him on Sunday that Washington was concerned over violent clashes between security forces and Palestinians in Jerusalem.

“According to media reports, Ben-Shabbat told US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan during a phone call that international intervention in the events, which have seen daily rioting in the Old City and other locations in the capital, is only rewarding those who are inciting the unrest.

“Israel is handling the events ‘out of a position of sovereignty, responsibly, and with common sense despite the provocations,’ Ben Shabbat said, according to a diplomatic source familiar with the conversation who was cited by Hebrew media reports.

Ben Shabbat went on to say international interference was “a prize for the rioters and those sending them who hoped to put pressure on Israel.”

He told Sullivan that it would be more helpful if the pressure were directed at those who were inciting the violence.”

So, it appears Israel understands that the strong Israeli ally is significantly weakened under the current President. The question then is whether or not this is consistent with the divine plan as outlined through God’s prophets. It seems very much, that it is.

Without doubt the Tarshish states, mostly constituted by the English-speaking nations and their allies, like India and the southern Arab states, are prophetically set for the defense of Israel. One would think that such a position would be divinely rewarded, and if in fact those states have been blessed above all the states of the world. The promise God made to Abraham is still in effect, though the state itself may be quite undeserving of it. We see this Scripturally in the curses upon Damascus.

Amos 1:3 “Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away *the punishment* thereof; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron:”

This threshing is probably the threshing referred to in 1 Kings. 13, in the days of Jehoahaz, king of Israel. This is the son of Jehu, and a wicked king in Israel. Yet God punished Damascus for the viciousness of

Damascus in raising their hand against Israel. God's promises are inviolate.

So why, then, will the Tarshish states be destroyed at the hand of the northern invader. Will this be in spite of their blessing of Israel, or because they retreat from their calling, and begin to curse Israel. Obviously, the latter.

The Kingdom of Israel Under the Levitical Priesthood to the Kingdom of Israel Restored

by John Thomas

THE Kingdom of God is the Twelve Tribes of Israel existing in the land promised to Abraham and Christ. When it existed of old time the Mosaic Covenant was its civil and ecclesiastical code which appointed and defined all things. But since the appearance of Jesus in Israel, certain things have come to pass in connection with him which necessitate a change and amendment of the covenant or constitution, that provision may be made, or scope afforded for the exercise of his functions as High Priest and King in Israel and for the carrying out of the principles which emanate from the dedication or purification of the New Covenant by his blood. This is the necessity which existed for a change of the law; "for the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12).

The Sinai Constitution of the Kingdom established a changeable priesthood of the tribe of Levi, the chief of which was a hereditary prince of the family of Aaron, called the High Priest. The high priesthood is an office divinely created; and no man of Israel was allowed to assume it unless he was called of God as Aaron. It was appointed for the offering for men both gifts to God and sacrifices for sins; so that the officiating party becomes a mediator between God and men. But the priesthood of Levi and Aaron was imperfect; and therefore, could not impart perfection, so as that he who did the service, or the worshippers should have no more conscience of sins, and thereby become heirs of eternal life.

This being the nature of the priesthood under which Israel received the Law or Covenant, the Mosaic institution was weak and unprofitable, and could make nothing perfect (Heb. 7:11, 18, 19; 9:9; 10:1). This

imperfection resulted from the nature of the consecration or blood of the covenant. Aaron and his sons, the altar and nearly all the things of the law were purified by the blood of bulls and goats, &c.; which, however, could not sanctify to the purifying of the heart, or the flesh from the evil within it, which makes it mortal. It was necessary to perfection that sin should be condemned in the flesh of the High Priest, which could not be effected by condemning sin in the flesh of the animals sacrificed under the Law. This necessity would have required the death of a High Priest at the celebration of every annual atonement at least being themselves sinners; but as this was incompatible with the nature of things, animal sacrifices were substituted. So that Aaron and his successors could not under penalty of immediate death enter into the Most Holy without this substitutionary blood. But then this blood was deficient of the necessary sin-remitting qualities. The blood required was that of the peccant nature—the human, for it was man and not the creatures that had sinned. But even human blood would have been unprofitable if it were the blood of one who was himself an actual transgressor, and a victim that even if an innocent person had not come to life again.

The Messiah in prophecy asks the question, “What profit is there in my blood; if I go down to the pit? can the dust praise thee? Can it declare thy truth?” (Ps. 30:9). The answer is none. For if the Christ had died, and not risen again, he would not have been a living sacrifice, and could not have imparted vitality to the things professedly sanctified by it.

The blood of the Mosaic sacrifices was weak and unprofitable because it was not human, because it was not *innocent* human blood; and because it was not the blood of one innocent of the great transgression, who had come to life again through the power of the eternal Spirit. For these three important reasons, the blood of the Mosaic Covenant could not take away sin, and therefore the High Priest and the nation, individually and collectively, were all left under the curse of the Law, which was death, for “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). The law could not give them life who were under it (Gal. 3:21), being weak through the flesh (Rom. 8:3), and deriving no vitality from the blood peculiar to it.

But it may be inquired, if the Mosaic institution could not perfect the conscience, nor give a title to eternal life and the inheritance, but left its subjects dead in trespasses and in sins, by what means will the prophets and those of Israel who died before Christ came, obtain salvation in the kingdom of God? The answer is that what the Law could not do, the bringing in of a better hope accomplished (Heb. 7:19). The Mosaic sacrifices were provisional, substitutionary, and representative. They pointed to the sacrifice of Christ, which in its *retrospective* influence was to redeem those from death, who when living had not only been

circumcised, but had walked also in the steps of *that faith* of their father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, *nor to his seed* (Gal. 3:29), through the law, but *through the righteousness of faith* (Rom. 4:12, 13).

One object of Christ's death is plainly declared to have been "for the transgressions under the first testament;" or as elsewhere expressed, "to redeem them who were under the law" (Heb. 9:15; Gal 4:5). "By his stripes," says Isaiah, "we are healed as Yahweh hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all. For the transgression of his people was he stricken." The "*we,*" the "*us,*" and the "*people*" in these texts, are the ancient worthies before, and under the Law, as well as those who have believed the Gospel and after his second appearing shall offer "sin offerings and meat offerings, and burnt offerings, and peace offerings for reconciliation" under the new Covenant consecrated by his most precious blood.

Under the first, or Mosaic Covenant, the priests were said to "make reconciliation with the blood of the sacrifices upon the altar, to make atonement for all Israel" (2 Chron. 29:24). So under the second, or New Covenant, of the kingdom, Ezekiel speaks of "one lamb to make reconciliation for them" (Ezek. 45:15). But withdraw from the premises the death and resurrection of Christ, and faith in them and the promises, and the reconciliation under both covenants is imperfect and vain.

Animal sacrifices are necessary to the service as types or patterns, and memorials. The Mosaic reconciliation was typical; the Ezekiel reconciliation, memorial or commemorative. The typical Mosaic could not perfect the conscience of the worshippers, because Christ had not then died and risen again; nor could they when he had risen, because they were offered by High Priests, whose functions before God were superseded by a High Priest of the tribe of Judah, after another order than that of Aaron, then in the presence of Yahweh himself. The Ezekiel reconciliation, however, will perfect the conscience, because Christ has died, and lives for evermore; which death and resurrection connected with the reconciliatory offerings by faith in the worshipper, and offered to God through the Prince of Israel, the High Priest upon his throne after the order of Melchizedec, will constitute sacrifices of a character such as have not been offered on the earth before.

The sectarian idea is that after John and Jesus proclaimed repentance, there would be no temple service performed by Levites that God would accept. But this is contrary to the sure word of prophecy, which testifies that "the Messenger of the Covenant" shall sit as a refiner and purifier of

silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto Yahweh an offering in righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, *as in the days of old and as in former years*” (Mal. 3:3, 4). And again the prophet records Yahweh’s declaration that “David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel: neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before him to offer burnt offerings, and to kindle meat offerings, and to do sacrifice continually. Thus saith the Lord, if ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night that there should not be day and night in their season: then, (and not before) may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; and with the Levites the priests, my ministers.” From this it is manifest that the perpetuity of David’s throne, and the perpetuity of the Levitical ministrations are parallel.

Some say that David’s throne is now occupied in heaven; will these same affirm that the Levites are offering sacrifices there, for the testimony says, “they shall do sacrifice continually?” The truth is that this testimony has regard to the time when the kingdom shall be restored again to Israel. At the time the prophecy was delivered there were unbelievers who, like the Millerites [founder of the Seventh Day Adventists—JP.] of our day, declared that the Lord had cast off the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Therefore, said Yahweh to the prophet,

Jer. 33:17 – 26 “Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, the two families which the Lord hath chosen, He hath even cast them off? Thus they have despised My people, that they should be no more a nation before them. But, if My covenant be not with the day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth, then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David My servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, *for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.*”

It is from the time of this return, then, that the perpetuity begins in relation to David’s son and the Levites. Both houses of Israel are still in captivity; therefore the return is yet future. When that return is accomplished, then henceforth even to “the end” appointed shall these gracious promises obtain as notable realities in the land of Israel.

It is therefore a principle of the kingdom of God that the Levites shall be priests in that kingdom under the New Covenant or constitution, as well as under the Old. As it is written,

Ezk. 44:11 “Thus saith the Lord, they shall be ministers in my temple, having charge of the gates of the house, and ministering to the house; they shall slay the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the

people, and they shall stand before them to minister unto them. They shall not come near unto me, to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things in the most holy place. But I will make them keepers of the charge of the house, for all the service thereof, and for all that shall be done therein.”

The reason given why they shall not do the office of a priest before God, but shall act as menials in the service, and in relation only to the people, is because under the Mosaic Covenant,

“they ministered to the people before their idols, and caused the house of Israel to fall into iniquity” (Ezek. 44:9–14).

This is the ground of their future degradation from their former rank, to that of the lowest class of the priesthood under the New Covenant.

The next class of priests above them is to consist of the Levites, the sons of Zadok (Ezek. 44:15). These will have no immediate communication with the people in performing the service, but will officiate intermediately between the people’s priests and “the Prince,” who is their High Priest, and Yahweh’s Anointed for ever. Zadok signifies *just* or *justified*. Zadok, who was contemporary with David and Solomon, is their representative father in the priesthood, the saints are “the sons of Zadok”; in the royalty, “the sons of the Prince” (Ezek. 46:16), and in the faith, “the seed or sons of Abraham.”

Eli and his sons were rejected as representative sacerdotal men, because the sons were wicked, and Eli honoured them above Yahweh. Therefore Yahweh said to him,

“I will raise me up a faithful priest, who shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind; and I will build him a sure house; *and he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever*” (1 Sam. 2:29–35).

He must therefore become immortal. Now under the Mosaic Covenant this “faithful priest” was Zadok, who walked before David and Solomon. When Absalom and Israel rebelled against the Lord’s Anointed, Zadok and Abiathar remained faithful with Yahweh and his king. But when David was about to die, Abiathar, who was descended from Eli, conspired to make Adonijah king instead of Solomon; while Zadok continued faithful to David. Solomon, however, being established on the throne, “he thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord; that he might fulfil the word of the Lord which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh.” He told him he was worthy of death, but he would spare his life for his father’s sake, because he suffered with him in Absalom’s

rebellion: he therefore exiled him to Anathoth, and promoted Zadok to the high-priesthood in his room (1 Kings 1:7, 39; 2:22, 26, 27, 35).

Now these were representative events. Yahweh will raise up the faithful of the house of Levi, even Zadok and his sons, and they shall walk before His Anointed for ever—even before the “greater than Solomon,” when, in “the city of the Great King,” he sits and rules upon his throne as a priest, bearing the glory (Zech. 6:12, 13), as Prince of Israel for ever. This superior class of Levites “shall come near to Me,” saith the Lord, “to minister unto Me, and they shall stand before Me to offer unto Me the fat and the blood: they shall enter into My holy place, and they shall come near to My table, to minister unto Me, and they shall keep My charge.” From the seventeenth verse to the end of this chapter are the ordinances for the lowest class of Levitical priests.

Here then is a change in the Levitical arrangements, and not an abolition of them. The “service” will be amended, not abolished. In the service under the Mosaic Covenant, there were “divers washings;” but in the service under the New Covenant of the Kingdom “washings” are omitted; for in the Ezekiel Temple there is no Laver, or brazen sea provided. But sacrifices remain; for eight tables are appointed to be set up in the entry of the north gate on which the lowest class of the priests are to slay them for the people. Paul therefore did not mean that the Levitical service was absolutely and finally discontinued—that it should be revived no more; but that it should be amended to adapt it to the new circumstances created by the sacrifice and high priesthood of Jesus, which was to supersede the priesthood of Aaron.

