

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!*

**And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars;
and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and
the waves roaring; ...And when these things begin to come to pass,
then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth
nigh— Luke 21:25, 28 .**

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**...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

An Open Door

By bro. G. A. Gibson

When we hear the word *door*, we usually think of that which forms the entrance to a house, or other building. These applications are common in the Scriptures where we read of the door of the Tabernacle, and the door of the Temple. The word is also used figuratively as the entrance to any thing. In the parable of the GOOD SHEPHERD, Jesus says, "*I am the door*," and the writer of the Acts speaks of "the door of faith" and, finally, in his message to the ecclesia in Philadelphia, Jesus says,

"I have set before thee an OPEN DOOR."

An "open door" is an excellent thing if it provides an entrance to a good place, and admits guests of a proper class. Such a door is that which opens for the proclamation of the Truth. But once the Truth has taken root and grown into an ecclesia, the door, while remaining open, should be carefully guarded, for many an ecclesia has been ruined because of the entry of unfaithful brethren. In the days of the apostles, there were many types of unfaithful brethren, and thus it has been throughout the history of the Household of Faith. One form of unfaithfulness was brought to our attention recently by a brother who said—

"When a people who have been called to a Divine service—who are in the world, but commanded to remain separate, who bear the Name of the Father—become submerged with the world in its activities, they cease to witness for God, and they witness for the world, and thereby bring the reproach of the world upon the Name of God."

On what *authority* does this brother make such a statement? Why should it be necessary to ask the question at all? Any brother, or sister, who has sufficient knowledge of the Truth to pass the examination for baptism, must surely know the answer to the first question. They *do* know, and so do all of us. Yet, in spite of apostolic warnings, one writes to us—

"I do hope ere long that you and your separated brethren will see the untenability of your stand, and will make the re-union complete to the honor of God's Name."

The matter of re-union was not looked upon from a prejudicial viewpoint, but was given serious, prayerful consideration, and it was realized that if we were to accept the reproach of the narrow way, many close friends, with whom we had taken sweet counsel together, would accuse us of being without love towards them. We did not refrain from participation in re-union because of personal feelings, or because of the friendship of some who are now with us. If we had been guided merely by friendship, we would not be where we are today. It was known then, and it has since been confirmed, that the cause of the 1923 separation has not been removed. How, then, could re-union bring honor to God's Name?

"Peace" and "brotherly love" are beautiful companions, but they are not only found in the Household of Faith; a form of them can exist in any religion, or outside of religion altogether. Therefore, they are not the foundation stones upon which the Truth builds its Temple, nor are they the stones of the Temple; but they are the embellishments that gild the Temple and make it beautiful. Is it not evident, therefore, that before we can have *true* peace and brotherly love after the *Divine* pattern, there must be something to come first? There is no question whatever that the belief of the Truth and submission to the Commandments is the true basis of apostolic fellowship, and there is no other.

Even though a man consent to the Truth in all its first principles, and declare his unreserved loyalty to our Statement of Faith, if he disobeys the commandments by being engulfed in the world's social life, his belief is nullified by his personal conduct:

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him"—1 John 2:4.

Those words are severe, stern and exacting; but they state a solemn and poignant truth which, if we have not been hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, will bring upon us a pitiless introspection, and cause us to realize that—

"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"—1 Peter 4:18.

Those who are striving to walk in the Truth, and laboring day and night to make their calling and election sure, realize that to stand up for the Truth against those who would undermine it by walking

contrary to its obligations is a difficult task, for such are hampered by considerations of right and wrong that do not trouble those who are careless. From a natural viewpoint, it would be easier to partake of the free and easy spirit that has developed in the brotherhood; but the prize is too great to trifle with, and the reproach for Christ far greater riches than all the treasures that this present world can offer.

The open door that Jesus has set before us is not an unguarded one, but the open door of the narrow way that leads to life. Jesus stands at that door and bids us come. If we come and remain in his company, our stand shall not be untenable.

"O Wind, Breathe Upon These Slain"

By brother Robert Roberts

[This article demonstrates how we can understand God's plan of salvation in the earth through prophecy, well before those prophecies come to pass. Bro. Roberts could see the rebirth of Israel, 80 years before Israel came into existence.—JP]

Who are these people scattered everywhere among the nations of the earth? Here we deal with a wonderful fact, before our very eyes. It is no matter of speculation or probability. It is a reality.

Here is a nation among all nations: a people dispersed in all countries, surviving in spite of opposition and persecution, clinging to their traditions of antiquity in spite of universal contempt.

What is the meaning of the strange spectacle? It was FORETOLD it would be so. In the ancient books they revere, which they have carried with them in their dispersion, and which have become the property of the world, it is written (and was written there *3,000 years ago* by their first leader Moses) that because of their disobedience it would come to pass that,

"The Lord would scatter them from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth" (Deut. 28:64).

—but that in the scattering, He would preserve them, *for the honor of His own Name* (Deut. 32:26-27)—

that, though He would make a full end of all nations among whom He would scatter them, He would not make a full end of them, only correct them (Jer. 30).

How come such an extraordinary spectacle—a nation scattered for weary ages, with books in their hands, foretelling the event! Oh, we know the answer. *God spoke to this nation, and to none else.* Their history is the history of revelation. It is the proof of inspiration. They are God's monument among men. It is as God told them:

"Ye are my witnesses that I am God, and that there is none else."

It is not merely their *present* position that we look at. We look back upon the centuries, and we see *the Jews always there.* If we were to suppose the 18 centuries that have elapsed since Christ's appearance among men, to be represented by 18 pictures, *in each picture the Jew would be the steady object,* all other objects in the picture changing and waning.

The first picture would show us Caesar enthroned, with his sceptre swaying all the earth—the Jew also enthroned, but subject to Caesar—Jerusalem still in her glory—Jacob having existence among the nations as a nation.

The second picture would show us Caesar in a halo of increased glory, and the Jew prostrate in the mire, receiving Gentile blows.

The third picture would be almost a repetition of the second. The fourth would show Roman glory beginning to pale before a new brightness—of *Jewish origin*—the brightness of Jesus' Name —paganism retiring before Constantine, who writes Christ's name with the point of the sword on the portals of the Roman system.

The fifth would show the Jew crouching in the corner before Catholic persecution. The sixth, the same. The seventh, a new light on Rome's seven hills—a light of lurid evil omen—the furnace glare of Papal power, and the Jew wandering hither and thither uneasily in the fiery glow. The eighth and succeeding pictures would show us substantially the same figures with variations—the Jew always in all countries to the front.

In the eighteenth, the glory of Papalism would be seen on the wane, and just at its finish the Napoleonic meteor would strike and explode

on the throne of "Saint" Peter and involve its kingdom in darkness for a time.

The nineteenth would show us the Jew in a more erect posture and a more advanced figure in the foreground and with his eyes turned over his shoulder towards the desolate land of his fathers; around his head, a new and increasing light, and Gentile figures showing a confused grouping and a muddy radiance like the murky, misty yellow of the setting sun on a wintry day.

But in all the eighteen, *the Jew visible and prominent*—this is the point. Ah, and we may go back before the first century and say the same for an *equal score of ages preceding*.

Whatever we may read of Egypt, and Babylon, and Persia, and Greece, and Rome; the Jew is always side by side. At no point in the historic age is the Jew invisible. He is coeval with civilization; he is concurrent with all human records of the past; and he is *with us today*—the only permanent figure in the changeful scene.

We look back upon the Egyptians, a powerful military nation at Israel's beginning, where are their power and glory now? Let the crumbling pyramids and rotting mummies, and chaotic ruins on the banks of the Nile, answer.

Where is Babylon, the destroyer of Jerusalem? Go to the banks of the Euphrates, and read, in the silent wastes and mounds, the fulfilment of the same Word which not only foretold Israel's dispersion *and preservation*, but Babylon's inhabitantless desolation from generation to generation (Isa. 13:20).

And Greece and Rome too, who fill so large a place in the literature of the polite, *where are they?* Their imperial power a history for the school, their nationality and language a study of bookworms, their race extinct, or represented only by the mongrel people of Italy and the Balkans.

