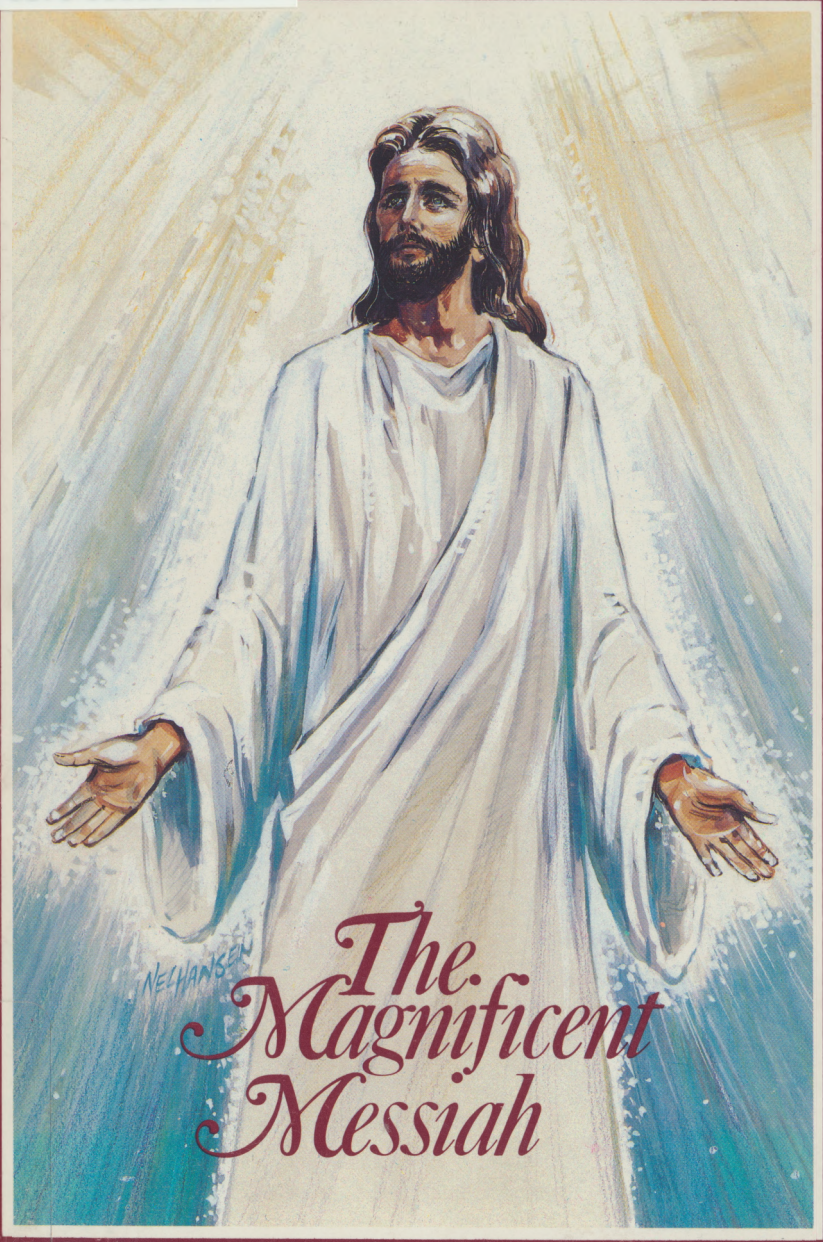


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*The
Magnificent
Messiah*

Atwood Foster

Forward by C.M. Ward

Behold the Man
Behold my servant
Behold the Lamb
Behold the Lion

Behold the Man whose name is the BRANCH...Zachariah 6:12. The prophets saw the coming Messiah as a man like one of us. He would be the son of David the King, a branch from the stump of Jesse. Isaiah 11:1.

Behold, my servant, whom I uphold . . . Isaiah 42:1. He would be the servant of Jehovah, anointed with the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit, Peter declared, "Thou art the Messiah, The Son of the Living God." Matthew 16:16.

Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world . . . John 1:29. He came as man's paschal lamb in fulfillment of all the types and patterns of lambs slain through the ages. Cf. I Corinthians 5:7. " (He) is brought as a lamb to the slaughter . . ." Isaiah 53: 7

Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah . . . Revelation 5:5. He was fully a man like one of us, and He went to the cross as a lamb to the slaughter. "Wherefore God also, hath highly exalted him . . ." Philippians 2:9.



Portland, Oregon

Ecclesiastical Press

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The magnificent Messiah

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MAGNIFICENT MESSIAH
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by the same Author:
The Gospel in the Tabernacle
This is That Which Was Spoken by the Prophet

THE MAGNIFICENT MESSIAH

J4062



Atwood Foster



4525 S.E. 63rd Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97206

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The Gospel in the Tabernacle
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The Messiah is the central theme
of the Holy Scriptures
both of the New Testament
and of the Old Testament

To my lifelong companion, Dorothy, by whose constant encouragement and support I have received inspiration and strength in my work, is this book affectionately dedicated.

The Messiah is the central theme
of the Holy Scriptures,
both of the New Testament
and of the Old Testament.



The Head of Christ
by Rembrandt (1606-1669)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
The Mr. and Mrs. Isaac D. Fletcher Collection
Bequest of Isaac D. Fletcher, 1917

THE MAGNIFICENT MESSIAH

Table of Contents

Forward	ix
Preface	xi

4000 Before Christ

SECTION I The Bible Revelation of God

1. The Goal of Life	3
2. A Personal Revelation of God	14
3. The Adorable Godhead	26
4. Names of Deity	38

2000 Before Christ

SECTION II Abraham, the Friend of God

5. God's Irrevocable and Unalterable Covenant	59
6. The Covenant Fulfilled in the Messiah	74
7. Those Beautiful Allegories	85

1500 Before Christ

SECTION III The Kingdom of Jehovah

8. The First Passover	96
9. The Kingdom Established	110
10. The First Pentecost	122
11. The Appalling Tragedy of Kadesh-Barnea	136
12. Their Cup of Iniquity Was Running Over	147
13. The Promised Land	162

1000 Before Christ

14. Saul Ascends the Throne of Jehovah	174
15. David's Son . . . His Everlasting Kingdom	184
16. What the Prophets Saw	195

Anno Domini 0

SECTION IV The Messiah

17. The Messiah Is Born	216
18. The Ministry of the Messiah	226
19. The Messiah Is Crucified	240
20. The Messiah Is Buried	252
21. The Messiah's Resurrection	263
22. The Messiah's Resurrection Gift	276
23. Maranatha! Our Lord Cometh	291
24. This Mystery	301
25. Israel's Sacred Calendar	318

FORWARD

I am pleased that this work has been produced. It reduces to dignified simplicity and miraculous clarity the foundation lessons of our experience and message.

I have known and loved the author for a generation. In the midst of many business ministries for the church he has sought vigor, comfort and guidance from the Word. And the more he has read and studied the more plain has become the purpose and schedule of God toward mankind. What he has learned in "following on to know the Lord" has filtered and sifted until this moment has arrived. The author is ready to share his experience in the Scriptures with others. I am happy for it.

These pages bring essentials to the surface. They will serve particularly well young lives and new converts who need to "root and build" and produce a witness that proceeds from character. One does not need a lexicon to understand these lessons. They are as self-evident as a child of God, moving daily in the Word of God, can make them. This is the genius of the author.

Too many times the Pentateuch portion of the Bible has been neglected by Gentiles. We suffer as do our Jewish friends who neglect the New Testament. God taught fundamentals to Israel through historical experiences that were carefully documented. Our Jewish friends study them intently. Adherence has contributed greatly to the preservation of that culture and race. This book delightfully brings many such lessons into perspective.

The book combines both the possibility of a study-book and a devotion-book. Therefore it has value for multiple purposes.

This is an important addition to our charismatic literature. It comes at a strategic time in revival and in-gathering. **The authority is in the Word.** And this volume exalts the Word and through the written Word the Living Word.