If we be asked the reason for the conclusion that Paul meant amendment, and not final discontinuance of the Levitical service, we reply, that it is found in the phrase “until the time of reformation” used by him. His words are *mechri kairon diorthoseos*. The Levitical service continued unchanged for forty years after the proclamation of “reformation” by Jesus; so that the *kairos* or definite time for discontinuance was not at his preaching, or even the rending of the temple vail. The Mosaic service was not “imposed until the time of *metanoia*, ” which is the word signifying the “*reformation*” preached. *Metanoete* “repent ye,” said Jesus. No; it was “imposed until the time of *diorthosis*, ” which is not “repentance,” but *emendation*, amendment; from *diorthoo* to correct, or make right. The subject of the *diorthosis* is the Mosaic Covenant, not the disposition of men.

The Mosaic Constitution must be amended to make way for a new order of priesthood, and a service which shall show forth the perfection of its character. The work of amendment in regard to its foundation was laid in

the death and resurrection of Jesus. It then became necessary to gather out of Judah sons for Zadok, and the Prince.

“Behold I and the children whom God has given me are for signs and wonders in Israel” (Isa. 8:18, Heb. 2:13).

These children being separated to Jesus from the tribe of Levi and the nation for the purposes to be accomplished through them at “the restitution of all things,” nothing remained for that epoch, but to give the Mosaic Constitution a thorough shaking. This is called *shaking the heavens*, and was the fulfilment of the prophecy by Haggai (Hag. 2:6), reproduced by Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. 12:26, 27): “Yet once, *it is a little while*, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will shake the heavens and the earth.” The “little while” was 587 years from the delivery of the prediction; and about ten years from the date of the epistle.

It was the last time the nation of Israel and their Kingdom were to be shaken. Their commonwealth was to be shaken that “the things made,” or constituted, by the Mosaic Government, which were incompatible with the rights of the Lord Jesus founded upon “the word of the oath” (Heb. 7:21–28), might be “removed”; and that “those things which” were in harmony with that word, and which “cannot be shaken might remain.” This then was the first stage of the “emendation,” or, as the Gentiles would say, of “the amendment of the Constitution.”

THE next work in carrying out the purpose of emendation is thus expressed in Haggai:—

“I will shake the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

When this was spoken, the Temple was in ruins, the foundation only being laid. The people then returned from Babylon said, “The time has not come that the Lord’s house should be built” (Hag. 1:2, 4, 9): that is, the seventy years that it was to lie waste from the time of its destruction are not yet accomplished, sixty-six years only having elapsed. But Haggai was sent to them to stir them up to the work, and in four years after, even in the sixth year of the year of Darius, it was finished (Ezra 6:15).

When therefore Haggai said, “this house shall be filled with glory,” he did not refer to the temple which Jesus frequented, but to the temple to stand upon the same site which is described by Ezekiel, into which “the glory of the God of Israel,” even the Son of Man in the glory of the Father, “shall come from the way of the east,” and cause the

neighbouring earth itself to shine (Ezek. 43:1). This is the only interpretation the prophecy will admit of; for when Jesus came, he was neither “the desire of all nations,” notwithstanding the fanciful gloss upon Virgil’s Pollio, nor was he in glory. The glory of the God of Israel left the temple when the Chaldees were about to destroy it; and it will not return until Jesus shall sit upon his throne and bear the glory in the era of “the regeneration.”

The shaking of the heavens and the earth, as we have said, refers to “*the end of all things*” (1 Pet. 4:7) constituted by the Old Covenant; but the shaking of the sea and dry land, to the kingdoms of the Gentiles, and is thus explained:

“I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen, &c. In that day, saith the Lord of Hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, and will make thee as a signet; for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of Hosts” (Hag. 2:22).

This period of overthrow is the “time of trouble such as there never was since there was a nation to that same time,” when Michael shall stand up, the Great Prince who standeth for the Israelites, who at that time shall be delivered, even all that shall be found written among the living in Jerusalem (Dan. 12:1; Isai. 4:3). This is the era of the resurrection of “The heirs” of “the kingdom which cannot be moved.” Michael [*Mi* who, *cha* like, *el* God], the great power of God, even Jesus the great Prince of Israel, appears at this crisis “to subdue all things to himself,” and to complete the work of emendation. He smites the image of Nebuchadnezzar upon its feet (Dan. 2:34), and grinds its fragments to powder (Matt. 21:44). He brings the king of the north, who is head over an extensive region, [*rosh al-eretz rabbah*] to his end (Dan. 11:45; Ps. 110:6). He causes Gog to fall upon the mountains of Israel; and expels the Gentiles out of his land (Ezek. 39:4; Ps. 10:16), that they may tread His holy city under foot no more.

Having made the nations lick the dust like a serpent (Mic. 7:16, 17), and bound their power as with a mighty chain (Rev. 20:1–3), he proceeds in the building again of the tabernacle of David, and in the setting up of its ruins—that is, in restoring again of the Kingdom of God to Israel, or in “the restitution of all things” belonging to the Mosaic law, compatible with his exercise of the functions of High Priest in Israel. When this work is accomplished the *diorthosis*, or emendation will be complete.

If the Mosaic Covenant of the kingdom had been found faultless, then should no place have been found for the second (Heb. 8:7). The priesthood of the Mosaic was *changeable*, passing from father to son.

This was deemed by the Lord a very important defect, which must therefore be amended. He determined therefore that the priesthood should be changed—that it should no longer “be left to other people”; but should be unchangeable in the hands of Messiah and the saints, or Zadok and his sons.

But this purpose could not be carried into effect so long as the Mosaic constitution of the kingdom continued in force; for this restricted the priesthood to the tribe of Levi, and made no provision for a priest of the tribe of Judah. Now Yahweh purposed that the High Priesthood of the nation should be changed from the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron, to the tribe of Judah and the family of David. Hence this change of the priesthood being determined, there was decreed of necessity a change also of the law (Heb. 7:12). As Christ’s priesthood was not authorized by the Mosaic Covenant, something was necessary on which to found it. This necessity was provided for in the Word of the Oath which runs thus, “I have sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec.”

This oath was uttered by Yahweh upwards of 500 years after the law was given from Sinai; and constitutes the right of David’s son to the priesthood of the kingdom; as the oath sworn to David also entitles his son to its throne for ever. The grand peculiarity, then, of the new constitution of the kingdom over the old is, *the union of the High Priesthood and kingly office in One person, of the tribe of Judah and family of David unchangeably, or for ever.*

Under the Mosaic, the priesthood and royalty of the kingdom were separate, and restricted to two distinct families and tribes—the priesthood, to Levi and Aaron; the royalty, to Judah and David. But this will be amended, and the Lord Jesus, in whose veins once flowed the blood of Levi, Aaron, Judah, and David, will unite in himself the kingly and priestly offices, when he sits and rules upon his throne and bears the glory.

When Jesus of Nazareth was manifested to Israel at his baptism it was clearly proved that he was the Christ, and therefore entitled to the things defined in the word of the oaths to himself and his father David. But “He was made under the law” (Gal. 4:4) to which he yielded a perfect obedience in all things. He never entered the Court of the Priests, nor the holy place; nor attempted to do service at the altar. Being of the tribe of Judah, the law forbade him to advance beyond the Court of the Israelites, or to minister in holy things. So long as the Mosaic law continued in practical operation, and he inhabited the land, he must have remained among the people.

Had Israel continued in their country under the law to this day, and Jesus had remained with them until now, and they had been willing to acknowledge him, and submit to his government, he would not have ascended the throne until the constitution was dedicated and amended: “for,” says Paul, in view of this condition of affairs,

“If he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law” (Heb. 8:4).

The emendation of the covenant must have been preceded by its dedication. This could only be accomplished by the death of the mediatorial testator: for no testament or covenant is of force while the testator liveth (Heb. 9:16, 17). Yahweh is the testator, but being incapable of death, His will, or covenant, was ordained in the hand of a mediator, who became Yahweh’s substitutionary testator. As Jesus the heir of God was to inherit under the new, or amended, covenant having root in the promises, his death was necessitated; for the covenant in which his rights were vested was of no force till he died and rose again.

His death was therefore the dedication of the covenant in his blood; as he himself said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:20)—and to show the connection between the covenant and the kingdom, he said, “I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come.” But when he came to life again after this dedication, he could not even then inherit the kingdom.

The Mosaic covenant must have been changed; an emendation, however, to which the party in power would by no means consent, as the amendment would have put them all out of the government. Pilate and Herod, Caiaphas and the Council must have surrendered their offices into the hands of Jesus, who would have promoted in their place his own disciples and friends. But then they would not hear of such a thing; therefore it remained only for Jesus to absent himself, and to abolish the kingdom until the time appointed in the wisdom of the Father for its restitution to Israel under a better, more permanent, and perfect order of things.

We come now to the consideration of the difficulty involved in Paul’s doctrine when regarded in the light of Ezekiel’s testimony. Jesus is now the High Priest of God, and the only one that exists, or ever will exist in relation to man. He has had no rival since the Mosaic Covenant “vanished away.” He is God’s High Priest for those, both Jews and Gentiles, who have been reconciled to God by his name—that is, who believe God’s promises concerning the kingdom, and the things

concerning Jesus, and have been united to His name by baptism. This is equivalent to saying, who have been reconciled through the belief and obedience of the Gospel of the kingdom—through the obedience of faith.

Of the things concerning Jesus are the things pertaining to his divine sonship, his spotless and unblemished character, his sacrificial death and resurrection, &c. constituting him God's Lamb, holy and without blemish, having neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing; of his own free will once offered to bear the sins of *many*. Thus he was at once the sacrifice and the priest; for he offered up himself; as he said,

“I lay down my life *for the sheep*. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it up again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment I have received of my Father” (Heb. 7:27; John 10:15, 17, 18).

Being thus the Lamb slain, he resumed his life, and entered into the presence of God, before whom he stands as the blood-sprinkled Ark of the Covenant (Rev. 11:19), in whom is deposited the Law hereafter to go forth from Zion, and the life of his sheep (Col. 3:3), whose sins he bears away (Heb. 9:28); and thus they are sanctified by the dedicated covenant through the one offering of his body: so that “by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Heb. 10:10, 14).

Now these sanctified ones are a purified people, whose “hearts,” or minds and dispositions, have been purified by faith (Acts. 15:9), faith in the promises of God, and in “the blood of sprinkling which speaks better things than that of Abel.” The blood of Jesus is the blood of sprinkling which gushed forth from his side as an offering or purification “for sin.” The poor in spirit and the meek, the honest and good hearts, that by faith appreciate the virtue of this sprinkled blood, and have become the subjects of repentance and remission in his name, are said to be “sprinkled from an evil conscience,” and to have “washed the body with pure water” (Heb. 10:22).

They are “the children of the promise,” or covenant; because in becoming Christ's they have believed the promises, and been purified by the blood of the covenant. As yet they walk by faith in the things believed, and not by sight. Faith, which is “the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things unseen,” is the mirror which reflects the things of the approaching future, and presents them to the believer's mind as though he were beholding, and personally in the presence of, the very things themselves. Hence, it is said to such, “Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God, to Jerusalem the heavenly, and to myriads of angels, to a general convocation even to an

assembly of firstborns enrolled for the heavens [*en ouranois*] and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaks better things than that of Abel” (Heb. 12:22),—*ye are come by faith* to these things, which at present ye do dimly contemplate; but which ye shall see no longer as through a glass darkly, but face to face in the presence of the Lord.

Now these, whose hearts are sprinkled and their bodies washed, are the only people on the earth since the entrance of Jesus into the presence of God, for whom he officiates as “High Priest over the house of God” (Heb. 10:21; 3:6); They are God’s temple, “the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Heb. 8:2). For forty years this temple coexisted with that in Jerusalem; but since the destruction of the latter, it is the only temple of God upon the earth, where gifts and offerings, called “spiritual sacrifices” (Peter 2:5. 9), are offered acceptably to his name. They become acceptable in being presented through Jesus Christ. They who do the worship (and they are all the faithful) enter into this holy place, or heavenly, which as a whole they constitute, with the sprinkled blood of the covenant upon their hearts. Purified once through faith in the blood-sprinkled covenant of promise, hereafter to become the law of the kingdom, there is in their case no more sacrifice for sin; “for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Yet, though thus sanctified, they continue to offer spiritual sacrifices. All this is worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth; which is the only service acceptable to him while his kingdom is in ruins, and prostrate at the feet of the Gentiles.

But this worship in spirit and in truth, expressed in the confession of the hope, &c., praise and prayer; in baptism; and in eating and drinking of the symbols on the table of the Lord, is the unburdensome privilege of those only who through faith in the covenant and its blood have become “heirs of the kingdom.” When this is set up in Palestine, the service is changed in form, but not in principle; and from social becomes national.

In the national service, the higher priesthood, which consists of Jesus and the “children God has given him,” all immortal by resurrection or transformation, though they offer the fat and the blood, it is for the people and not for themselves. They need no more sacrifice for sin; but being “priests unto God” (Rev. 5:10), there needs must be something for them to offer on account of the worshippers for whom they officiate. The New Covenant, which we now accept as a matter of faith and hope, has not yet been made with the house of Judah and Israel. If it had, they would now be a united nation in Palestine. It will be made with them when they are grafted into their own olive, and not before.