But the Jew, here he is today, as *pronounced* a people, as *separate* a race, with as *fixed* a language, as in the palmiest days of Judah's power. The Jew is God's work, God's people, God's witness:

"This people have I formed for Myself, and THEY SHALL SHOW FORTH ALL MY PRAISE."

This is the meaning of their preservation, and the purpose of the preservation we shall yet see realised in the setting up of the Kingdom of God in all the earth, to the praise of Jehovah's Name in every land. But this is only half the subject. There is a *future*, as we know. Of this future, God spoke to a Jew in captivity at Babylon, "a man greatly beloved," to whom it was said,

"From the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand. and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words."

The angel of Yahweh's presence thus addressed Daniel. To what purpose did Gabriel come to Daniel, greatly beloved in Babylon?

"To make thee understand what shall befall thy people IN THE LATTER DAYS."

And Daniel "understood the thing and had understanding of the vision" (10:1). And the vision is in our hands for *us* to understand also. What the vision reveals is this, that after a protracted period of down-treading and chaos, there would come a time "in the latter days," when Yahweh would deliver His people; when the land would be "cleansed;" and when the dispersed of Israel would be gathered again from the four winds of heaven, the glorious sequel of which would be the establishment of a Kingdom under the long-promised Anointed One, which should govern all mankind for the blessing of man and the glory of God.

A rough indication is given of the length of the time of down-treading—a length sufficiently great to justify Daniel's introductory statement (10:1) that "the time appointed was long." It is not necessary on this occasion to go into any technical demonstration on the subject of the times and seasons. Suffice it to remember that *the "time appointed" expired in the age in which we live*, and that we have reached the time when the preliminary symptoms of emancipation ought to be visible, both as regards land and people.

If it be asked why we look for *preliminary* symptoms—why the thing may not come with the suddenness of a thunderclap—the answer is, it is revealed that the work will be gradual and at first natural. And the nature of the thing, considered in the light of God's dealings with Israel, requires gradual work in the first stage.

It is not in harmony with God's orderly and progressive ways in the past, that a scattered and despised nation and a desolate land should, in a single day, arise from the down-treading of centuries, though in its later stage (when the hour arrives for the manifestation of the Lord with his brethren), there will be quick and startling work. It is according to nature and analogy that the thing should begin slowly.

The question is, *Is the work begun?* Who can shut his eyes to the fact that takes a survey of the whole position for years past? We have first the emancipation of the Jew from civil disabilities.

The opposition to the Jew is now social. Men are his enemy privately, and they would like to alter the law, and are forming associations to try and bring about an alteration. But the law is in favor of the Jew as it has not been during the past centuries.

And this change is a latter-day change. It is about 30 years old or so.¹ The Jew is today eligible to hold landed property, and to follow any profession, to vote in municipal and parliamentary elections, and to fill any office of authority, in many lands. This is a great change when looked at against the background of the dark centuries that are past.

Another fact to be noted is the wonderful *wealth* of the Jews. This has become quite proverbial. It is a comparatively modern development. However men may explain it; by whatever combination of circumstances it has come about, there is the fact patent to all the world that the strings of the money bags of the world are held by Jewish hands. Kings and governments have to use Rothschild when any great performance of finance has to be compassed. This is doubtless a preparation for events further on.

Then, we behold a work of organisation going on among the Jewish race which is quite a novel thing in their history. Until the present generation, since their dispersion, Israel has been a race of units, having no connection one part with another.

But now, they are becoming organised. The establishment of a universal Israelite alliance with headquarters at Paris has laid the foundation of a corporate existence unknown to Jewish life for ages.

¹ This was remarkably written in 1864, well before Israel was even thought of, as becoming the State we see she has become today.

It has given the Jews a rudimentary nationality which cannot fail to be of the utmost importance in all future movements for their national resuscitation. It is "*bone coming to his bone*," the broken people coming together.

Under the auspices of the Alliance, there is an annual meeting of Jewish delegates from all parts of the world, at which matters affecting Jewish interests are debated, and from the officials of which, there is correspondence with Jews throughout the world.

So much for the *people*. Are there any symptoms of revived life for the *land*? People not interested or attentive to the matter would be astonished at all the facts that could be placed together in support of an affirmative answer to this question. Ever since the Crimean war when, by the treaty of Paris, Turkey was compelled to allow foreigners to hold land in any part of her empire, there has been a steady advance in the direction of new life in the land.

Jerusalem has become a changed city within the period that has elapsed since then. Building is going on in all directions outside the walls, and so it is also at several other centers. This revival of activity has also taken the form of agricultural settlements in various parts of the land; and the movement as a whole is *chiefly Jewish* (though Germans and others have taken part). The movement has received a great stimulus from various circumstances well within the memory of the brethren.

It is not only that colonies have been actually formed, but movements have been set on foot, and taken in hand by various classes of persons, which have for their object the Jewish settlement of the land on a large scale, and a situation has been created that only requires the ripening of imminent political changes in the East, to open the floodgates of Jewish immigration.

Egypt has been occupied by England. She is already in Cyprus, from which the mountains of the Holy Land are remotely visible.

All these things taken separately may each appear small, and without significance to the eye that only looks at them from the newspaper point of view, which is a very limited point of view. But, taken together, and looked at in the mass in connection with the long dark past of Israel's experience, and in the light of what has been revealed,

they have but one message to the ear of intelligence. They tell us that we are in the era of the Lord's return. He comes, not only to raise and glorify his saints: He comes to deliver Israel from all distress.

Brethren, *the day is breaking.* If it takes a long time to break and is slow in coming, we must remember the day is long that is coming, and the night has been long from which it is emerging. *"Long hath the night of sorrow reigned; the dawn shall give us light."*

The darkness is not so deep as it was fifty years ago. The pitchy blackness has given way to something like a twilight in which the forms of the mountains are dimly visible against the sky. The eastern horizon slowly lightens with the blush of coming dawn.

Soon the actual light will brighten all the air and gild the mountain tops. Soon a glorious shaft will strike athwart the somberness and tell the awaking world that the sun at last has risen and ascends the morning sky. Soon amid the turmoil and complications and gladsome tokens of this latter day, will Christ announce his presence.

What this will mean we know—at first, trouble, dire and prolonged, for the uncircumcised populations of the earth, but at last peace, and righteousness, and rest, and joy, and blessing. All mankind will share in the promised blessedness. Just as in the natural sunrise, all darkness flees before the glorious orb of day; just as all countries and all conditions receive the gladdening flood of light—the dens of barbarism alike with the homes of civilization, so all nations, all ranks of men, all conditions of life, will be embraced in heavenly beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

Part Three

"Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years, and hear your whoredoms, until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness . . . And ye shall know My breach of promise."

Such was the irrevocable fiat of Jehovah against the responsible element of the Divinely-elect nation, which He had redeemed from Egypt for a people to Himself; and it was the just punishment of their unfaithfulness. The responsible class consisted of—

“. . . all those men which have seen My glory, and My

miracles, which I did in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now these ten times, and have not hearkened to My voice."

The doom of the *whole nation* was respited by the earnest and prevailing intercession of their faithful and unselfish leader; but these murmurers against God were doomed to perish, though not yet. They were to gradually die out during the fixed period of their wanderings in the wilderness.

In this we may discern the greatest wisdom and kindness towards the survivors of the nation, amongst whom there must have been a vast number who could not discern between their right hand and their left; and so by this wise and merciful arrangement the distrustful and faithless murmurers would be succeeded by a generation nurtured and educated under the beneficent institution given to their fathers at Sinai, and thus become more fitted for the Divine favor which would have devolved upon their fathers had they proved themselves worthy of it. The nation thus mercifully saved and Divinely molded would be a perpetual monument of—

"The truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which He had sworn unto our fathers from the days of old."