C. M. Ward

PREFACE

There is nothing in all of life so pregnant with pure joy as the Christian faith, nothing so satisfying as an intimate walk with Christ in the Spirit. Life knows no peace nor rest for the human heart comparable to that found through faith and trust in the living Messiah.¹

In Christ there is assurance that carries men far beyond the deepest abyss of sorrow and pain. By His Spirit men experience "...love, joy, peace..."² These priceless fruits are found deep in the emotional lives of men who walk with their God.

We must hasten to admit that there are many unhappy Christians, but the problem is not with the gospel. However, the situation does emphasize the need for strong Christian teaching and leadership. The gospel "...is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth..."³ Any man (or woman) who will embrace the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ wholeheartedly, study the Scriptures earnestly, and worship God in spirit and in truth, will certainly build a strong Christian faith and a life of real joy. A man filled with faith and with the Holy Spirit is a victorious individual. His life-experience is gratifying and fulfilling. This is what God desired for men.

Before the foundations of the world were laid, the Creator projected man's salvation.⁴ His magnificent plan was designed to develop men who would reflect His character.⁵ Man's fall, suffering, and redemption were essential to this purpose.

God created man to be like Himself:⁶ noble, loyal, great, and true. He purposed that men of faith should grow in the likeness of His divine Son and that they should become as kings and priests, reflecting the spirit of the Messiah whom they worship.⁷

We must always keep in mind that our God does not and will not change. He is the same yesterday and today and forever. The God of the Scriptures is the everlasting Jehovah, the eternal Elohim Adonai. Throughout the boundless ages of the past, present, and future, He is always the same.⁸ Only His revelation to man has

been progressive from Adam to the present day. As we study the Scriptures we thrill at the ever-developing revelation of Himself to us, His creation.⁹

The fathomless plan for man has never been altered since it was conceived in the heart of the Creator aeons ago. In the sacred Scriptures we see that plan set forth and unfolded before us. This divine revelation has been given not in a day, nor in a month, nor in a year. Rather, it has been the theme of the ages. We do not even yet grasp it in its fullness. But "...we see through a glass, darkly;..."¹⁰ only a fringe of the wisdom and revelation of His divine grace and goodness.

Through the centuries God's great plan for man has been revealed to the prophets by His Spirit.¹¹ The promise that He would send the Messiah was recorded first as given to Adam and Eve. Then to Abraham the promise was more clearly outlined. God promised the patriarch a Son through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.¹²

To Moses the promise was indelibly outlined in the redemption from Egypt and in the subsequent development of the nation of Israel. Abraham's children lived through nearly four centuries of Egyptian slavery. From this furnace of affliction Jehovah redeemed them by a paschal lamb.¹³ Then He gave them His beautiful Covenant at Sinai.¹⁴ This whole story of Israel's redemption from Egypt and the giving of Jehovah's Covenant law was designed as a pattern and type of the ministry of the promised Messiah. Like Moses, the Messiah would redeem God's people from the slavery of sin, and fifty days later, He would give them His marvelous New Covenant.¹⁵

The nation of Israel was a theocracy. Jehovah was their King. But wonder of wonders, the time came when the infinite Jehovah was made to step aside and a mere man was placed upon the lofty throne of Israel.¹⁶ This, too, was in prophetic anticipation of the coming and rejection of the Messiah, who was Abraham's Son and David's Son and God's Son.¹⁷ The Messiah would one day come, "...and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."¹⁸

Only God could have conceived such an amazing plan for the

coming of a Messiah. The prophets described Him as human and yet divine. They called Him David's Son and God's Son. He would occupy David's throne which was Jehovah's throne. What an exciting picture is drawn by the prophets of that magnificent Messiah that was to come!

And in the fullness of time He came.¹⁹ As the human Son of David and the divine Son of God, He became Israel's Paschal Lamb,²⁰ passed through the grave of death, and ascended to the Father's right hand. There, like Moses of old, He received of the Father the (New) Covenant²¹ which he proceeded to place in the holy of holies of His Church.