At the engrafting, there will be a grand national celebration called “*a delivering of the Covenant*” *be masoreth ha berith* (Ezek. 20:37), a delivering of the New Covenant from Zion (Mic. 4:2), a glorious, but not such a terrible, display of power as when the Covenant was delivered from Sinai. The nation, or Twelve Tribes, having been brought at length to acknowledge Jesus as High Priest and King, are received into favour; and being under the New Covenant, as in former years they were under the Old, Yahweh becomes merciful to their unrighteousness, and proclaims everlasting oblivion of all their past individual and national offences by virtue of the royal blood of the Covenant, the preciousness of which they then perceive and appreciate. This amnesty, however, benefits that generation only to which the covenant is delivered and by which it is accepted. It affects not the generations of Israel’s rebellious dead; they are “cut off from the people.”

Now, the question remains, when thus reconciled to God through the blood of his son, is the nation to have a religious service of worship; and if they are, what is to be *its principle*, and what *its form*? No one who understands the Bible would affirm, that the Twelve Tribes of Israel were to live in their own land under the New Covenant for 1000 years without any religious worship. To affirm this would be to say in effect, that God had prepared a royal priesthood for his kingdom, but had provided no service for them to preform. This is inadmissible for a moment.

There will be a service under the New Covenant as there was under the Old. Its principle will be memorial, not typical; even the extension of the principle on which is now celebrated the death and resurrection of Jesus. Hence the “reconciliation” will be *a memorial reconciliation made perfect by the blood of the covenant which institutes it*. The reconciliation of the old covenant was typical and imperfect; because the dedication blood, being merely that of bulls and goats, could not perfect the conscience in taking away of sins. When the Prince under the New Covenant “prepares for himself, and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering” (Ezek. 44:22), it is memorial of his own sacrifice of himself, and memorial of the reconciliation which the people enjoy through the blood of the Covenant with which, through faith in it, their hearts will be sprinkled then, as the true believers are at present.

Such is the principle of the amended “service which pertains to the Israelites” (Rom. 9:4). The form thereof is detailed in Ezekiel more at large than we can present it here. It is a service not of spiritual sacrifices, but of bloody sacrifices of spiritual significance. The lower order of the priesthood, mortal Levites, slay them for the people, and pass the fat and blood from the table at the north gate to the altar, where they are burned

and sprinkled by the higher or immortal priests, “the seed of Zadok,” before the Lord.

The past sins of the nation having been amnestied at the delivering of the Covenant, there is henceforth no more a remembrance of sins once a year. The old Mosaic annual atonement on the tenth day of the seventh month, at which the tribes were to “afflict their souls,” is not revived under the New Covenant. It will form no part of the service then. It was one of those things made or appointed, that was removed when the Lord shook the Mosaic heaven by the Roman power. There will be no Laver of water between the Temple and the Altar for the seed of Zadok to wash themselves before they enter the temple. These washings and carnal ordinances are also abolished; for those who approach the altar and enter in, are like their prince, holy and undefiled, being devoid of evil in the flesh.—*Herald of the Kingdom* 1851.

WAITING FOR THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL

By Robert Roberts

We are like Simeon this morning. We are “*waiting for the consolation of Israel*” (Luke 2:25). All waiting is more or less of a weariness. People do not wait unless they know what they are waiting for, and are sure that it is coming. The certainty and value of what they are waiting for keep them in the waiting attitude. God has said,

“They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me.”

In waiting for the consolation of Israel, we are waiting for God: because the only ground we have for expecting the consolation of Israel is the fact that God has promised it. Our neighbours think we are waiting for a poor thing in waiting for the consolation of Israel. This is because they have a poor idea of what the consolation of Israel means. They think of it in the nakedness of what they understand by the “restoration of the Jews,” which is a very cold affair as they think and talk of it. To them the restoration of the Jews is merely a question of the timid, cowering rag-hunting Jew being removed from his dispersed state in the countries to live in his own land. They are tempted to say, “What the better will the world be for that? What the better will any man be for that? What does it matter to us where these Christ-hating Jews live?”

If that was all, certainly the restoration of the Jews would be of no more interest or consequence to us in any way than the shifting of the Bashi Bazouks from Bulgaria to Armenia, of which the world heard after the

last Russo-Turkish war. But that is not all, or a hundredth part of what is meant by the restoration of the Jews. When we know the Truth, we know that the restoration of the Jews, in its completeness, means everything we can desire for men or nations. We see this, when we ask, Who are the Jews? There is only one answer sustainable by truthful history, and that is the answer contained in the words of Moses when he said to the twelve tribes encamped on the border of Moab, 40 years after their departure from Egypt:

“Thou art an holy nation unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth” (Deut. 7:6).

God Himself joins in the answer:

“This people have I formed for Myself: they shall show forth My praise” (Isaiah 43:21).

The mode and process of their formation and choice are abundantly illustrated in the details supplied to us, in the call of Abraham, God’s promises to him, the fortunes of his family, their settlement and multiplication in Egypt, their enslavement there, their deliverance by Moses, their reception of a divine constitution and law through him. These details are well known to those who know the Truth. The purpose for which the choice has been made is variously expressed. The mode adopted in the verse quoted from Isaiah—

“They shall shew forth My praise” in one way, includes all. It is like that other statement, *“the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.”*

When this is achieved, “All families of the earth shall be blessed”, as promised to Abraham at the very beginning. People look at the Jews and say, “How can we expect any such result from such a people?” In this they judge by appearances, which is always unsafe. The same question might have been asked with more apparent force concerning Israel in their slavery in Egypt. They were not only in subjection, but they were in an utterly benighted state, worshipping the gods of Egypt, as we learn from Ezekiel.

Yet we know what has since been accomplished through them—the righteousness of God exhibited in the Law: the great and precious promises revealed through the prophets: the raising up of a numerous family of righteous servants, to God in their several generations, and *“of whom, as concerning the flesh Christ came.”* *“To them,”* as Paul summarizes the matter, *“pertain the adoption and the glory, and the covenants and the giving of the law and the service of God and the promises.”*

Had we seen them in Egypt, nothing could have come through a nation so downtrodden and debased. In truth these results would never have come had they been left to themselves. They were not left to themselves. God laid hold of them and by them and through them accomplished the results. So when we see the Jews in our day far scattered, benighted and disobedient, we should make a mistake if we formed our judgment of the future from what was naturally like them. God has made known His purpose with them, and all that is left for us is to ascertain what that purpose is, for His purpose is certain to come to pass. He has declared that His purpose is to gather them:

"He that scattered Israel will gather him."

"I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all countries and will bring you into your own land" (Ezek. 36:24).

He has also declared what His purpose is in so gathering them:

"I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel but for My holy name's sake which ye have profaned among the heathen whither ye went—I will be sanctified before their eyes."

Hence the purpose of God is irrespective of any condition Israel may be in: and our interest in them arises from the purpose and not from what they are in themselves. Not till they are saved can we look for the promised blessedness. For what is their salvation—their gathering together from all lands, their purification, and reconstruction as a nation, but the setting up of the Kingdom of God; and what can we look for till the kingdom of God come? When we look at the matter in this way, we see that this thing that people talk coldly of as, "the restoration of the Jews" is really the beginning of the salvation of God in the earth. That salvation, as Jesus said, is *"of (or from) the Jews."* When it arrives, the prophets represent the righteous as saying, *"we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Isaiah 25:9).* The connection of this saying shows what good reason they have for their joy.

"In this mountain shall the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things."

Wherein consists the fatness of the feast, we are presently told. First of all, the spiritual and intellectual obtuseness that afflicts mankind is to be brought to an end.

"He will take away the veil that is spread over all nations."

What an emancipation is this? Consider the difference between an ignorant, loutish man, and a man brimming over with loving intelligence. Such is the difference between the present state of the earth's population and that to which they will be brought by the new influences and

institutions of the Kingdom of God. At present, darkness—oppressive and dreary—covers the earth: then the glory of the Lord shall shine: the nations shall walk in the light thereof. No longer will man have to say to man, *“Know the Lord;” “all shall know Me.”*

“From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles.”

How interesting will the human race be everywhere when the mortal veil is removed that now overspreads their understanding. It is a veil of different materials, just as the veil of the tabernacle was of different materials, with this difference, that the various materials of which the veil of the tabernacle was composed were all materials of excellence and glory, whereas the veil of darkness is made up of different forms of barbarism.

There is the darkness that is native to the unenlightened human understanding, there is the darkness that comes from the perverted action of the human propensities tending to diabolism, and there is the superadded darkness of tradition and of the strong delusion that God sent upon the Gentile community to whom His Word came by apostolic hands, *“because they received not the love of the Truth.”*

The whole forms an impenetrable veil and reduces mankind everywhere to a state of barbarism—more tolerable than the barbarism of cannibalism but still barbarism whose hideousness becomes visible when the light of the new man shines.

How glorious when Yahweh pours His Spirit upon all flesh, and they become everywhere gladly responsive to the law that will go forth from Zion. Then only will the dream of poets be realised that “man with man will brother be, the world o’er and a’ that.”

Then consider the next ingredient of the *“feast of fat things”*—not next in the sense of being second, by any means, but only next in the order of mention in the prophecy *“He will swallow up death in victory.”* God says He will do this *“in this mountain”*—in the Holy Land. To what extent will this go? If we had not the apostolic writings, we should be at a loss here. We might imagine that the whole nation of Israel restored and the Gentile nations everywhere were at this time to become immortal—with which supposition we should find it difficult to harmonize the occurrence of death among the priestly relations (Ezek. 44:25), and the population in general (Isaiah 65:20).

But the apostolic writings show us the details and the reconciliation. They not only show us *“Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets*

in the Kingdom of God,” and therefore that resurrected men are in question, but they expressly inform us that it is “those that are accounted worthy of that world and of the resurrection of the dead” that “shall not die any more, being made equal to the angels” (Luke 20:36). Who these are Paul reveals:

“We (Paul and his class everywhere of any age) shall be changed—this mortal shall put on immortality.”

And he directly points to the prophecy of Isaiah as applicable to the event:

“When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (1 Cor. 15:54).

By this, the abolition of death is restricted to a particular class at this time, otherwise described as:

“the time of the dead that they should be judged and that Thou shouldest give reward to Thy servants the prophets and to the saints and to them that fear Thy name small and great” (Rev. 11:18).

But though restricted to a class, the thing is done at this time and in this place “in this mountain,” and is the most glorious element of the feast of fat things. How perfectly glorious! Such a thing never was before, that there should be upon earth, among men, a class of men who are immortal—ever young, incapable of decay, fatigue, pain or death. Especially glorious is this feature when we consider the relation of this class of men to mankind at large. This relation is in the scripture expressed without ambiguity: “they shall REIGN.”

The sense of the reigning is defined: “power over the nations, whom they shall rule with a rod of iron;” “rulers over many things.” Hence “Kings and priests unto God, who shall reign upon the earth.” “The saints shall take the Kingdom and possess the Kingdom.” Consider then that these immortal sons of God shall be the captains of mankind, who shall govern without error, without partiality, and without fear; whom no rebel can successfully oppose; no stratagem surprise; no accident kill, and no disease lay low. For mankind how unspeakable a good is this: for the rulers themselves, how great a salvation. What greater could there be?

“There shall be no more curse, the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it. And His servants shall serve Him. And they shall see His face, and His name shall be in their forehead. And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle nor light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

“The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

Returning to Isaiah’s description, it is similar to this of the Apocalypse:

“The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people will He take away from off the earth.”

How fierce the “*rebuke*,” how bitter the tears, we all have some knowledge. Look back upon the frowning ages past of this dark and evil day. The accumulated sorrows of the night looked at thus in the bulk are dreadful to contemplate. Even our own puny individual shares are sometimes too much for our weakness. How fat is the feast that will abolish all this with a stroke, so that the people of God will seem to awake as from a horrible dream of the night to find all serene and the morning sun shining in the azure heavens.

The tears and the groans of many generations will here find their end, broken hearts their healing, suffering Israel, His long promised “*consolation*.” “*Waiting for the consolation of Israel*” is to wait for good things indeed. “*These sayings are faithful and true*,” said the angel to John when he told him of them. We can say how true if we but look, and we require to be made to feel their truth while they are still a matter of promise; for no man will submit to self-denial on the strength of a promise as to whose truth he has any doubt. Look at the pledge of their truth we have in Jeremiah 46:28—

“Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the Lord, for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but will correct thee in measure, yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished—Behold I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return in rest and none shall make him afraid.”

It may be asked, what pledge is there here? It may be said this is a prophecy, and what pledge can a prophecy be of a prophecy? Look again; though this is a prophecy, it is something more. It is prophecy fulfilled, or at least involves it, for see:

“I will not make a full end of thee; I will scatter thee; I will correct thee.”