We may also discern the Divine wisdom and prescience under the circumstances of a long period of wilderness probation, and the *continued existence of the rejected*, in thus making apparent the reason of the delay, and thereby furnishing His faithful servants with an effectual answer to the remonstrances of future discontent should it again manifest itself; and so making it clear that their only wisdom was now to submissively resign themselves to the fate that their rebellious spirit had justly brought upon themselves.

The Lord had sworn to Moses that all the earth should be filled with His glory; and this unalterable purpose was to be effected with, and through, Israel. But the men which had seen His glory, and His miracles which He did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and had tempted and provoked Him to their destruction, were excluded—not only from participation in that great and beneficent Purpose, but were not to be permitted even to *see* the land in which that glory was finally to be manifested.

This incident of Israel's experience in the wilderness is made the

ground of an *earnest apostolic appeal to faithfulness* on the part of all to whom the Gospel had been preached in his day—" . lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them.

"But the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. 3:4).

In the course of his argument in these chapters the apostle points out that the "*Rest*," or Millennial Sabbath, "which *remaineth* to the people of God" has to do with the land and people of Israel in a day subsequent to that in which he wrote; and, therefore, subsequent to our own day. If, therefore, we are wise we shall listen to the Divine exhortation to take heed, lest there be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief, which would certainly prove as effectual as in their case to prevent *us* entering the Rest that remaineth.

From the lengthened halt of the encampment at Kadesh it would appear that Jehovah, knowing that thoughts of evil and open hostility to the Divinely existent arrangements were in contemplation, thereby afforded both time and opportunity for the manifestation of that spirit of insubordination and rebellion by which it was hoped to set aside those arrangements, and to substitute leaders of their own choice, both of a political and sacerdotal character, for those whose very names had become abhorrent to them, and so frustrate the impending doom which had been pronounced upon them, and then—energized by their own leaders—reach the much coveted goal of which they thought themselves unjustly deprived.

The administration, in its sacred and political arrangements, from under which the factious leaders of the plot groaned to be delivered, was but of recent origin; and, doubtless, from its very commencement, had been a continual source of dissatisfaction and disappointment to some of the heads of tribes and families who considered that they had not been justly dealt by in the preferment of others to positions to which they felt entitled.

And—calling to mind the position of the tribe of Levi before its separation for sacerdotal services, and that according to this, Moses and Aaron could not claim to belong to the ruling branch of that tribe—we can see on what grounds Korah (who was a Kohathite, a descendant of a brother of the progenitor of Aaron) contended that the

priesthood, by right of birth, should have belonged to *his* family; hence his supposed prior claim to that office.

Some such grounds as these were also urged by certain of the chiefs of Reuben, as the *eldest of the tribes*, who were dissatisfied with the deposition of that tribe from its natural birthright by the recent administration under which Judah obtained the precedence.

With some such causes of discontent rankling in their hearts, the leaders of the two factions joined hands, and sought opportunity for remedying the supposed wrongs, which opportunity they found in the prolonged halt at Kadesh, the position of the two tribes being favorable to the completion of the scheme which they had concocted in those solitudes (Num. 2:10; 3:20).

In harmony with these considerations is the fact that *the chief conspirators were the chiefs of these two tribes*, in the persons of Korah, a Kohathite of the tribe of Levi, and Dathan, Abiram, and On, of the tribe of Reuben. The conspiracy was doubtless the result of jealousy of the sacerdotal preeminence of the line of Amram on the one side, and the right of primogeniture in the line of Reuben of the other.

The leaders of the conspiracy, having successfully won over to their views 250 of the princes of the people, now made bold to prefer their wicked accusation against their Divinely-appointed leaders in preferring the evil insinuation that they were *self-elected*, saying to Moses and Aaron—

"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is with them: wherefore, then, **lift ye up yourselves** above the congregation of the Lord?"

That Moses was astonished at this unfounded complaint and the seriousness of its nature, may be judged from his falling on his face when he heard it. Perceiving the need for immediate action—

"He spake unto Korah, and unto all the company, saying, Even tomorrow the Lord will show who are His, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto Him: even **them whom He hath chosen** will He cause to come near unto Him.

"This do: take your censers, Korah and all his company; and put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord tomorrow: and it shall be that the man the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy; ye take

too much upon you, ye sons of Levi.

"Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi; seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? . . and seek ye the priesthood also?

"For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord; and what is Aaron that ye murmur against him?"

And Moses sent to call Dathan and Abiram, who said:

"We will not come up. Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of a land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except **thou make thyself** altogether a prince over us? Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up" (Num. 16:1-4).

The reader will call to mind the case of offering strange fire by two of the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, when—

"There went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord" (Lev. 10:2).

At that time Moses had said unto Aaron—

"This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh Me; before all the people I will be glorified."

If any departure from the Divinely-prescribed course, even though of the priestly order, as in the case cited above, was visited with swift and irremediable judgment, what shall we say to the wilfully wicked calumny and arrogant presumption of the conspirators in the case before us! The conspiracy, doubtless, originated with Korah, whose claims found a ready response in the disaffected chiefs of the tribe of Reuben.

Korah himself, being a chief of the very tribe most honored of God, was peculiarly guilty, for the Levites were chosen of God to minister for the whole people before the Lord. And whatever the meaning of the charge of the princes of the tribe of Reuben may have been which they made against Moses—

"Wilt thou put out the eyes of these men?" (Num. 16:14).

—whether in the form of an accusation of perverting the understanding of the people, or treating them as if incapable mental imbeciles, or to liken him to the tyrannical barbarians of the Gentile nations who celebrated their conquests by perpetrations of cruelty, such as that alleged against Moses, it was but the fabrication of a base calumny made for the express purpose of inciting the whole nation to take part in the attempt to overthrow the Divinely-elect administration which did not permit of human ambition and self-rule, which they would have greatly preferred. It is testified of Moses, on the occasion, that he—

" . . . was very wroth, and said unto the Lord, Respect not Thou their offering: I have not taken one ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them" (v. 15).

This form of speech is evidence of a clear conscience before Him Who had appointed him, and the expression of implicit confidence in the righteous judgment of God in the matter. As the legislator and Divinely-elected governor, Moses was faithful in all things.

They could not accuse him of ever having accepted at their hands any form of present, even of an ass, though such presents were highly esteemed and gladly received by the great men of the East. And he rebuts the evil accusation of cruelty and oppression—

"Neither have I hurt (or injured) one of them."

And having acted the part of a good shepherd towards the flock Divinely committed to his care, and ruled over the house of God with righteous impartiality, he had the best of reason for believing that he should be vindicated from every unjust aspersion, and in the end justified in the eyes of the nation.

We have thus endeavored to consider the nature and objects of the conspiracy, that we may be the better enabled to *see* the necessity there was, not only for its frustration, but that it should be *absolutely nullified by some such signal and terrible judgments* as should have the effect of repressing the latent tendency of human ambition and popular discontent, and afford the necessary protection against any repetition of the machinations of evil men.

Moses, having appointed the next day for the trial of the issue thus raised, Korah officiously concerned himself in the *gathering of all the congregation* against Moses and Aaron, unto the door of the

Tabernacle of the congregation; so that, not only those who had associated themselves with him in the espousal of his cause, but all the congregation were summoned by him to attend.

This fact would seem to indicate that he had every confidence in a favorable issue. And we cannot but think that in all his plans and conclusions he had left God out of the matter, and had proceeded upon purely human probabilities, *relying upon winning over the entire congregation*, and thus gaining the day.

The time fixed by the servant of God having arrived, and the interest and excitement of the people being concentrated by the busy emissaries of the claimants upon the impending issue, imagine with what consternation they beheld the glory of the Lord as it appeared with dazzling effect upon the eyes of the vast multitude, and heard God's voice speaking to Moses and Aaron, saying:

"Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment" (Num. 16:21).

While these words, "Separate yourselves," were primarily addressed to Moses and Aaron, they obviously included all who chose to associate themselves with them, as subsequently appears. What confusion of face! What wailings of terror must have seized the guilty consciences of all engaged in the plot to usurp the position of God, for that is practically what would have happened if it had succeeded in deposing His ministers, which was their object.