This was written over 2,400 years ago. This prophecy requires that during all the time Israel would be dispersed and afflicted, but not ended. How has it been? Has it not been just so? Do we not see Israel scattered

among the nations at this very day? Are they not in affliction great and sore? Now consider this in the light of two natural probabilities lying in opposite directions. Was it not probable that in the severity of such experiences as the Jewish nation has been subjected to, the nation would perish and disappear, as other ancient peoples have done? But if they have so much national grit as to be able to withstand a furnace heat of afflictions that would melt other people, was it not likely that they would assert their racial superiority and long ago have got the upper hand of their Gentile neighbours, or at least have established their own nationality in the face of all opposition?

These undoubtedly were the natural probabilities prospectively contemplated. Yet here is all natural probability outraged, and the Jews, after all these ages, occupying before our eyes the very position that this word of prophecy foretold—widely scattered in every nation under heaven, but persistently surviving, the object of the universal hatred and persecution in which the most powerful governments have heartily joined, yet unprevailed against from age to age, though her ancient persecutors, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome have passed away—clever, able, wealthy and influential in many cases—and yet unable to rescue Jewish nationality from the abyss into which it was plunged nigh 2,000 years ago.

In this we have a powerful, visible, living pledge of the fulfilment of the other part of the prophecy which says

“I will save thee from afar off and thy seed from the land of their captivity.” . . . “Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate. As a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee, and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee.”

“*Consolation*” implies a previously grieved and afflicted state. Such has been Israel’s state for ages. Such is the state more or less, of all who make the hope of Israel their portion, and who thereby become incorporate in the “*commonwealth of Israel*” to whom the promises belong. The “*consolation of Israel*” for which Simeon waited is that for which they wait. When it comes, it will be real, adequate, and everlasting. Shall we not with patience wait?

Restoration of the Ancient Kingdom of Israel

By Robert Roberts

“And I will restore thy judges as at first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning. Afterwards, thou shalt be called, the city of Righteousness, the faithful city” Isaiah 1:26.

Many believe in the doctrine that Christ will come to reign on the earth, without perceiving what it involves in relation to that ancient kingdom of God which was established under Moses, perpetuated in the hands of divinely appointed kings for many centuries, and finally scattered to the winds because of iniquity. We shall best see the connection of the two things by considering what is said of Jesus in reference to “the throne of David.” Peter, on the day of Pentecost, says,

“David being a prophet, knew that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins according to the flesh, *he would raise up Christ* to sit upon his throne” (Acts 2:30).

If we turn to the record of this oath (Psalm 132), we find words almost parallel to Peter’s: “The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; He will not turn from it; *of the fruit of thy body* will I set upon thy throne.” The application of this to Jesus is placed beyond a doubt by Peter’s statement, and by the message of the angel to Mary, prior to his birth: “the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David” (Luke 1:23). The meaning of which is illustrated in the words of Isaiah: “*The government shall be upon his shoulder...upon the throne of David and his kingdom*” (chap. 9:6, 7).

We deem it unnecessary to argue upon the literality of these statements, for the simple reason that there is nothing in them to suggest or justify, or even admit of figurative interpretation. There once existed a literal throne of David, and Jesus was descended from David’s literal family by Mary. This being so, a plain promise with reference to the two things must obviously be accepted in the same plain and literal way. Under the circumstances, it would be taking a most unwarrantable liberty, and doing violence to the most ordinary rules observed in the understanding of language, to explain it away in a mystical sense.

To make the words mean anything else than they plainly express, must appear to every thoughtful mind a most arbitrary and unsatisfactory way of dealing with the Scriptures, opening the way for unlimited fancy and exposing the Bible to the charge so frequently brought against it, that it

can be made to prove anything—a charge which is false in itself, but which only derives too much countenance from a system of interpretation which ignores its plain statements and makes them mean anything that it may be thought they should mean, or which a lively imagination may suggest.

It is impossible for the subtlest ingenuity to get over the simple point established by the testimonies adduced, viz. that the throne of David is bequeathed as an inheritance to Jesus of Nazareth. What this proposition may mean is a point of the greatest importance; for upon the understanding of it, depends our apprehension of the declared purpose in the case. It is to be noted, then, that “the throne of David” is a definite individual subject of discourse. It is no general phrase devoid of local point or application. It is an historic appellative, pointing to a political constitution existing in the past, so that no doubt may be entertained as to its character, and no difficulty experienced in understanding the meaning of the promise concerning it.

The throne of a nation is not the gilded chair on which the king sits; it is *the position, the royal office* of the nation’s ruler, of which the throne becomes but the symbol. The throne of David, therefore, is not “a wooden seat” as some have called it by way of contempt, but the position David occupied as the king of Israel. No candid mind will dissent from this proposition, in view of the current use of the word “throne.” “The throne of England,” “the throne of France,” “the throne of Russia,” are well understood figures of speech representing the royalties of these respective states entirely apart from the mechanical accessories, which are, in every case, matters of individual taste.

Why, then, should some novel sense be attached to the same phrase as applied to David in the Scriptures? The evidence that it should be understood in the same way is abundantly furnished in the Bible itself. We select one or two instances. Jer. 22:2: “Hear the word of the Lord, O king of Judah, that sittest upon the throne of David.” These words were addressed to Zedekiah who reigned over the kingdom of Judah upwards of 400 years after David and when therefore the literal seat occupied by David must have long passed into disuse. Zedekiah was a wicked king, and it was not therefore from any spiritual resemblance that he was said to sit on David’s throne, but simply and purely because, as a matter of political fact, he occupied the royal position established by God in the person of David his royal ancestor.

It is said of Solomon, (1 Kings 2:12) “*Then sat Solomon* on the throne of David his father,” while it is afterwards stated that he made a new throne of ivory and overlaid it with gold (1 Kings 10:18), so that as regards the

actual chair of state used by David, Solomon appears to have dispensed with it, and yet in the sense in which the Scriptures use the phrase, he sat “on the throne of David.”

The throne of David being the kingly office or position, let us for the better understanding of the matter as affecting Jesus, consider what that position was. It was unlike the position of ordinary kings whose ancestors have at one time or other gratuitously assumed the mastership by the right of conquest or accidental might, and transmitted a title to their posterity valid only by usage, and not by original derivation.

David was divinely selected and commissioned. He was a contented shepherd boy when Samuel, by guidance of the Spirit, poured the anointing oil upon his head, in typification of the qualification by Spirit-anointing of which ‘the root and offspring of David’—the real anointed or Christ—was to be the subject. He was elected to the position by God, and held it of “Divine right” in the most absolute sense. He was not king from fancy, from liking, from natural masterhood, but by appointment; neither was he king for his own purposes.

His office was a representative one. He was God’s vicegerent. He ruled as “*King for God*,” as was said of Solomon after him (2 Chron. 9:8). God was originally the king of Israel, communicating with the nation through the testimony in the tabernacle. That this is the light in which God regarded himself is evident from what he said to Samuel when the people desired to have a king, to go in and out among them like other nations (1 Sam. 8:7). “They have not rejected thee, but *they have rejected me that I should reign over them*,” and still more so in the declaration of Samuel, when delivering God’s message to them; “Ye said unto me, Nay, but a king shall reign over us *when the Lord God was your King*” (1 Sam. 12:12).

The people, however, were unable to appreciate the privileged government they were under, and were weak enough to wish to be like other nations around them in having a human head. God yielded to their wishes in the matter, but did not surrender His prerogative as the nation’s ruler; He gave them a king, but only as a deputy. He was to rule—not for his own magnification, but “for God.” Hence he was said to be but “captain over God’s people,” and the throne he occupied was styled “the throne of the Lord” (1 Chron. 29:23). This was David’s position, this the primary and distinguishing character of “the throne of David,” *a God-constituted and God-representative royalty, occupied vicegerently for God*.

The nation over whom this exalted jurisdiction was exercised demands consideration as the next important element of “the throne of David.” Historically, it presents a contrast to every other nation on earth. It does not owe its existence like other peoples, to the chances of war or migration, but had a distinct selective origin with an individual man; and the peculiarity of the origin is that that man—Abraham—had nothing to do with it.

He was a dweller in Mesopotamia, following the occupation and conforming himself to the quiet policy of his fathers, and left to himself, would probably have lived and died among his kindred, unnoted and unknown; but God commanded him to leave his father’s house, and go into a strange country which should be shown him, telling him he would there become a great nation. He obeyed the commandment, “not knowing whither he went,” and came into the land of Canaan.

The rest of the story is too familiar to the Scripture reader, to require recapitulation. From Abraham—an old man—past the time of life, sprang there even of one, (and that a “child of promise,” begotten of divine energy, when nature’s power had waned, viz.: Isaac,) as many as the stars of the sky for multitude” (Heb. 11:12). The result was, the children of Israel—a nation of God’s creation, and of God’s rearing.

Who forgets the fostering care with which its infancy was watched, the corn of Egypt, the raising up of Joseph, the mission of Moses, the plagues of Pharaoh, the deliverance from bondage, the triumph of the Red Sea, the provision of the wilderness, the destruction of the Canaanitish nations, and the settlement in the land of promise? God through the prophets repeatedly reminded them of these things, and speaks of them as His vineyard which He tended (Isaiah 5:7), His ‘children’ whom He brought up, (Isaiah 1:2), His wife whom He espoused in early youth (Jer. 2:2). He claims them as His own; “Israel is My firstborn;” “Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God *hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto Himself above all people that are on the face of the earth*” (Deut. 14:1). “*You only have I known of all the nations of the earth*, therefore will I punish you for your iniquity (Amos 3:2).

Then if we consider the laws by which this nation was governed, and which David as king for God was called upon to enforce, we find the same divine specialty of feature. They were not the product of human legislation; they were not devised in human wisdom; they were the direct prescriptions of God, communicated by the hand of Moses, amid the visible terrors of Sinai. They were not open to human amendment; they were to be preserved with scrupulous sanctity, as the unalterable dictates

of the Almighty: “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it” (Deut. 4:2).

The king was to study and observe them; “*He shall write him a copy of this law* in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites; and it shall be with him, and *he shall read therein all the days of his life* that he may learn to fear the Lord his God to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes, to do them” (Deut. 17:18, 19).

The divine character of the kingdom as a body politic, is further evident in the selection of the territory it occupied. This was not capriciously chosen by the leaders of the nation, nor accidentally acquired in the chances of war, but was covenanted to Abraham, about 500 years before the nation existed; and the subsequent allusions to it evinces the speciality of it; “The land is mine” (Lev. 25:23). “My mountains,” (Ezek. 38:21). The land of Palestine, as the fundamental element of the kingdom of David, is of God’s selection and allotment. “A land,” said Moses, “that the Lord thy God careth for. The eyes of the Lord are always upon it from the beginning of the year, even unto the end of the year” (Deut. 11:12).

Thus the throne of David when analyzed turns out to be *a divinely appointed jurisdiction over a divinely constituted arrangement of things political*. The throne of David was in fact the throne of the Lord, and the kingdom of David the kingdom of God. How comes it to have no existence now? Because of the wickedness of the people who were related to it.

It was an arrangement based upon and hedged in by contingencies. It was founded upon the law of Moses, and the condition of stability under that law was, perfect obedience to its requirements. Disobedience was threatened from the beginning with national retributions (Deut. 28:15–68). The national existence depended upon conformity to the national constitution; and when this national constitution was violated beyond all hope of amendment, the national organization was broken up, the royal family abolished, the people scattered in dispersion, and the land given to the enemy.

This result was predicted by the prophets with the greatest reiteration and emphasis; and we see the warranty of their words in the present prostrated condition of the kingdom of David. Where is it? The land exists, but in a state of hopeless sterility, infested with “the worst of the heathen” (Ezek. 7:24). The people exists, but in a state of universal degradation and powerlessness. The royal family is extinct, its only living representative being Jesus Christ at the right hand of the Majesty

in the heavens; the Mosaic constitution is abolished both by force of irrepressible events and the decree of its divine framer. The kingdom of David in the emphatic metaphor of the spirit is “in the dust.”

“Thou hast cut off and abhorred; Thou hast been wroth with Thine anointed. Thou hast made void the covenant of Thy servant: *Thou hast profaned his crown by casting it to the ground.* Thou hast made his glory to cease, and cast his throne down to the ground” (Psa. 89:38, 39. 44).

So the words of Ezekiel have been verified: “I will *overturn, overturn, overturn it*, and it shall be no more *until he comes whose right it is, and I will give it him*” (chap. 21:27). The kingdom *has been overturned* and is no more. The Jews have fallen by the edge of the sword and been led captive among nations, and Jerusalem is trodden under feet of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24).