And behold, in the moment of their vindication, the men so bitterly inveighed against bring not railing accusation against their enemies, but fall upon their faces and plead with "the God of the spirits of all flesh," saying—

"Shall one man sin, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?"

Again God responds to the earnest solicitations of His faithful servants, and bids Moses speak unto the congregation, saying—

"Get ye up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him. And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.

"So they got up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side" (Num. 16:26-27).

What an awful suspense! What care and anxiety lest any should suffer except the truly guilty! It is testified that the *children* of Korah died not (ch. 26:11). From this it would appear that they had not joined their father in the conspiracy, or, having repented, separated themselves before the judgment fell. A clear space around the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, having been made—

"Dathan and Abiram came out and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and sons, and little children."

What rebellious obstinacy could have induced them to stand defiantly at the doors of their tents in full view of the Tabernacle, where Korah and his associates stood with lighted censers awaiting the Divine verdict? All being ready, Moses stood forth, saying—

"Hereby ye shall know that **the Lord hath sent me** to do all these works: for I have not done them of my own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men, then the Lord hath not sent me.

"But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord."

Here was an unprecedented challenge. Awful words! Yet among the most sublime utterances that ever fell from the lips of man, in respect of integrity, uprightness, and faith in God's righteous vindication. Now mark the result of that appeal to God—

"And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods.

"They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them; and they perished from among the congregation.

"And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them, for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.

"And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the 250 men that offered incense" (Num. 16:31-35).

What an awful catastrophe! Let us let our minds dwell profitably on these terrible events. What an infallible test and signification of Divine approval! Thus were miraculously extinguished both branches of this presumptuous conspiracy. But there yet remained in the midst of the infant nation the generation of the distrustful miscreants doomed to perish in the wilderness. Of these we shall hear more hereafter. Meanwhile the signal overthrow of the conspiracy was to be memorialized. Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was therefore directed to take the brazen censers of the conspirators, and thereof to construct plates for the altar.

Notwithstanding this terrible display of Divine vengeance, we are informed that, the very next day, the spirit of murmuring again manifested itself in the encampment. And what is more surprising, even against those men whose claim to Divine leadership had been so miraculously attested in their presence.

If under such circumstances of terror as those which they had just witnessed, the people of the Lord could persuade themselves that Moses was the author of the tragic events whereby the treasonable element has been consumed from their midst, *what more could possibly be done to convince them* of the wickedness and folly of insubordination and mutinous conduct against their Divinely-appointed and righteous rulers? The narrative informs us:

"On the morrow, all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.

"And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the Tabernacle of the congregation, and behold, the cloud covered it, and **the glory of the Lord appeared.**

"And Moses and Aaron came before the Tabernacle of the congregation. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.

"And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the

congregation, and make an atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; **the plague is begun.**

"And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation: and behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were 14,700" (vs. 41-49).

Such was the dreadful penalty which they had again to pay for their disgraceful conduct. *How long will it be ere they learn righteousness?* The factious spirit which characterized the people in the wilderness amid all the righteous judgments and pleadings of God with His nation was not extirpated even by the lengthy sojourn there as the means adopted for its suppression. How true it still remains that—

"Though favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord."

But is this apparent helplessness in the presence of abounding wickedness to continue indefinitely? What saith the Scripture?—

"Lord, when Thy hand is lifted up they will not see: **but they shall** see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people. Yea, the fire of Thine enemies shall devour them" (Isa. 26:10-11).

Yet another attempt to confirm the Divine ordination of His servants, Moses and Aaron, was to be made. *The device was of a highly typical character, and was intended to serve for all generations until its typification should become apparent in the appearance of the antitypical man of His right hand* (Psa. 80:17)—"The son of man who Thou madest strong for Thyself." Moses, acting under Divine directions, gathered from the prince of each tribe an almond rod, and inscribed thereon the name of the tribe so represented. After which he was commanded to lay the rods before the ark in the Holy of Holies, that on the morrow it might be made Divinely manifest which of the tribes had been selected to perform the priestly functions. This being done—

"It came to pass that on the morrow Moses went into the Tabernacle of witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and bloomed blossoms, and yielded almonds.

"And Moses brought out all the rods from before the Lord unto all the

children of Israel; and they looked, and took every man his rod" (Num. 17:8-9).

Thus were the pretenders again confounded, and the claim to the priestly functions before Jehovah confirmed in a manner that it was impossible to gainsay. And the miraculously budded and fruit-bearing rod was directed to be laid up before the ark—

"To be kept for a token against the rebels; and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from Me, that they die not" (v. 10; see Heb. 9:4).

We have indicated the typical character of the quickened and fruit-bearing rod, which will be readily identified as representing the Divinely-begotten Son of God, chosen of Him to draw near unto Him, and proved to be such in being brought to life again after being put to death. The laying up of the Divinely-quickened rod in the Ark will be recognized as representing the ascension of Christ to the right hand of God, and the allegorical assurance that the purpose of God with Israel and the world will be infallibly accomplished. The whole significance of this transaction centers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, we have briefly noticed the Divine, exclusive choice of Aaron and his sons to the sacred office of the priesthood, and the miraculous vindication of that choice, and the jealousy with which it was guarded and sharply defined on the occasion of the revolt of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who sought to invade that holy position. The importance of the subject of priesthood warrants some further consideration of it, in its two-fold aspect of type and antitype.

The great lesson which it was designed to teach in *the existence of sin, and the alienation from God which it has entailed*. Without sin, there would have been no necessity for intermediation. The exemplification of this principle is clearly set before us in the case of our first parents who, before the entrance of sin, enjoyed the holy companionship of angels of God in a state of enchanting beauty and excellence amid felicitous surroundings.

But apparently this intercourse with their heavenly companions was not of long duration. It was abruptly broken off by reason of disobedience on the part of the newly-formed pair who, after the judgment of the righteous tribunal of Divine justice before which they were brought and heard, were driven from the hallowed precincts of the Paradise of God,

in which they had basked in the sunshine of Divine favor and holiness, and tasted of the sweetness of communion with the Eternal Creator, through His holy messengers.

Thus driven from the presence of God, they became strangers and sojourners in a land cursed of God by reason of their sin; and all nature was made to participate in the terrible judgment which had befallen them. Condemned to death after a life of labor, fatigue, pain, sorrow, and sickness, they became the prey of the ruthless monarch into whose hands they had been helplessly handed over, and whose property they became, referred to by Paul:

"I am carnal, sold under Sin."

—which he also says—

" . . . hath reigned unto death" (Rom. 7:15, 21).

Such is the expressive metaphor, or personification of the power from which none but the Eternal could deliver, and that only in harmony with the righteousness of the law which made "the wages of sin" death.

Such purposed deliverance was made known to them before their expulsion into exile, where the race has remained during the long night of intervening darkness and death, now shortly to be dispersed by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his beams. The comforting assurance of hope gleaming in the future was contained in the prophetic annunciation that—

"The seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head."

—which embodied the Divine purpose of deliverance through a second Adam, who, by his perfect obedience to the will of his Divine Father, and absolute sinlessness developed under the fiery trial to which he should be subjected, and bearing the sin-cursed nature of his progenitor, should suffer the Divine penalty of sin, and obtain complete victory over it by resurrection to life eternal, which the first Adam failed to attain.

And this not for himself only, but on behalf of all who should feel the helplessness of their position, and in faith and obedience humbly and gratefully comply with the terms upon which pardon and restoration to the Divine favor might be attained.

Such was the Divine grace purposed in the Edenic inauguration, by promise, of the plan of redemption. A typical law of faith and obedience was therefore instituted, pointing forward to the accomplishment of this gracious purpose, with promised present blessings upon compliance with

the Divine way thus established, and the hope of resurrection to unending life in the day of gladness and joy to which the race were invited.

But "the way of God" thus instituted, instead of being hailed with gladness, was corrupted by the setting in of a terrible apostasy in which nearly the whole of the multiplied race were involved in the course of a millennium of godlessness, despite the earnest pleadings of the few men of faith, such as Enoch, who prophesied of the coming of the Lord, to—

" . . . execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15).