This is as far as events have sustained the prophetic forecast. The question powerfully presses itself—what next? “*He comes whose right it is.*” “*The time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*” These are the two divinely indicated limits of the present prostration. This is incontestably evident from the use of the word “until”—“It shall be no more UNTIL he come;” “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

What is this but saying, that WHEN “he comes whose right it is,” and WHEN “the times of the Gentiles have expired,” the non-existing and the down treading of the kingdom of David shall come to an end? This is in exact accordance with Hosea’s prophesy (chap. 9:11), quoted by James (Acts 15:16). “After this I will return *and build again the tabernacle of David* that is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof.” And this connects us with the starting point: “*The Lord God shall give unto Jesus the throne of his father David.*” If Jesus is to receive a throne which has not existed for more than twenty centuries, obviously something must occur to bring it into existence.

This “something” it is evident, is the second advent of the Christ, to do the work of re-organization, to build again the fallen tabernacle, to “restore the kingdom again to Israel” in accordance with the request of the Apostles after his resurrection (Acts 1:6). In doing this, he will reclaim his country—the land of promise—from the desolation which now reigns over it, and gather to it the scattered Jews from the countries of their dispersion, rebuild Jerusalem, re-enact the laws, and generally restore the ancient kingdom of Israel, “upon the throne of David, and his kingdom to order it, and establish it with justice and judgment, from

henceforth even for ever. *The zeal of the Lord of Hosts, will perform this*" (Isaiah 9:7).

But the more systematic demonstration of these propositions we briefly summarize in these conclusions to which every honest mind must arrive in view of the evidence adduced—

1. *The throne of David was a God-constituted royalty erected as a delegated administration of His authority in a nation formed by Himself, and settled in a land of His own choosing (Palestine).*
2. *This throne does not now exist, but*
3. *It will be re-erected in the same country at the coming of Jesus the Christ and occupied by him when he reigns "over all the earth" as "King of kings and Lord of lords."*

Questions Relating to the Kingdom of God

PROPOSED TO THE CALVINISTIC METHODIST SUNDAY SCHOOL, MONTGOMERY, AND NOW ANSWERED, ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH,

By Robert Roberts

1.—*Explain the term "kingdom."*

Answer—"Kingdom" means the dominion of a king.

2.—*Give the different meanings of the term "kingdom" in the New Testament.*

Answer—Strictly speaking, it has not different meanings in the New Testament. The central idea of the term is applied in a variety of relations, and hence arises an appearance of diversity in the meaning, where, in fact, there is uniformity. Thus, while the kingdom of God primarily means the kingdom of David, which God will re-establish on earth, through Christ (Dan. 2:44; Amos 9:11), when he comes to fulfil Zech. 14:9, Christ himself is spoken of as "the kingdom of David" in the song of the people when he made his entry into Jerusalem—(Mark 11:10). He is so spoken of because as the son of David and heir to the throne of David—(Luke 1:32) he is naturally to be regarded as that

kingdom in the germ, while the kingdom itself is yet unmanifested in its coming glory. Hence also it could be said that in his being among them, the kingdom of God was among them—(Luke 17:21). Again, the coming kingdom was the subject of Christ's discourse when on earth (Mark 1:14; Luke 4:43; 9:2, 11; 13:28; Matt. 4:23). He spoke of it that people might know about it, and believe on it, in order that they might enter into it and possess it in power and great glory in the day of its manifestation—(Matt 5:20; Luke 12:32; 13:28, 29; 22:29, 30; 6:20; 19:11–25). Hence, when he approached the people with this offer, it could be said that the kingdom came nigh to them (Matt. 12:28), because the kingdom of the future by these means came nigh to them. Again, the kingdom of God was a doctrine in vogue among the early disciples. It was fully believed among them that the righteous would inherit it and that the unrighteous would not—(1 Cor. 6:9; Jas. 2:5; 2 Pet. 1:11). Hence, as a doctrine, Paul could say, when some were stickling about meats and drinks, that it was not an affair of "meat and drink, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." In all these cases, and every other that can be cited, the central idea is the same. The apparent diversity is merely a diversity of application according to the circumstances of discourse, the same as what occurs in every subject that can be talked of.

3.—*What was the general notion concerning the kingdom of God when Christ was on the earth?*—(Luke 14:15; Matt. 11:10; Acts 1:6).

Answer.—The general idea undoubtedly was, as shown by the verses referred to, that Christ would establish a real kingdom on earth, in which he would visibly and powerfully reign; that his friends would reign with him, and that the kingdom so established would be the ancient kingdom of Israel restored in the Holy Land. This idea was a scriptural idea, as shown by the following Scriptures: Isa. 9:6; Dan. 2:44; 7:13–15, 27; Jer. 33:14; Obadiah 17–21; Ezek. 37:21; Psalms 149:7–91; Rev. 2:26; 3:21; Luke 22:29–30; Matt. 19:27. But after the death of the apostles, largely through the influence of Origen of Alexandria, the scriptural idea was abandoned, as inharmonious with the philosophic idea of man's natural immortality and "disembodied" existence after death; and the idea was established in its place, and has been popular ever since, even to the present day, that the language of Scripture on the subject is to be "spiritualized" and made to mean that a good state of the heart would prevail among men through the operation of ecclesiastical institutions.

4.—*Did Christ consider the announcement of the kingdom an imperative duty of his mission?*—(Matt. 10:7; Luke 4:43; and 10:9–11).

Answer.—Undoubtedly. The preaching of the kingdom came before the preaching of the cross, from which it follows that modern preaching which is all about the cross and nothing about the kingdom, is not according to Christ.

5.—*What is the meaning of the expressions—“The kingdom of heaven is at hand?”—(Matt. 4:7, and 1:15). “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation?”—(Luke 17:20). “The kingdom of God is within you?”—(Luke 17:21). “The gospel of the kingdom?”—(Mark 1:14).*

Answer—These are substantially explained in the answer to question No. 2. The kingdom of heaven was at hand, or had approached (which is a more correct translation of *hggike*), because Jesus, who was that kingdom in the germ, had appeared, and because the inheritance of the kingdom was offered by him to all who should believe and obey him. It came not with observation, because he came with no pomp or outward show, but as a plain and humble man, poor in circumstances, and the friend and companion of the poor. The kingdom of God was among (not within) them, because he was in their midst. “Among” is the marginal reading; and more in harmony with the facts of the case, considering that the saying in question was addressed to the Pharisees, of whom he says in Matt. 23:27, that they were as whited sepulchres, beautiful outwardly, but *within* full of uncleanness. The “gospel of the kingdom of God” means the glad tidings of God’s purpose to set it up, and promise to give it to those who love Him—(Luke 8:1; Dan. 2:44; Jas. 2:5).

6.—*Refer to the starting point of the kingdom of God.*—(Matt. 11:12; Luke 16:16).

Answer—The starting point of the kingdom of God may be found in the very beginning of things on earth, as it has been in preparation since “the foundation of the world”—(Matt. 25:34). It was promised before the (Mosaic) world began—(Jas. 2:5; Titus 1:3). But the official invitation to all men to become heirs of it was only promulgated in the days of Jesus, when “the law and the prophets” had reached their climax in him.

7.—*Show that the kingdom of God is a divine order of things, and not a future personal reign.*

Answer—I can do the first but not the second. The kingdom of God is a divine order of things, but part of that divine order is “a future personal reign” both of Christ and the saints. This is evident from the following Scripture testimony: Paul says that Jesus Christ “shall judge the living and the dead at his appearing *and his kingdom*”—(2 Tim. 4:1). Thus he puts his appearing and his kingdom together. Now, no man can deny that his appearing will be personal, because it is stated (Heb. 9:28) that he is to appear “the *second time*.” We know that his appearing the *first time* was personal; and it stated concerning the second time, that he shall “so come *in like manner* as he went away”—(Acts 1:10). Therefore his second appearing will be personal; how indeed could he otherwise “appear?” Now it is stated that when this happens, “the kingdoms of this world shall become his, and that he *shall reign* for ever and ever”—(Rev.

11:15). Also that “the Lord shall be king over all the earth” (Zech. 14:9), and that he shall “reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem”—(Isaiah 24:23; Micah 4:7). There is a great deal more evidence of the same sort, going to show that part of the divine order of things is a future personal reign.

8.—*In what sense is the kingdom of God not of this world?*—(John 18:33–36).

Answer—In the same sense as Jesus himself and his disciples were “not of this world”—(John 17:16). They lived on the earth as other men did, but they did not belong to the present evil world that lives upon it. There is a world to come (Heb. 2:5), which will be in the same earth—(Matt. 5:5; Psalm 37:9). To this new world the kingdom of Christ belongs and not to the ungodly world that now exists.

9.—*What are the elements of the kingdom of God?*—(Romans 14:17).

Answer—The elements of the kingdom of God are various. Christ is one of them (Jer. 23:5); the law that he shall send forth to the nations (Isa. 42:4; 2:3) is another; the twelve tribes of Israel restored to their land another—(Matt. 19:27; Ezek. 37:21–22). Also, unlike the present evil system of things, it will be characterized by “righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”—(Rom. 14:17).

10.—*Who are held in contrast to Christ and his kingdom?*—(John 14:30; 16:33).

Answer—The present evil world and all that goes to make it up.

11.—*What is the relation of the subjects of Christ’s kingdom to the world?*—(John 15:19; 17:15–21).

Answer—Those referred to in the passages cited are not “the subjects of Christ’s kingdom,” but the heirs of it—the future rulers of it. This must be apparent to any one who considers who they were. They were Christ’s own disciples, to whom he said, “Ye shall sit with me on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel”—(Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:38). Those who sit on thrones are not subjects, but rulers. Hence Jesus makes promise to this effect to every one that is to sit on his throne: “I will give him power over the nations, and he shall *rule them* with a rod of iron”—(Rev. 2:26). Paul also says, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” (1 Cor. 6:1) also Daniel 7:19, that “the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom.” In view of this, we can understand their song in Rev. 5:10: “Thou hast made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign *on the earth*.”

12.—*What is the change requisite for the natural man in order to be a subject of Christ’s kingdom?*—(John 3:3–5).

Answer—The natural man is nowhere invited to be “a subject” of Christ’s kingdom, but to be a king and a priest with him in it, as the evidence adduced in the last answer shows. Such must be born of the Spirit in having their mortal nature changed by the power of the Spirit at the resurrection (Rom. 8:11; Phil. 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:53), because “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God”—(1 Cor. 15:50).

13.—*Name the parables which convey the idea that the kingdom of God is a fellowship of persons united for a common good and the exercise of a common action?*—(Matt. 22:1–11; 25:1–13; 8:11–13; Mark 12:1–12).

Answer—There are no parables which convey the idea defined. The parables illustrated various phases of the kingdom taught in the prophets. The saints are themselves an element of that kingdom, and therefore some of the parables bear upon the work of their development, but no part of the Scriptures limits the kingdom to them who are but its heirs and coming rulers in the world or age to come.

14.—*Refer to the figures which show that the kingdom of God is a power gradually developing itself from within?*—(Matt. 13:31–34).

Answer—There are no figures which do so, if by “within,” the question means inside a man. Jesus used the mustard seed and leaven to illustrate the fact that the kingdom of God would ultimately prevail to the filling of the whole earth, although in his day, and ever since, it was the smallest and most insignificant of objects in the affairs of men. The development of the saints by the faith and hope of it, is part of its growth; it has been in slow preparation, in other senses, since the “foundation of the world:” it is despised and rejected of men, as Christ, its great root, was; it will, in due season, at his coming, after the terrible war of the great day of God Almighty, become a mountain, filling the whole earth. It was these facts that Jesus illustrated in his parables, and not ecclesiastical imaginations on the subject by which the word of God has been made of none effect.

15.—*Jesus refers to the coming of the Son of Man in His kingdom: when and where was it fulfilled?*—(Matt. 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27).

Answer—These passages are but three versions of one and the self-same matter, viz., the transfiguration. That Christ’s words referred to the transfiguration is shown by the fact that the account of that divine exhibition follows in each case, and also that Peter, who was one of the three privileged spectators, refers to it in this sense: “We have not followed cunningly-devised fables when we made known unto you *the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: for we were* eye-witnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard *when we were with him in the holy mount.*”—(2

Pet. 1:16–18). The whole was “a vision” of the coming glory—(Matt. 17:9). In this sense, the three apostles, referred to as “some,” did not taste of death till they “saw” the event which is still the hope of believers. That the actual advent of the kingdom was recognised by Christ as still a matter of futurity, is shown by such subsequent allusions as these: “When ye see these things (certain foretold events among the nations) come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand”—(Luke 21:31). “I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come”—(Luke 22:18).

16.—*To what period of time in the history of His kingdom does Jesus refer?*—(Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:29–30; Rev. 2:26–27).

Answer—In the passages alluded to, Jesus refers to the time when the fallen kingdom of David shall be raised from the dust (Amos 9:11) and be made the head of all the kingdoms of the earth—(Isa. 60:12). This is when the Redeemer comes to Zion (Isa. 59:20), which Paul quotes as still a matter of futurity in his day—(Rom. 11:26).

17.—*What is the prototype of the kingdom of God on earth?*—(Matt 6:10).

Answer—The state of love and obedience now prevailing among the angels of heaven.

18.—*What is to be the extent of this kingdom?*—(Matt. 8:11–12; Phil. 2:10).

Answer—“All kingdoms, nations, and languages shall serve him”—(Dan. 7:14). “The uttermost parts of the earth shall be his possession”—(Psalm 2:8). The whole earth shall be filled with His glory—(Hab. 2:9).

19.—*Who is the chief agent, and what are the means used to extend the kingdom of God?*

Answer—The chief agent is Christ, “for he is king of kings, and they that are with him are the called, and chosen, and faithful”—(Rev. 17:14). The means used to establish his dominion among the nations of earth will be fire and sword—(Isa. 66:16). By these, Christ will break them as with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel—(Psa. 2:9). His saints will join in this violent work—(Rev. 2:27; Psa. 149:5–9).

20.—*What part do angels take in this kingdom?*—(Heb. 1:14; 1 Peter 1:12).

Answer—They will be the glorious attendants on Christ at his coming—(Matt. 25:31). They will take part in the triumphant ascription of praise to his glory (Rev. 5:11), and they will be the visible mediums of communication between heaven and earth during the reign of Christ—(John 1:51).

21.—*What is to be the duration of Christ's kingdom?*—(Luke 1:33).

Answer—In its preliminary phase, during which the saints are kings and priests, co-operating with Christ in the work of bringing the whole world to God (Rev. 5:10; John 17:33; Isaiah 2:3–4), it will last a thousand years—(Rev. 20:4). In its final form, it will be without end—(Luke 1:33).

22.—*Show that we can consistently, with reason and the tenor of Scripture, interpret the sentence figuratively, "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"*—(Rev. 20:4).

Answer—I cannot show this. Any attempt to show this would involve a wresting of Scripture. The teaching of all Scripture on the kingdom of God establishes the literal sense as the meaning of Rev. 20:4.

23.—*Recite the triumphant passage bearing on the final consummation of the kingdom*—(Rev. 12:15).

Answer—You must mean verse 10; but this does not bear on "the final consummation of the kingdom," but on a transient historical phase illustrated during the emperorship of Constantine, in the fourth century, in connection with the downfall of Paganism—to which era the symbolism of Rev. 12 principally belongs.

24.—*Explain the saying of the apostle, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father"*—(1 Cor. 15:24).

Answer—The reference is to the change that will take place at the close of the thousand years, when Christ, having accomplished the full reconciliation of the world to God, will cease to be the mediator between God and man, and God Himself will assume the government of the kingdom in some way not revealed.

The Kingdom of God Particularized

By Dr. Thomas.

DAVID was born in the 38th year of Samuel's judgeship. In the 18 years and 7 months which succeeded, he killed the lion and the bear, smote Goliath, was anointed Yahweh's king elect to rule His people Israel, and passed through much tribulation that he might inherit the kingdom, if approved. Saul was killed in battle; and David succeeded him, first as king of Judah, and two years afterwards as sole king of Israel. He had long wars with the surrounding nations, which at length ended in their conquest and an enduring peace. In his career as a king raised up to

execute Yahweh's vengeance upon the heathen, he acquitted himself as "a man after God's own heart;" and, with all his faults, as one "of whom the world was not worthy;" because he honoured God by devout and earnest faith in "*His word*," which He has magnified above all His name (Heb. 11:32, 38; Psa. 138:2; Acts 13:22).

David being approved as a suitable progenitor of "the Seed," Yahweh made an everlasting covenant with him, which he confirmed with an oath. By this he established the sovereignty of his family over Israel for ever. Henceforth, the house of David was *the royal house of the kingdom of God*; and to rebel against David, or a descendant of his, lawfully occupying his throne, was to rebel against Yahweh himself, to whom the throne and kingdom as certainly belonged as if He had no visible representative in Jerusalem. Hear what the Strength of Israel proclaims:

"I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn unto David My servant saying, Thy Seed (*zarecha*, singular) will I establish for ever (*ad olam*), and build up thy throne for all generations (*le-dor-vahdor*) ...

"I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David My servant; with My holy oil have I anointed him: with whom My hand (power) shall be established: Mine arm shall also strengthen him ...

"In My name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his power (who bears Yahweh's name) also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto Me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him My Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed (*zero*, David's seed, *singular*) will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven...

"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of My lips. Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed (*zaro*) shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before Me. It shall be established as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven" (Psa. 89).

Hear again the word Yahweh sent to David by Nathan concerning his seed who was to bear Yahweh's name—

"It shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will *raise up* thy seed after thee, who shall be of thy sons: and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build Me a temple, and I will establish his throne for ever. *I will be his*

Father, and he shall be My Son. I will settle him in My house (temple), and in My kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore” (1 Chron. 17:11–14).

From this covenant it is clear as a sunbeam that David was to have a seed who should be both son of David and son of God; that this seed should be a king, and heir to all David’s prerogatives; that the throne and kingdom of Israel should be everlasting in David’s family; that his seed should be raised up from the dead to sit upon his throne; that he should then build a temple, and that he should be settled in that temple for ever, that is, should be a priest continually there.

Paul makes it absolutely certain that “the Seed after David of his Sons” is the Lord Jesus, and not Solomon, by applying the saying in the covenant, “I will be his Father, and he shall be my Son,” to Christ (Heb. 1:5). And that David himself so understood it, is obvious from innumerable passages in his writings. David believed the Son here spoken of was to be raised from the dead to sit upon his throne; and that when he sat upon it, he was to be an immortal king, and an undying priest after the order of Melchizedek. Peter declares this; for in reasoning upon what David wrote in the sixteenth Psalm, he said,

“David being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would *raise up Christ to sit on his throne*: he forseeing this spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his dead body was not left in the tomb, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God *raised up*” (Acts 2:30).

Being raised from the dead, and, therefore, Son of God according to a spiritual nature which he should possess in common with the angels, than whom he was then no longer lower, he saw him in possession of his dominion as Yahweh’s king on Zion, the hill of his holiness, with the nations for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession (Psa. 2:6–8). He discerned also what would be his own character, and that of his Government; for, says He, concerning him,

“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a righteous sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness; therefore, O God, thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness (the Holy Spirit), above thy fellows” (Psa. 45:6).

And when thus sitting upon his throne in Zion, he beheld him with the eye of faith, as one who had subdued his enemies, and become the royal high priest of the kingdom. Speaking of his Son and Lord, he says,

“Yahweh shall send the rod of thy strength from Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek” (Psa. 110).

Yahweh swore this when He swore to David that He would settle him in His house and in His kingdom for ever. Thus by “the word of the Oath” was David’s family constituted the royal house of the kingdom under both constitutions, or covenants, old and new; and the transfer of the priesthood declared from Aaron and his sons to David’s Son for ever. Hence the carrying out of this purpose necessitated the future abolition of the Covenant of Sinai, and the introduction of a constitution better suited to the case.

Royal City of the Kingdom

Moses said to Israel,

“When ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the Lord your God giveth you to inherit, and when He giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye shall dwell in safety; then there shall be a place *which the Lord your God shall choose* to cause His name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that I command you” (*Deut.* 12:5, 16).

The time for making choice of this city arrived, when the Lord had given the Kingdom to David, and rest from all his wars. David sought out the place, and Yahweh approved it. He “found it in the fields of the wood.” He found it in a manner he did not expect. The Ark of the Covenant had been removed from Obededom’s to the City of David on Mount Zion; while the Altar of burnt sacrifice continued at Gibeon. Now David having been moved by Yahweh to number the people, who had sinned, seventy thousand of them fell by pestilence in the country parts in three days. At length an angel of the Lord arrived at Jerusalem to destroy it, and as he was destroying, Yahweh said to him, “It is enough, stay now thine hand.”

At this crisis David discovered the angel standing near the threshing-floor of Ornan, or Araunah, the Jebusite, between the earth and heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand extended over Jerusalem. David having confessed his sin in numbering the people, and prayed that the plague might be stayed, the angel commanded Gad, David’s seer, to tell David to go up and set up an altar to Yahweh in the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite. When David saw the angel, he would have gone to Gibeon, where the Mosaic tabernacle was, to enquire of God before the altar there; but he was afraid because of the angel’s sword which crossed the way.

David must have been greatly relieved, therefore, when Gad delivered the angel's message to him in the name of Yahweh. Without delay, he went to the "fields in the wood," or district of the forest where the threshing-floor was situated, and purchased it for six hundred shekels of gold by weight, and built there an altar to Yahweh. When it was finished, he offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings upon it, and called upon the Lord, who answered him from heaven in consuming the sacrifices by fire from thence, and in commanding the angel to sheathe his sword (1 Chron. 21).

Ornan's threshing-floor was on Mount Moriah, where Abraham had offered up Isaac, and through the substitute provided, received him from the dead in a figure. This appears from the testimony that—

"Solomon began to build the temple of Yahweh at Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the angel appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite" (2 Chron. 3:1).

The Ark of the Covenant, which prefigured Jesus, the royal son of David, was placed in the City of David on Mount Zion, where it remained forty years preceding the building of the temple by Solomon. This long residence of the Ark on Zion distinguished Zion as the place of the throne of the kingdom; as the building of the altar on Moriah designated it as the place of the Temple. Moriah and Zion are not to be confounded as one city. They are two distinct mountains, and the sites of two cities; though in after times they came to be surrounded by one and the same wall, and to be vernacularly styled Jerusalem. The Temple was in Jerusalem, and the Throne in Zion, the city of David's house. They are the subjects of distinct prophecies, though often times associated together; and these prophecies relate, not to a visionary mount "beyond the skies," but to Zion, "the hill of God," (*Har-Elohim*, the hill of Gods,) the royal city of David's kingdom, in 31 degrees 50 minutes north latitude, and 35 degrees 20 minutes east longitude from Greenwich, about 25 miles west of Jordan, and 42 east of the Mediterranean, where David dwelt; "the hill which God (*Elohim*, Gods) desireth to dwell in; yea," in which "the Lord (Yahweh) will dwell for ever" (Psa. 68:15–16). Of this city "glorious things are spoken;" for "all God's springs are in her" (Psa. 87).

God has dwelt in Zion in ages past (Psa. 74:2). He dwelt there when the Ark rested there; for He dwelt between the outstretched wings of the Cherubim representatively by the glory which they sustained (Psa. 80:1), and in speaking to Moses and the High Priests, caused His voice to be heard as if proceeding from the lid of the ark, called "the Mercy Seat," which was overshadowed by the glory (Num. 7:89).

The Ark, the Mercy Seat, and the Cherubim of glory, were representative of the Christ, who is therefore termed “the Ark of God’s Strength,” “the Ark of His Testament,” “the Mercy Seat,” (*hilasterion*) and the bearer of the glory, in the Scriptures, old and new. When he comes in “the glory of the Father,” he will “build the temple of the Lord,” and bear the glory, and sit and rule upon his throne, and be a priest upon his throne (Zech. 6:13). When this comes to pass Yahweh will dwell in Zion again, and “shine forth” through Jesus there, as the Lion of the Cherubim of His glory; and in speaking to men will cause His voice to proceed from him, as the blood-sprinkled seat of His mercy, divinely overshadowed with the brightness of His majesty.

“When the Lord shall build up Zion He shall appear in His glory.”

“He hath chosen it; He hath desired it for His habitation. This, saith He, is My rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe *her* priests with *salvation*; and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. *There* will I make the horn (*keren*, horn, strength, power) of David to bud. I have ordained a light for mine anointed. His enemies (the foes of this light) will I clothe with shame; but upon himself shall his crown flourish” (Psa. 132).

“The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and make thee glorious; the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister to thee; for the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. I will make thee, the place of My feet, glorious. The sons of thine oppressors shall bow down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee the City of Yahweh, Zion, the holy of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee *an eternal* excellency, a joy of many generations” (Is. 60).

This testimony is sufficient to prove that the Royal City of the Kingdom under the Old and New Covenants, is Mount Zion, “the joy of the whole earth,” when “Yahweh shall reign over Israel there from henceforth even for ever” (Mic. 4:7).