So corrupt had the race become that—

"It repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at heart."

For God saw that—

"The wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (Gen. 6:6, 5, 3).

So the long-suffering of the Lord was prolonged for that period, during which Noah, a preacher of righteousness, while preparing an ark for his own salvation in faith of God's threatened judgment, according to Divine instruction warned them to—

"Flee from the wrath to come."

But every effort was fruitless, and the Lord brought upon the whole race His threatened flood of destruction which "swept them all away." Only Noah and his family survived; and with him the Lord renewed His Edenic Covenant in proof that His purpose in the creation of the earth should not fail through the wickedness which had provoked Him to utter destruction of a godless world.

In due time other generations in the lives of Shem, Ham, and Japheth arose, and peopled the Babylonian and other parts of the earth; and another apostacy manifested itself. But the purpose of God in His promised salvation of the race was now about to take a more definite shape; and for this purpose He laid hold of a man of strong faith and

unswerving obedience, and made known to him the reason for which He had chosen him, and the intended form that His gracious purpose should take, and covenanted with him to make of him "a *great nation*," and to give unto him and his seed the land into which He had brought him, for an everlasting possession; and that "*in him and in his Seed all families of the earth should be blessed*."

This is definite and clear, especially in the light of New Testament doctrine, by which we are informed that the "*Seed*" associated with Abraham in the promise was CHRIST; and that in the covenant made with Abraham, the Gospel—which is the "power of God unto salvation"—was preached unto him; and that this was the "*New Covenant*" which was ratified by the blood of Christ (Gal. 3:16-18; Rom. 15:8).

This Covenant was renewed and perpetuated in Abraham's son, Isaac, and in his grandson, Jacob; the 12 sons of the latter being the patriarchs of the 12-tribed nation which was developed and Divinely nurtured in Egypt until the days of Moses. By Moses God delivered His nation from the bondage in which they had been held for the Divinely-specified period, and brought them into the wilderness on their way to the promised inheritance.

Lord of the Sabbath

BY BROTHER JOHN THOMAS

On the sabbath it was "lawful to do good," but this good was not arbitrary. Neither the priests nor the people were the judges of the good or evil, but the Law only which defined it—

"On the sabbath days the priests in the Temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless" (Matt. 12:5).

—for the Law enjoined them to offer—

". . . on the sabbath two lambs of the first year" (Num. 28:9).

This was a profanation of the seventh-day law, which prohibited "any work" from being done; and had not God commanded it, they would have been "guilty of death." *It was upon this ground that Jesus was "guiltless"*; for he did the work of God on that day in healing the sick *as God had commanded him*.

"The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: therefore (said Jesus) the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

It was a wise and beneficent institution. It prevented the Israelites from wearing out themselves and their dependents by incessant toil, and revived in them a weekly remembrance of the Law and promises of God. It was, however, only a "*shadow of things to come*" (Col. 2:17), the *substance* of which is found in the things which pertain to the Anointed One of God. It was a part of the "rudiments of the world" inscribed on the—

"Handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us" (Col. 2:14).

—and which the Lord Jesus—

".. took out of the way, nailing it to his cross."

When he lay entombed he "rested from his labors," abiding in his place all the seventh day. Having ended his work, he arose on the eighth day "and was refreshed." The shadowy sabbath disappeared before the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, who, having become the accursed of the Law, delivered his brethren from its sentence upon all.

The ordinances of the Law of Moses are styled by Paul the "rudiments" or "elements of the world," which, in Galatians, he also terms "weak and beggarly elements" whereunto they "desired again to be in bondage" (Gal. 4:9). They evinced this desire by observing "days, and months, and times, and years" (v. 10), not being satisfied with the things of Christ, but seeking to combine the Mosaic institutions with the Gospel.

This was Judaizing, and the first step to that awful apostacy by which the world has been cursed for so many ages. When the Mosaic constitution, as the "*representation* of the knowledge and the truth," had "waxed old" (by the manifestation of the *substance* to a sufficient extent to nullify it), it "vanished away" by being "cast down to the ground" by the Roman power and with it the law of the seventh day (Heb. 8:13; Dan. 8:11-12).

Even before its abolition, Paul expressed fear of the Galatians:

".. lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain,"

—seeing that they were becoming zealous of the ordinances of the Law (Gal. 4:11). They seemed not to understand that the Mosaic economy was only a temporary constitution (Gal. 3:19):

".. added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come."

—that when he came (v. 13), he—

" . . redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us,"

—and that therefore they had nothing to fear, nor to hope for, from keeping or transgressing its commands. They had got it into their heads that "except they were circumcised" and kept the Law of Moses (as well as believed and obeyed the Gospel of the Kingdom) they "could not be saved" (Acts 13:1, 5).

Therefore they "desired to be under the Law," and began to busy themselves about "keeping the sabbath," and doing other works which Moses had enjoined upon Israel. Paul was very much distressed at this and describes himself as "travailing in birth again until Christ be formed in them" (Gal. 4:19).

They had been delivered from the "yoke of bondage" by putting on Christ; but by seeking to renew their connection with the Law they were selling their birthright for a mess of pottage.

"I say unto you (saith Paul), that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole Law.

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. 5:2).

A *partial* observance of the Law can do no one any good. If he kept the sabbath in the most approved manner, but neglected the sacrifices, or ate swine's flesh, he was as accursed as a thief or a robber; for to every one under the Law it saith (Gal. 3:10):

"Cursed is every one that continueth not in ALL THINGS which are written in the book of the Law to do them."

Hence even the sinless Jesus was cursed by it, because he was crucified, for it is written (Gal. 3:13)—

"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

What hope then is there for Jew or Gentile of escaping the curse of the Law, seeing that from the very nature of things connected with the present state of Jerusalem, it is impossible to observe it, save in the few particulars of "meat and drink, or in respect of the sabbath" *partially, etc?*

The observance of the seventh day was regulated by the Mosaic Law, and the penalties due to its "desecration" or "profanation" are pronounced by it alone. But it is clear that the Law being taken out of the way or abolished by Jesus, who nailed it to his cross (Col. 2:14), there remain no more retributions for the non-observance of its appointments; and therefore there is no transgression in working or in speaking one's own words on the seventh day.

On the first day of the creation-week God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. So on the first day of the week "THE TRUE LIGHT" came forth from the darkness of the tomb "like dew from the womb of the morning."

It is a day to be much remembered of his people, because it assures them of their justification "in him," of their own resurrection to life, and of the certainty of his "judging the world in righteousness as Jehovah's king, when they shall also reign with him as kings and priests to God (Rom. 4:25; 8:11; I Cor. 15:14, 20; Acts 17:31; Rev. 5:9-10).

This day is also notable on account of the special interviews which occurred between Jesus and his disciples after his resurrection (John 20:19, 26). He ascended to heaven on this day, even the forty-third from his crucifixion. And seven days after, that is the fiftieth, being "the day of Pentecost," the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the apostles, and the Gospel of the Kingdom preached for the first time *in his Name*.

Power being in the hands of their enemies, the Christians of the Hebrew nation still continued to observe the seventh day according to the custom. Hence, we find the apostles frequenting the synagogues on the sabbath days and reasoning with the people out of the Scriptures.

To have done otherwise would have been to create an unnecessary prejudice, and to let slip one of the best opportunities of introducing the Gospel to the attention of the Jewish public. They did not forsake the synagogues until they were expelled. While they frequented *these*, however, on the *seventh* day, they assembled themselves together with the disciples whose assemblies constituted the churches of the saints and of God. They ordained elders over these societies, and taught them to—

"Observe all things whatsoever Jesus had commanded them" (Matt. 28:20).

In his letter to the Hebrew Christians, Paul exhorts them to—

". . . not forsake the assembling of yourselves together" (10:25). Such an exhortation as this implies a *stated time* and place of assembly. On what day, then, did the churches of the saints meet to exhort one another so as to provoke to love and good works? Certainly not on the *seventh* day, for then the apostles were in the synagogues. What day then more appropriate than the *first* of the week?

Now it cannot be affirmed that the saints were commanded to meet on this day, because there is no testimony to that effect in the New Testament. But it is beyond dispute that they *did* assemble themselves together on the first day of the week, and the most reasonable inference is that they did so *in obedience to the instruction of the apostles*, from whose teaching they derived all their faith and practice which constituted them the disciples of Christ.

To keep the first day of the week to the Lord is possible only to the saints. There is no law (except the emperor Constantine's) that commands *sinner*s to keep *holy* the first, or eight, day, or "Sunday," as the Gentiles term it. For a sinner to keep this day unto the Lord he must become one of the Lord's people. He must believe the Gospel of the Kingdom and Name of Christ, and become obedient to it, before any religious service he can offer will be accepted.

He must come under law to Christ by *putting on Christ*. Having become a Christian, if he would keep the day to the Lord, he must assemble with a congregation of New Testament saints and assist in edifying and provoking them to love and good works, in showing forth the death of Jesus, in giving thanks to the Father, in celebrating the resurrection of Christ, and in praising and blessing God.

Under the Gospel, or "Law of Liberty," he is subject to no "yoke of bondage" concerning a sabbath day. It is his *delight*, when an opportunity presents, to celebrate in this way the day of the resurrection. He requires no penal statutes to compel him to a formal and disagreeable self-denial or "duty"; for it is his meat and drink to do the will of his Father Who is in heaven.

The Law of Moses was delivered to the *Israelites* and not to the Gentiles, who were therefore "without the Law"—

"What things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law" (Rom. 3:19).

Consequently the nations were not amenable to it; and though they obtained not the blessings of Mt. Gerizim (unless they became faithful Jews by adoption), neither were they obnoxious to the curses of Mount Ebal (Deur. 27:9-26). The faithless Jews and Gentiles are equally aliens to the precepts of Christ and his apostles. What these prescribe is enjoined upon the disciples of Jesus. *They only are "under law to Christ."*

"What have I (says Paul) to do to judge them that are without? God judgeth them" (I Cor. 5:12-13).

He has caused the Gospel of the Kingdom to be preached to sinners "for the obedience of faith." When they are judged, it will be for "not obeying the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thes. 1:7-10), and not because they do not "go to church," or do not keep a sabbath instituted by a semi-pagan emperor.

The sabbath God requires sinful men to observe is to CEASE FROM THE WORKS OF THE FLESH as completely as He rested from the work of creation on the seventh day, that they may enter into the millennial rest that remaineth for the people of God (Heb. 4:9-11).

Men frequently err in their speculations from inattention to the marked distinction which subsists in the Scriptures between those classes of mankind termed "saints" and "sinners." They confound what is said to, or concerning, the one, with what is said in relation to the other. Relatively to the institutions of God they are as near or afar off as are "citizens" and "foreigners" to the laws and constitution of the United States.

"What the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law."

This is a principle laid down by Paul concerning the Law of Moses which is equally true of the codes of all nations. "Citizens" are the saints, or "separated ones," of the particular code by which they are insulated from all other people; while "foreigners" or "aliens" from their commonwealth are sinners in relation to it; for they live in other countries in total disregard of its institutions, and doing contrary to its laws, and yet are blameless; so that if they were to visit the country of that commonwealth, *they would not be punished for their former course*, because they were not under law to it. Let them, however, while sojourning there, continue in their native customs, and they would become guilty, and worthy of the punishment made and provided for such offenders.

As I have shown, the observance of the seventh day was obligatory only upon the Israelites so long as the Mosaic code was in force, being "a sign" between God and them. The sabbaths belong to the land and people of Israel and can be only kept according to the Law while they reside in the country. This will appear from the fact that the Law requires that "two lambs of the first year without spot" should be offered with other things "as the burnt-offering of every sabbath;" an offering which, like all the offerings, must be offered *in a Temple in Jerusalem* where the Lord has placed His Name, and "not in the dwelling-places of Jacob." Israel must therefore be restored to their own country before even *they* can keep the sabbath. Then, when—

"the throne is established in mercy, and he (the Lord Jesus) shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness" (Isa. 16:5)

—then, I say—

"They shall hallow My sabbath" (Eze. 44:24).

But these sabbaths will no longer be celebrated on the seventh day. They will be changed from the seventh to the *eighth*, or *first* day of the week (which are the same).

The "dispensation of the fulness of times," popularly styled the "Millennium," will be the antitype, or *substance*, of the Mosaic Feast of Tabernacles which was a "*shadow* of things to come." In this type, or pattern, Israel were to rejoice before the Lord for seven days, beginning on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when they had gathered the fruit of the land. In relation to the *first* day of the seven, the law says (Lev. 23:35)—

"It shall be a holy convocation: **ye shall do not servile work therein.**"

This was what we call Sunday. The statute then continues—

"On the **eighth** day (also Sunday) shall be an holy convocation unto you, and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly, and ye shall do no servile work therein."

Again (verse 39)—

"On the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the 8th day shall be a sabbath."

Thus, in this "pattern of things in the heavens," the first and eighth days are constituted holy days in which no work was to be done. It also

represents the palm-bearing or victorious ingathering of the 12 tribes of Israel from their present dispersion to the land of their fathers, when—

"The Lord shall set His hand again **the second time** to recover the remnant of His people" (Isa. 11:11).

Three times in four verses does Zechariah style the yearly going up of the Gentiles to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts there, the *keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles*—an event which is consequent upon the destruction of Nebuchadnezzar's image and the re-establishment of the kingdom and throne of David (see Zech. 14).

This national confluence of the Gentiles to Jerusalem is characteristic of Messiah's times, and of the true or real festival of Tabernacles, when he will—

"confess to God among the Gentiles"

and sing unto His Name, and

"they shall rejoice with His people (Israel)"—Rom. 15:9-10.

Referring to this time the Lord says (Eze. 43:7-9)—

"The place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where **I WILL DWELL in the midst of the children of Israel FOR EVER.**

"And My holy Name shall the children of Israel NO MORE defile, neither they, nor their kings.

"They have even defiled My holy Name by their abominations that they have committed: wherefore **I** have consumed in Mine anger.

"Now let them put away their whoredom and the carcasses of their kings far from Me, and **I will dwell in the midst of them for ever.**"

This is clearly a prophecy of what shall be hereafter, because the house of Israel still continues to defile God's holy Name by their abominations; but when this comes to pass, they shall defile it "*no more.*"

After the declaration of these things, Ezekiel is commanded to show them the construction of the Temple which is destined to be the "*House of Prayer for all nations,*" with the ordinances, forms and laws thereof. The Lord God then declares (v. 18)—

"The ordinances of the altar in **the day when they shall make it.**"
—and when the Levites of the seed of Zadok shall approach unto Him.

The "cleansing of the altar" and the consecration of the priests is then effected by the offerings of *seven days*—

"And when these days are expired, it shall be that upon the eighth day AND SO FORWARD, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings, and I will accept you (O Israel), saith the Lord" (v. 27).

Thus, the day of the Lord's resurrection from his seventh-day incarceration in the tomb becomes the sabbath of the future age which shall be hallowed by the priests of Israel, and be observed by all nations as a day of holy convocation in which they shall rejoice, and do no manner of servile work at all.

Constantine, though not a Christian himself, paid homage to the truth so far as to compel the world to respect the day on which Christ Jesus arose from the dead. Hence, in 328, he ordained that the day should be kept religiously, which a judaizing clergy construed into a sabbatical observance according to the Mosaic law concerning the seventh day.

Christ and his apostles did not promulgate a civil and ecclesiastical code for the nations, when they preached the Gospel of the Kingdom. Their object was not to give the nations laws and constitutions, but to separate a peculiar people *from the nations* who should afterwards rule them justly and in fear of the Lord, when the dispensation of the fulness of times should be introduced (Acts 15:14; 1 Cor. 6:2; 2 Sam. 23:3-4; Tit. 2:11).

To be able to do this, these "peculiar" were required to be "*holy, unblamable and unreprouvable before God*" (Col. 1:22-23; 1 Thess. 2:19, 3:13). To this end instructions were delivered to them, that under the divine tuition they might be—

". . . renewed in the spirit of their minds; and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:23-24).