Aristocracy of The Kingdom

By the aristocracy is meant *the Princes of the State*. In the commencement of Yahweh’s Kingdom these were Moses, Aaron for the tribe of Levi, and eleven others, one for each tribe. The sons of Aaron also were sacerdotal princes; to whom may be added the Levites of the houses of Kohath, Gershom, and Merari. Besides these, Moses selected

the chief of the tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over them—captains over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among their tribes. “And I charged your judges at that time,” said he, “saying, hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him.” These were they who possessed the kingdom. Flesh and blood, mortal and corruptible men. So that Yahweh’s kingdom under the first constitution may be defined *a divinely-organized system of government in Israel, administered by sinful men under sentence of death.*

The Interregnum

This is a long period of time, extending from the destruction of the royal city and temple by the Romans, AD. 70, to the return of Jesus to Mount Olivet, to fight against the nations under Gog, which shall then have assembled against Jerusalem to battle; and, having defeated them with a terrible overthrow, to restore the kingdom again to Israel, and become the king over the whole earth (Zech. 14:1 9; Ezek. 37., 39). This interval will have occupied about 1796 years, calculating the birth of Jesus at 4 years before the Vulgar Era. We style it the *interregnum*, because it is an interval of time *between the kingdom* in its past existence under the Mosaic Covenant, and its future existence under the Christian Covenant, called “*the New.*” During the continuance of the interregnum *the kingdom does not exist.* “It shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him,” saith Yahweh (Ezek 21:27).

The kingdom and throne are in ruins, and the royal city and temple are trodden under foot of the Gentiles, even the worst of them. But, saith the Lord “*I will return, and build again the dwelling of David, [eth succath David, that is Zion, the city where he dwelt,] as in the days of old*” (Amos 9:11; Acts 15:15). All things are now tending to this crisis. The present policy of the Gentile powers is working out a result, which will manifest itself in Gog, the Prince of all the Russias, possessing himself of Jerusalem, “the city of the Great King.” When the saints see this, let them rejoice greatly; for the interregnum will be about to end in the deliverance of the Holy City, which shall become henceforth “the throne of the Lord” (Jer. 3:17); and the glorious things spoken of Zion accomplished facts.

It is very common for sectarian theologians to style this interregnum “the Christian Age,” “Messiah’s Age,” “the Christian Dispensation,” &c.! But these misnomers belong to the language of Ashdod; and savour of Rome, and not of Jerusalem. The interregnum is a part of “*the times of the Gentiles,*” “the court which is without the temple of God, cast away (*ekbale exo*), and unmeasured,” “who tread underfoot the Holy City, or

them who worship in the Temple” (Rev. 11:1, 2). The Christian or Messiah’s age, or economy, is the age to come. The interregnum belongs to Antichrist as anyone may see who is capable of seeing by the light of truth. It is the time of the ascendancy of that cruel, devilish, and satanic power, which is to prevail against the saints until the Ancient of days shall come (Dan. 7:21, 22; Rev. 13:7).

They, however, cannot see this, in whom dwells the wisdom that is from beneath; because both they and the power are energized by the same spirit. Woe, helpless and hopeless, to the nations, if the Christian age has no more happiness for them than they have experienced in this! It may have been a millennium of bliss to the earthly, sensual, and devilish rulers of mankind, who have wallowed in lust, and grown fat upon the groans and torments of the people. Emperors and kings, popes and cardinals, “lords spiritual and temporal,” priests and pastors, have reveled in the blessedness of *their kingdom*, upon which they have blasphemously invoked the name of Christ; but to the saints it is a hated kingdom; a kingdom that oppresses them; a kingdom they desire to see destroyed; and therefore in the interregnum, (an age of hypocrisy, diabolism, and sham), they pray to their Father in heaven that His kingdom may come, and break in pieces and consume the power of them that destroy the earth. “Christian age” indeed! An age which belongs wholly and solely to “the Devil and his angels,” for whom utter destruction is preparing, that the day of Christ may be introduced.

During forty years preceding this interregnum, the Gospel, or glad tidings to Judah and Jerusalem were proclaimed, announcing that David’s throne and kingdom should be re-established under a new and better constitution than the Mosaic; and inviting all Jews of whatever class or condition in life, to become the heirs with Christ of the glory, honour, incorruptibility, life, priesthood, power, and majesty of the kingdom, *on condition of* believing the things of the New Covenant, recognising Jesus as “*the Seed*” of the Covenants made with Abraham and David, acknowledging his blood as the blood of the new Covenant, and of becoming the subjects of repentance and remission of sins through his name, being united to it by baptism.

This proclamation was made to procure rulers and priests for the kingdom, upon the principle of *righteousness imputed on account of faith in the promises of God contained in “the Covenants of promise.”* Those who embraced the proclamation became kings and priests *elect*, although descended neither from Aaron nor David; and received *a title* to the blessings of the Covenant, to be enjoyed by them *in a higher sense* than they will be possessed by the Twelve Tribes, when it shall be delivered to them as the constitution of the kingdom restored again to Israel.

Thus the heirs now elected have now the remission of their past sins, and then possession of the kingdom with everlasting life; whereas the Tribes will then only attain to remission, with great temporal blessings, and the hope of eternal life at the end of 1000 years. The elect are now sanctified by the blood of the Covenant, and in their case there is no further need of sacrifice for sin; they have been washed, and will therefore require to be washed no more. They are complete in Christ, with whose blood they have been sprinkled, and in whose name they have been washed. They only need eternal life, and to be like the King and Priest of their communion now at God's right hand, and they will be perfect; and efficient for all the duties they have to perform when promoted to the honour, glory, and offices to be bestowed upon them when the kingdom is restored.

But *the official necessities* of the kingdom are greater than can be supplied by the faithful of Judah and Jerusalem. A sufficient number of the Jews have not accepted Yahweh's invitation to fill His house. He requires more kings and priests for His kingdom than He succeeded in obtaining from Israel by the preaching of His apostles. It became necessary, therefore to turn to the Gentiles, and invite them to enter His house, or kingdom, upon the same terms as the Jews.

The invitation commenced at the house of Cornelius and has been sounding out, more or less loudly and extensively, to the present time. We should judge from the little interest that exists in the kingdom of God, that a sufficient number of saints has been obtained to answer all the necessities of the case. We do not know that it is so; but we think it probable, that as many men and women have been procured from Judah and the nations, as the kingdom will have use for in the age to come. We hope the best, but fear the worst.

We should rejoice in the conviction that thousands would yet embrace the Gospel of the Kingdom, but we sorrow in the belief that few will do it. They turn a deaf ear to it, and those that hear seem too generally incapable of understanding. There is less faith in the Gospel of the Kingdom among the Gentiles now, than there was among the Jews when they were "broken off because of unbelief." The Gentiles stand only by faith in the goodness of God exhibited in the Gospel; but if they continue not in His goodness they also shall be cut off. This is their position now. They have become "wise in their own conceit." Their fulness is almost, if not quite, come in; for they have turned their backs upon Yahweh's goodness, and are about to fall (Rom. 11).

The work of separating men and women for the purposes of the kingdom by preaching the glad tidings concerning it, has prolonged the interregnum to the present time. It was necessary “to take out from among the Gentiles a people for the Lord’s name;” and therefore time was required to accomplish it. But, we doubt not, that had there been saints enough to administer the affairs of the kingdom, the kingdom would have been restored to Israel at Christ’s resurrection; in which case no Gentiles would have shared it with the Jews; but would have been brought into subjection to it, as they are yet to be in the era of regeneration, or restitution of all things pertaining to the kingdom, and compatible with its existence under the New Covenant.

But Judah’s loss was our gain. By their partial and temporary rejection, the Gentile *kosmos* that believes is reconciled, and become heirs of the kingdom, the Gospel of which Judah despised, because it was preached in the name of Jesus. But they will not continue always in unbelief; for blindness has only in part happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And then all the tribes of Israel will be saved. For God will graft them into their own olive again, and that too on the principle of faith in Jesus, which will be life from the dead to the world. The interregnum will then be brought to a close. The 144,000, the *representative* number of the saved, will then be complete; and nothing will be wanting but the setting up of the Kingdom under the New Covenant.

The Kingdom under the New Covenant

To set up the kingdom under the new covenant, Jesus Christ, “The Repairer and Restorer” must return to Jerusalem; the land of Israel must be wrested from the Gentiles; the twelve Tribes must be resettled in Yahweh’s domain, to be expelled no more; and the kings and priests elected for the kingdom must be raised from the dead that they may enter upon the administration of its affairs.

The kingdom cannot be established before the resurrection of the saints; because, from the nature of the priesthood and the ordinances connected with it, none can discharge the functions of it before God, who are not constituted priests “after the power of an endless life,” as the Lord Jesus was before them. The kingdom under the Mosaic Covenant was inherited by flesh and blood. Its kings and priests were all mortal men, men who died and saw corruption. It was “left to other people.” Aaron and his sons, and David and Solomon, and all who possessed the honour, glory, and power of the kingdom, died and left them to successors. They were physically corrupt, and inherited corruption, or that which was to be abolished. The flesh profited them nothing; for, though descended from Israel according to the flesh; though circumcised the eighth day, though

priests and kings by hereditary descent; these advantages gave them no right to the eternal priesthood and royalty of the kingdom under the New Covenant, which has been dedicated by the precious blood of its immortal High Priest and King.

The kingdom under this covenant partakes of the nature of its King, whose blood has purified its constitution. It is incorruption—a kingdom which can “never be destroyed,” an “everlasting dominion which shall not pass away.” If the reader fully understand these things, he will comprehend the saying of the apostle, that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither can corruption inherit incorruption.” It is a physical impossibility.

Can mortal men possess an everlasting kingdom, the priesthood and royalty of which are not to be left to successors? Men whose lives rarely exceed seventy or eighty years, cannot hold office for ever, or even a thousand years. Now, the offices, etc., of the kingdom under the New Covenant are inheritable for not less than a thousand years, and some of them for ever. They cannot be possessed for fifty years by one set of men, and then vacated that they may be held by another set for fifty more. No, they who are promoted to them at “the Regeneration,” or “Restoration,” will possess them always; for the priesthood and royalty are unchangeable; are non-transferable—cannot be “left to other people.”

This being the nature of things, *the immortality of the heirs of the kingdom is necessitated.* The kingdom cannot exist, the administration of its internal and foreign affairs cannot be carried on, its ecclesiastical and civil ordinances will continue a theory, an unaccomplished prediction, so long as Christ sits at the right hand of God, and “his fellows,” the “joint heirs” of his glory and power, the co-partners of his “joy,” are sleeping in the sides of the pit wherein is no water, the unconscious, undreaming tenants of the tomb. “Corruption cannot inherit incorruption.” The “heirs of the kingdom” are either now in a state of corruption, or corruptible. So long as they continue thus, they cannot possess the kingdom. It is folly, namby-pamby, trashy absurdity, to affirm they can. None but those “alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them,” would declare it.

How can they, however, utter aught else but foolishness, who are ignorant of the nature of the kingdom of God? And is it to be wondered at that the old heathens should have plunged into such unfathomable nonsense about souls and Elysium, seeing that they were intensely dark upon the things of the kingdom of God. The doctrine farthest possibly remote from their conception, was that *immortality was life manifested through corporeal incorruptibility, for all those, and those only, who*

should by faith and practice be accounted worthy of an indestructible kingdom in the land of Israel, that should not be left to successors.

They knew nothing of such a divine purpose as this, neither do the heathen of modern times, who eulogize the old philosophy, and approve the speculations of Plato on “the immortality of the soul.” They are ignorant and faithless of the gospel of the kingdom of God, in which the true doctrine of life and incorruptibility has been proclaimed; and, being ignorant of this, there is no absurdity so ridiculous that they are not liable to embrace it.

The New Covenant of the Kingdom

“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast.” The “*house*” here signifies *their country*, or territory of their kingdom. “And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up and break down, and to throw down and afflict; so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord.” “If the ordinances of the sun, moon, and stars depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall cease from being a nation before Me for ever. If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord.” The ordinances of the heavenly bodies cannot depart from before Yahweh; heaven cannot be measured, nor the foundations of the earth discovered; therefore Israel, though widely scattered and peeled, are not cast off for ever; but are certain to be restored, and thenceforth to continue always a nation before God (Jer. 30, 31).

Under the Mosaic Covenant the Twelve Tribes were divided into two nations under two distinct kings, from the fourth of Rehoboam to the sixth of Hezekiah, being 256 years. But when they shall cease to be cast off, and instead of being called Lo-ammi, shall become a nation before Yahweh, “they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all;” for “thus saith the Lord God, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations (*goyim*) whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and *bring them unto their own land*, and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and *one king* shall be king to them all.” (Ezek. 37:21, 22).

When the two houses of Israel, or the Twelve Tribes, are brought into their own land again, the law, or New Covenant is delivered to them from Mount Zion by their Lord and King; “for out of Zion is to go forth the law,” by which their organization as a kingdom is to be

accomplished. Referring to this time, Yahweh saith, some 470 years after David's decease,

“My servant David shall be their prince for ever. And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set *My temple (miqudashi)* in the midst of them for evermore. My dwelling (*mishkani*), also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And the nations shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, *when My temple shall be in the midst of them for evermore*” (Ezek. 37:25–28).

From this testimony it will be seen, *first*, that the covenant is not yet made with Israel and Judah; *second*, that they are in the Lo-ammi state; and, *thirdly*, that they are not yet sanctified, or made holy, for the declared reason that the temple of Yahweh is not yet in the midst of them, and cannot be there until they are restored, and the Lord returns to build it.