Luke's Census

“And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria)”—Luke 2:1-2.

Those who deny the infallibility of the Scriptures often point to Luke's account of a census by Cyrenius (whose Latin name was Quirinius) in the days of Augustus. They argue that this census could only have taken place in 6 AD, when Quirinius had been sent to Syria by Augustus to dissolve the affairs of Herod Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, who had fallen out of favor with Augustus. While we would agree with the critics that Jesus could not have been born in 6 AD due to many historical and Scriptural facts, this doesn't discount Luke's testimony at all.

Critics of the Bible often set an impossible date for a Scriptural event, look for that event at the wrong date, and then conclude it never happened. Well, it didn't happen at that time, but that doesn't mean it didn't happen. If we looked for evidence of World War II in say, 1850, we wouldn't find any. Should we then conclude that World War II never happened? This is what the world's experts do with so many Scripturally recorded events. Luke's census clearly occurred and is historically recorded in 8 BC. And since these censuses took up to three years to complete, it is very easy to see that Luke was a much better historian than his modern critics.

The principal proof that there was a census ordered by Augustus Caesar as recorded by Luke comes from Augustus himself in his own official document, “Res Gestae Divi Augusti” (The Deeds of Divine Augustus). In it he explicitly mentions conducting censuses, in 28 BC, 8 BC, and 6 AD. His 8 BC census recorded that there were 4,233,000 citizens in his empire.

Tertullian, an early Christian writer, also references an "enrollment" (census) that was made by Sentius Saturninus, who was governor of Syria around 9-7 BC. While this doesn't directly mention Augustus ordering the census in 8 BC, it provides independent evidence of a census having taken place at a time that Augustus claimed it did.

Archaeological and epigraphic evidence from Turkey, particularly the Monumentum Ancyranum in Ankara (which is a complete copy of Augustus' Res Gestae), provides significant support for the existence of

Augustus' censuses, as described in his *Res Gestae*. This evidence helps corroborate Augustus' own statements and confirms the scale of Roman administrative practices in the region.

So it is clear from history that Augustus ordered and conducted a census in 8 BC, which would be the exact time required by Luke for the census to have been conducted. But critics of the Bible are quick to point out that Cyrenius (Latin: Quirinius) was not the governor of Syria in 8 BC but rather had been the governor (legate) of Syria in 6 AD, at another census ordered by Augustus and recorded by Josephus. Of course 6 AD is a date much too late for the birth of Christ, and the true historical accounts show that Herod the Great was dead by 4 BC and therefore couldn't have carried out the deeds recorded of him in Matthew, such as the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem. Based on this, critics argue that Luke was wrong with his dates.

Now the man Quirinius is quite well known in ancient history. He appears in Augustus' writings, having been made proconsular in 12 BC, a special title granted to only two men per year. These specially appointed men are the ones most generally called upon for special duties, such as governing, or carrying out wars. The local governors were often chosen for their organizational skills, not their military ones, so other proconsuls were often sent to settle other matters in a given district, such as carrying out wars. It was not at all uncommon for Caesars to appoint a second leader, called a "Duumvir," to a region which was under stress. For a specific task, a second commander was used such as when Vespasian was sent to Jerusalem by Nero to settle the Jewish rebellion, though Cestius Gaius was legate, or governor at that time. In the rebellion of Israel in 70 AD, the great military leader Vespasian, was sent by Nero to put down the rebellion in Jerusalem, as the governor Cestius Gaius was considered incapable of doing so.

In this regard, one of the other historically recorded things concerning Quirinius, was that he was sent to Syria some time after his appointment as proconsular to deal with an especially fierce and troublesome tribe on the borders of Syria called the Homonadenses. It is historically recorded that Quirinius fought them and was ultimately victorious. The time frame for this, however is uncertain, the dates being some time between 12 and 3 BC. This is what potentially places him in Syria at the time of the 8 BC census.

It is interesting that Luke uses the term “hegemoneuo” for Quirinius’ role in Syria, which means “to act as a ruler,” rather than another form of the word hegemon which more plainly means ruler, as applied to Pilate.

Quirinius’ next note in history was when in 6 AD, he became the actual governor of Syria. He was specifically sent by Augustus to settle the affairs of Herod Archelaus, who had fallen out of favor with Herod and was finally banished in 10 AD. This is the governorship which enemies of the infallibility of the Scriptures, insist is what Luke was referring to because with such a date it is impossible to harmonize the Scriptures.

Quirinius’ final note in history had to do with divorcing his popular and influential wife, an event which caused him to lose favor among the Romans. This is the sum total of what is certainly known about Quirinius. So it can’t be said with certainty from man’s history that Quirinius was or was not in Syria at the time Augustus ordered the 8 BC census. But it can be said with certainty that Luke places him there, and based upon the facts of the case, there is no historical reason to doubt him.

There is one more interesting piece of archeology which is often referenced to Quirinus, and that is a damaged grave stone. The stone is fragmented, and the name of the buried person is gone. But from what is there, it can be said that it belonged to a proconsular, one appointed under Augustus (and remember there were only two appointed each year.) The person was a duumvir, meaning he served as a governor alongside another governor. And this particular person served two terms as legate of Syria. The stone claims that this particular legate had two victory march celebrations, showing he was a military man, not merely an administrator. There is a written record of one victory celebration granted to Quirinius for his victory over the Homonadenses, and there could easily have been another one, as he was a trusted general who served the Roman Legions many years. And while the stone cannot be said for certain to have belonged to Quirinius, it certainly can be said that it couldn’t have belonged to any of the known Syrian legates, except Quirinius.

Next, we come to the date Matthew gives us for the birth of Christ. We covered this in a recent Berean, that the death of Herod the Great (in spite of some real stretches of the imagination by modern Christian chronologists) had to have been in the spring of 4 BC. Prior to his death, Herod the Great went back two years to order the slaying of all infants in Bethlehem, two years old and younger. This date, Matthew tells us, was according to Herod “diligently enquiring” about the appearance of the star

from the Magi (Matt. 2:16). So the Magi had to have shown up at least by the spring of 6 BC. And while we don't know exactly when Herod made this proclamation, it most likely would have been a few months before his death, taking us back to the winter of 7 BC, exactly the time when Augustus' census would have been carried out.

And we would note that the Magi were not there at the birth of Christ, but sometime later. Jesus was born in a manger (Luke 2:7), but when the Magi found him, he was in a house (Matt. 2:11).

The Magi testified that they had seen "his star in the east" speaking of the king of Israel. It is clear from ancient tablets now in the British Museum, that astrologers in Sippar Mesopotamia, were following a specific conjunction of planets in 7 BC with great interest. There was a conjunction (a time when the planets line up and appear joined together as if one bright star) of the planets Jupiter and Saturn (which symbolized kingship to the astrologers) that occurred three times in that year. Notably, the words of the Magi could be translated that they had seen his star in the sun's rising. The first conjunction occurred in the spring of 7 BC, in the early morning sky, or in the sun's rising. The second conjunction occurred on Oct. 3, which, according to Johannes Kepler, the man for whom the motion of the planets is named, and the man who first wrote of this "star" in the late 1500s, was the Jewish Day of Atonement (tenth day of the seventh lunar month). And the final conjunction occurred on the 4th of December, low in the southern sky. These conjunctions all occurred in the constellation Pisces, which symbolized to the astrologers, the Mediterranean. If the Magi were following this conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, as they left Jerusalem the conjunction of the planets would have been directly in front of them, low in the southern sky, as they traveled south to Bethlehem.

Israel had two great Holy Days. The Passover, on which Jesus died, and the Day of Atonement. Is it not likely that the day of Atonement was the day he was born? But whether or not any of that is right, what is clear is that Augustus ordered a census on 8 BC. Jesus was born at least by spring, 6 BC. And Quirinius (Cyrenius in Greek) was employed as a leader in Syria between 12 BC and 3 BC.

We can conclude, then, that Luke's historical account is the only account consistent with all the known facts of the matter and is in fact the infallible word of God.

ARTICLE FIVE OF OUR “STATEMENT OF FAITH” Considered at Jersey City

Clause 5. That Adam broke this law, and was adjudged unworthy of immortality, and sentenced to return to the ground from whence he was taken--a sentence which defiled and became a physical law of his being, and was transmitted to all his posterity (Gen. 3:15-19, 22-23; 2 Cor. 1:9; Rom. 7:24; 2 Cor. 5:2-4; Rom. 7:18-23; Gal. 5:16-17; Rom. 6:12; 7:21; John 3:6; Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:22; Psa. 51:5; Job 14:4).

[Bro. Harry Sommerville attended the Jersey City Convention in 1952, sitting in the front row, and when possible, raising his hand to introduce the 10-Point statement as a basis for reunion with the Central Assemblies. No chairman would call on him. And this is the result of that conference, as reported by him.—JP]

By bro. H. A. Sommerville

This fifth article or proposition of our Statement of Faith, like those preceding and those following it, is supported by numerous passages of Scripture, among which are:

Rom. 7:24 "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (KJV Marg.)

1 Cor. 15:22 "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

Many others are given which may be seen to corroborate and firmly establish the proposition.

The fifth proposition, Clause Five of our Statement of Faith, is one to which many from the Central Assemblies object, as we can demonstrate by quoting from the speech on "The Atonement" given at the Jersey City Conference (1952) by their leading defender of Central Assemblies, John Carter. Quoting the Fifth Clause he comments:

"It may be that a little fault could be found with the phrasing of this [Clause Five—JP] from a grammatical point of view. The defilement was the operation of God's MORAL law in

life, and it's a law that rules true today as we've tried to illustrate . . ."

"We wish to note the attempt to teach the PHYSICAL change was not caused by the sentence, but by remorse and shame and the operation of a MORAL law, thus making the defilement part of the transgression, rather than the punishment thereof."

The statement that "The sentence defiled" is what some in the Central Assemblies do not really believe. The apparently ungrammatical conclusion that the sentence was to become a law of Adam's being, may be easily cleared up by asking: "What was the sentence?" The answer being:

"Dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return."

Then did not this become the physical law of Adam's being? We answer emphatically, YES. But alas there is an attempt made to deny this by reasoning that would conclude that Adam, not being immortal, was already on the road to death apart from the sentence.

To illustrate this we remember a Central fellow from the Boston Meeting declaring that—

"The 5th article as it reads would make God the one who defiled Adam's nature."

—not realizing that **this is exactly what the statement really is intended to teach.** The sentence was not the transgression but was the Divine decree pronounced in **punishment** of the transgression.

A careful study of John Carter's speech before referred to, reveals his belief that the change came by the gradual operation of a moral reaction of the mind causing moral laxity and defilement until the whole being became thus defiled. This is illustrated by quoting further from the same speech—

"We do something and we think about it. We feel a sense of shame. We feel guilt. We think, 'We mustn't do it again.' But temptation arises again, and we yield a second time. And unless we are very careful we shall find that we're not quite so serious in condemning ourselves the second time as we were the first time. And if we have done the thing four or five times we shall find ourselves, to use the modern term, 'rationalizing' the process and excusing it.

"Now Paul says 'sin deceives.' He speaks of the 'deceitfulness of sin.' He can even express the fact in a figure when he says, 'Satan is transformed into an angel of light.' And so we are aware that as we do wrong there are these changes in us by which our wrong becomes a part of ourselves."

In another part of this speech he follows the reasoning of a writer on "Psychology" in an attempt to prove the moral reaction produced in the brain is the cause of the change. All this to expound the theory that the sentence of the Angel of God did not defile Adam necessarily, for the defilement would automatically result from the continuation of sinful acts; each in turn further weakening the powers of resistance. Quoting again briefly—

"A drunkard says 'I won't count this one.' He may not, says James,² and a merciful Heaven may not, but the molecules in his brain are counting it, and next time temptation comes, they will assert themselves. It's a law of life and that is what it means."

Keeping in mind the statements of certain from the Central Assemblies declare that they accept the 5th and 12th clauses of the statement only when "defined and explained by John Carter," we begin to understand just what they mean and also why the phraseology must be watered down in order to be palatable.

²"For the benefit of those of us who are unfamiliar with worldly literature, and who may be puzzled by this quotation, perhaps it should be mentioned that John Carter is apparently quoting from the modern worldly psychologist named James, not the apostle James."

Hints for Bible Markers

Psalm 24:3

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?”

As was mentioned last month, there is much exhortational material in this verse. Isaiah brings out God's promise to those who will be able to “*ascend into the hill of the LORD*” with these words, “*And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.*” (Isaiah 25:6). What are the characteristics of those who will enjoy “*a feast of fat things*?” Those who walked in fear of displeasing their Heavenly Father during their probation on this Earth. Walking in righteousness to the best of their ability during the days of their flesh. Not backbiting. Those who are in control of their tongue. Who do no evil to their neighbor. Nor do they criticize their neighbor. They honor them that fear the Lord; while condemning vile persons. Who keep their word even to their own hurt. They have spoken truth to all, including in their heart to themselves. Putting away all evil imaginations. They will possess clean hands and a pure heart. Those who have loved “the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself” (Luke 10:27).

Brother Sully in his book *The Temple of Ezekiel's Prophecy* (Publication date 1984) makes some interesting observations about this verse. The first thing he brings out is: “The leading indications of a range of buildings forming a circular space in the center of the Temple commence with the following testimony:

“This is the law of the house: upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof *round about* shall be most holy. Behold, *this is the law of the house* (Ezekiel Chapter 43:12).”

The emphatic closing sentence of this verse is of deep importance. “Behold! this is the law of the house” is equivalent to, *Behold! this is the central or striking feature of the house in relation to which all others are subordinate.* This aspect of the subject will become more and more apparent as we consider all details of the Temple of universal praise and worship. Thus we see that the Inner Temple is not a building upon the top of a hill, but that the Most Holy is a *Hill* in the inner court.

Speaking prospectively of “the righteous generation that seek the God of Israel” the Psalmist said:

“Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?” (Psalm 24:3).

This parallelism shows that the *Holy Place* of God is also the *Hill* of the Lord” (Page 40).

He also brings out on page 62 another interesting idea: “Again, speaking of the administrative functions of the higher order of priests in the book of Psalms, we read:

“Who shall *ascend* into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in His holy place?” (Psalm 24:3).

Now, this parallelism not only indicates that the holy place is a hill, and that one standing anywhere upon it stands in the holy place, but the figure upon which the parallelism is founded requires a literal *ascent*. Thus also when the requirements of the case are considered—the necessity for exhibiting a full view of the process of offering—one may conclude that the altar will be considerably elevated. The position of the altar is shown at D. on Plates II and III. and forms a central feature in the frontispiece.”

We must also point out that our brother Thomas in his exposition of the Apocalypse, which everyone should make a habit of reading on a regular basis, brings out that this ascending “*into the hill of the LORD*” is the change of the righteous into spirit nature. He wrote (taken from the first edition written in 1869, Vol. 3, pages 384 – 385) “The judgment of the household of Christ intervenes between the resurrection, and the ascending of Yahweh’s Hill. This is evident from Psa. 24; where, in answer to the question, “Who shall go up into the Mountain of Yahweh? And who shall ‘rise into’ the place of his holiness?”—it says, “The innocent of hands and the pure of heart; who hath not lifted up his soul to vanity and hath not sworn to deceit”. This implies previous scrutiny. All saints who rise, but whose moral qualities, on examination, are not found in accordance with the above, shall not “rise into the place of His holiness”—“yahkum binkom kodsho;” which is Mount Zion. They shall not be permitted to stand there as constituents of the 144,000, who are the pure of heart, and in whose mouth no guile “had been found.” We point this variance out, that the reader might draw his own conclusions as to which interpretation is correct or accept that this has the dual application and both ideas are fitting.

Continued next month should the Lord will

bro. Beryl Snyder