Israel and Judah cannot be sanctified until the temple is re-built; for in carrying out the mercy of the New Covenant, when “the Lord will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more,” a bullock for a sin offering is to be prepared for the prince and for all the people of the land at the celebration of the passover, when it is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. This appears from the testimony of Ezekiel 45, where it says that the prince shall give a meat offering, and a burnt offering, and peace offerings to make reconciliation for the house of Israel; and these must be purged upon the altar, when it shall be purged and purified for the purpose, and the temple shall have been reconciled or expiated.

The everlasting covenant of peace with the Twelve Tribes which Yahweh promises to make, is termed a New Covenant, being an improvement upon the Old. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—which, My covenant, they brake, &c.; but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the House of Israel.

After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know Me, from the least unto the greatest of them, for I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more” (Jer. 31:31).

The New Covenant is to be made with the two houses of Israel some time subsequently to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldees, when the promise was made. It cannot have been made with them yet; for, from the time it is made their iniquity will have been forgiven and forgotten. Will any man in his right mind affirm that the sin and iniquity of the house of Judah is forgiven? Can Judah be forgiven their treatment of their king so long as they continue in unbelief?

No; the grafting of the Twelve Tribes into their own olive is predicated on their not continuing in unbelief (Rom. 11:23). The Covenant is not yet made with Israel, or we should behold every Israelite a living tablet of the new law, full of the knowledge of God, and in disposition like their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The Mosaic Covenant was engraved on stones; but the New is not to be recorded thus—it is to be inscribed upon their hearts by the spirit:

“for, saith Yahweh, I will put My spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be My people, and I will be your God” (Ezek. 36:27).

And again,

“I will hide My face no more from them; for I have poured out My spirit upon the house of Israel, said the Lord” (Ch. 39:29).

No sophistry can make this applicable to the past. God’s face is now hid from them, and because of the hiding thereof, they are wanderers among the nations, not walking in His statutes, nor observing His judgments to do them.

By the new and everlasting covenant of peace, the Twelve Tribes will be brought into legal possession of their country; Jerusalem will be safely inhabited; it will become the Lord’s throne; and the nation will be constituted with an everlasting righteousness in the Lord their king; for “in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory” (Isa. 45:25). They will be justified in the Lord by faith in Him, and because they believe in Him, they will glory in Him. But before they can be justified in Him, they must be introduced into Him; the nation must put Him on as “the Lord its righteousness.”

During the interregnum, an individual believer in Jesus and the things of the covenants is introduced into Jesus as the Christ, that he may be “justified in the Lord,” by baptism into his name; so the believing nation will be baptised in the Red Sea into Jesus, as it was before into Moses, when all its sins will be cast into the depths of the sea, and it will come to Zion to receive the law, or covenant of peace. In proof of this second

passage of Israel through the Red Sea—see Psa. 68:22; Isai. 11:15–16; Zech. 10:10–12; and Mich. 7:19. Thus is the nation introduced into the name of the Lord, in which its “new heart and new spirit,” and its faith in Jesus, are granted to it for repentance and remission of sins; and they are accepted. Henceforth, “they shall walk up and down *in his name*.” They shall be “settled after their old estates.” “Their land that was desolate shall become as the Garden of Eden; and the waste, and desolate, and ruined cities, fenced and inhabited.” As for Jerusalem, it shall be called “a city of truth,” and “its name from that day shall be Yahweh-Shammah—the *Lord is there*” (Ezek. 36:26; Acts 5:31; Ezek. 48:35).

By faith in the promises, belief in Jesus, and baptism into him as its Lord, High Priest, and King, the nation is “saved from its enemies, and from the hand of all that hate them.” Thus saved, it will have become strong and powerful, “serving God without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of its life,” or *mortal* career. Immortality is yet before it; for it is a nation destined to exist and flourish for ever.

Immortality and glory, honour and rank, in the kingdom are now accessible, and have been for ages past, to individuals of the nation; but they judge themselves unworthy of it. When, therefore, the kingdom comes, they can rejoice only in common with the nation in its territorial, civil, spiritual, and social blessedness. If they would live for ever, they must wait with patience till death shall be abolished from the earth, and “every curse shall cease” (Rev. 21:4; 22:3). Then, at the end of the thousand years, all, both Israelites and Gentiles, who shall be accounted worthy of exaltation to the higher, or angelic nature, will become immortal; and, as *one nation*, subject to Jesus and the saints, will constitute an everlasting kingdom on the earth, when “all things shall be created new,” and “the sea shall be no more.”

In the present interregnum, believers of the Gospel of the Kingdom, when justified in the Lord, and so made holy, and saved from their past sins, are still required to offer sacrifice, or to do service to their Father, who is in heaven. The doing of service is indispensable so long as human nature is “sinful flesh.” If, when believers are justified and sanctified morally and constitutionally, they were also physically cleansed, or purified from that evil principle which brings them into death and corruption, religious service would be unnecessary.

When they rise from the dead, they will be free from this evil; nevertheless, they will perform religious service, but it will be for nations and individuals subject to this evil, and not for themselves. Now the same analogy obtains in regard to the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Although

justified in the Lord, and constituted a holy nation, they are still a nation of generations subject to mortality, because of the evil in their flesh, which nothing but the creative energy of omnipotence can eradicate. So long, therefore, as the nation is perpetuated by a succession of generations, there must be a national religious service connected with the memorials of death, and performed for them by a priesthood, such as the blood of the covenant of their sanctification demands.

When death shall be destroyed, generations will cease to be born and to pass away, and the life of the nation will be sustained, by a generation that shall consist of individuals who shall have all become immortal, or "equal to the angels." The nation will then be free from the death-principle. It will be intellectually, morally, and physically perfect. Its sin, as well as the sin of the world, will be thoroughly removed; so that no vestige thereof will remain. There will, therefore, be no ground for a service in which gifts and sacrifices are offered for the erring and the ignorant. "The law of sin and death" being extirpated from the nature of man, the good he would do will not be beset by evil. He will not err, nor be the sport of ignorance.

"God will be all in all," as He now is in Christ; so that His will will be as loyally and acceptably performed as though He were to execute it Himself. No service, therefore, will be needed to remind men of the impurity and mortality of their nature, their inherent sinfulness and ignorance, and that their acceptedness is predicated upon the perfect obedience of another, even unto death, whom God had set forth as a propitiatory through faith in his blood. But until this consummation be attained, a service will be necessary, memorializing these very things.

The necessary memorial service of the kingdom urges us on to a brief consideration of its priesthood. This is an order in the State composed of men who shall have become priests "after the power of an endless life," having been, during the interregnum, washed in baptism, sanctified by the anointing spirit, and consecrated by the blood of the covenant. These are "priests to God," who, saith the Lord, "shall enter into the temple, and they shall come near to my table, to minister unto me, and they shall keep my charge" (Ezek. 44:16). They are then the priests of Zion clothed with righteousness and salvation (Psa. 132:9, 16), the meek whom the Lord hath beautified (Psa. 149:4). They are representatively styled "*the sons of Zadok*;" and are kings also, as well as priests, and therefore priests "*after the order of Melchisedec*." The priesthood of the kingdom is consequently a Royal priesthood; and as it is "*for ever*," its officials are immortal and "equal to the angels." They are perfect as their Father who is in heaven, having no evil in their flesh, or impurity of character.

Such are the priests of the kingdom when the saints shall possess it “*under* the whole heaven.”

The Royal Priesthood is an order under one Chief, who is called High Priest. He is the elder brother of the order, all the rest being “his brethren.” He was once like them in the days of their sinful flesh, “a little lower than the angels;” but being also “made after the power of an endless life,” he enjoys the spiritual, angelic or higher nature, and sits as high priest for ever on his father David’s throne, and bears the glory. The sons of Zadok, or Jesus and his brethren are constituted priests for ever by “the word of the oath;” so that the royal priesthood of the kingdom is without predecessor or successor.

Its officials do not derive their inheritance from Aaron and his sons; nor from the old covenant of the kingdom. They inherit under the New, which gives them all the privileges and honours which they possess. The word of the oath made their Chief, though a son of Judah and of David, High Priest contrary to the Mosaic Law, which created Aaron; it makes them priests also of the same order *by constitution*, when in the interregnum they were made the righteousness of God *in him*. Being in him they are “complete in him,” and “joint-heirs” with him, of all his titles, honours, and real and personal estate.

Contemporary with this order of priests there will be in the kingdom a class of priests who are not royal, or priests after the power of an endless life. This inferior class is Levitical. They will be mortal and corruptible men of the tribe of Levi, degraded from their former rank under the old constitution to an inferior station under the new, to minister before the people instead of before the Lord as in the days of old. The reason of this degradation is the misconduct of their order under the Mosaic covenant.

When the people turned to the worship of idols, the Aaronic Levites became their ministers instead of vindicating the honour and institutions of Yahweh; therefore, says he,

“they shall even bear their iniquity”—“they shall not come near unto me to do the office of a priest unto me, nor to come near to any of my holy things in the most holy place; but they shall bear their shame, and their abominations which they have committed” (Ezek. 44:10, 13).

Let the reader give heed to this, and note that these Levitical priests under the old covenant officiated at the altar, entered the holy place and burned incense, and ate the shewbread at the Lord’s table, and their chief also passed into the Most Holy with the blood of the atonement. This was coming near to Yahweh, and ministering unto Him. But their order had

caused the people to serve idols, and had officiated as idol priests. They had done this while the kingdom existed under the Mosaic code, and the punishment of the offence is decreed to fall upon the order in its degradation when the kingdom shall be restored under the New or amended constitution. They may not approach the altar to offer the fat and the blood of the sacrifices, nor enter the Holy and Most Holy to stand before the Lord.

In this state of affairs the High Priesthood is vacated, and the altar and Holy places devoid of ministers. There are the nations and the Twelve Tribes, and the ministering Levites, who minister to the worshippers, but cannot approach to the Lord. What is to be done in this case? Does not the reader perceive a vacancy here?—a space to be occupied by an order, that *may* appear before the Lord?—that may burn the fat and sprinkle the blood upon the altar, and enter the Holies, and minister for the world as priests to God, and not to the people? The chain is complete when the order is introduced between the people's priests and Yahweh. Counting the links from the remotest, there is, *first*, the nations; *secondly*, Israel; *thirdly*, the Leviticals; *fourthly*, the sons of Zadok; *fifthly*, the High Priest, or Prince of Israel; and *sixthly*, Yahweh. This is the chain that connects the ends of the earth to the throne of the Eternal when the kingdom shall exist in the Age to Come.

It is evident that the sons of Zadok are resurrected men. Ezekiel is testifying things which had not existed previously to his day, could not exist contemporarily with him, and have not existed since. They are at variance with the Mosaic law, and could not therefore exist so long as it continued in force. But they are things foretold while the temple was in smoking ruins, and affirmed of God as certain to come to pass. There is no question therefore but they will be hereafter. The reason given why the sons of Zadok shall burn the fat and sprinkle the blood on the altar, and appear before Yahweh in the Holy place, is, because "they kept the charge of His sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from Him." But these faithful men have been dead for ages. It is necessary, therefore, for them to rise from the dead, that they may perform the service to which they are appointed.

Hints For Bible Markers

Psalms 14:2

“The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God.”

Last month we spoke of a scriptural fool and this verse points out there are many of them. Many billions, probably trillions, of people have dwelt upon the earth, living and dying, completely beyond the opportunity of God’s plan of reconciliation. But our Heavenly Father looks them all over, looking for the incredibly rare material He desires. True humility in man, ones who will not desire their own will but seek Yahweh’s will in all things. Who genuinely realize they, men, are nothing. A very rare breed of people who realize they can never attain to anything desirable without a complete submission to the will of God.

Mankind seeks to please the Deity in his own way. This is the universal quest! Man wants to decide what is good. He does not like what pleases the Most High. The world attempts, over and over and over, to try and do what they deem good, which they feel is the only way to please God.. They may appear, at first, to do a good thing but it eventually ends in corruption and disaster. Their schemes will not work because God is not the basis, the source, or even included in the plans of mankind. Politics, business, science, art, and sociology will never work without having Yahweh as the foundation of knowledge and understanding. Therefore the Master Builder looks down from heaven for the rare material that can be shaped and formed into the desired sign of His righteousness.

Psalms 14:3

“They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”

The Old Testament and the New are in agreement as Paul repeats this same ideal when he declared, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” (Romans 3:23). “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart” (Ephesians 4:18). With the Scriptures in our hands, it is entirely different. We may, if we suffer ourselves, be guided by His wise instruction. However, man through his personal thoughts on religion has tried to reconcile reverence for the Scriptures with his own beliefs, feelings, and views. Thinking his intelligence, views, and common sense (which is not so common), would allow him to understand, modify, and correct God’s Written Word. This corruption has led the Palmist to affirm, *“They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy”*.

Continued next month should the Lord will

bro. Beryl Snyder