When the Christian believers in Jerusalem were filled with the Holy Ghost, "...they spake the word of God with boldness."²² Throughout the ages men of faith have drunk at the fountain of the Holy Spirit and have been made strong to follow the Lamb of Calvary and proclaim His Lordship. They have faced with confidence and with joy rejection by wicked men, and have embraced the cross, fire, and death rather than turn away from following the Lord Jesus. They have found incomparable delight in fellowship with Christ in the Spirit and in the knowledge that He has purposed for them to be "...sons of God:..."²³

Such experience in the light of the holy Scriptures leaves us with only one reasonable course of life.²⁴ It is to believe the Scriptures and to search out and follow their guidance. No man can really grasp this momentous gospel story and be the same again. It will transform him, and translate him into the kingdom of God's dear Son.²⁵ He will join in the exaltation and awesome wonder of the prophets and apostles and martyrs of the Lamb.²⁶

When I (your writer) was twenty-two years of age, this adorable Messiah baptized me in the Holy Spirit.²⁷ For about seven hours the Spirit flowed through my body like a river.²⁸ The experience was so wonderful that I did not want it to ever cease. This lovely Spirit of the Lord has continued to bubble and flow through my being during all the years of my life since. My daily practice through some forty years has been to devote a large portion of each morning to study and prayer in the Spirit.

The following pages of this book consist primarily of expository sermons that your writer has preached to congregations

through a lifetime of ministry. They are here assembled in a systematic form. Basically they cover the central theme of the Bible: God's revelation of Himself to man. They follow the natural course of God's dealings with men, setting forth His changeless plan of redemption which He will fully accomplish through the magnificent Messiah.

The King James translation of the Bible is the standard text quoted in this book. Where other texts are used they are identified, as follows:

LG = Living Gospels	L = Living Bible
LL = Living Letters	W = Weymouth

The King James text makes the following translations of the names of Deity in the Old Testament:

Hebrew	English
Elohim	= God
Jehovah	= GOD, LORD
Adonai	= Lord

I fear that the reader loses much of the significance of the Hebrew names by seeing only these English words. So I often insert the Hebrew name into the English text in quotations. I have also emphasized by italics parts of the scriptural quotations.

Thanks and much appreciation are due my daughter, Judith, who has untiringly proofread, corrected, and retyped the pages of this manuscript. Surely God brought her home after five years of teaching ministry both in Japan and California for just such a time as this.

Salem, Oregon
September 1, 1976

Atwood Foster

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1. Psalm 16:11
John 15:11
Romans 14:17
I Peter 1:8
I John 1:4
2. Galatians 5:22
3. Romans 1:16
4. Ephesians 3:11
Revelation 13:8
5. Romans 8:29
6. Genesis 1:26,27
7. Exodus 19:5,6
I Peter 2:9
8. Exodus 3:14
Psalm 83:18
Isaiah 44:6
Malachi 3:6
Hebrews 13:8
9. John 1:1
Titus 3:4
Hebrews 1:1-3
Revelation 1:8
10. I Corinthians 13:12
11. I Peter 1:10-12
12. Genesis 22:18
Galatians 3:16
13. Exodus 12:3-13
14. Exodus 34:27,28
15. Jeremiah 31:31-34
Hebrews 8:7-13
16. I Chronicles 29:23
17. II Samuel 7:11-16
18. Luke 1:32,33
19. Galatians 4:4
20. I Corinthians 5:7
21. Acts 2:33
22. Acts 4:31
23. I John 3:1,2
Romans 8:14-18
24. Romans 12:1
Cf. Hebrews 12:1,2
25. Colossians 1:13
26. Revelation 7:9-17
27. Acts 1:5; 2:4,39
28. John 7:38

*The following two beautiful songs
are taken from
"God's Love Hush
and Other Songs"
by Dorothy Gutekunst Foster
Price: \$1.00*

God's Love Hush

ALICE REYNOLDS FLOWER

DOROTHY GUTEKUNST FOSTER

Lento, religioso *cresc.* *dim.* *p*

1. The hush of God's love is up - on me. The
 2. The qui - et of heav - en en - folds me. God's
 3. The hush of God's love is up - on me. I
 4. So now with God's love hush up - on me, I

p *cresc.*

storm breaks in fu - ry a - round;— But held in His ut - ter-most
 love holds me stead - y and still;— Tho' cir - cled by rag - ing and
 dare not such ho - li - ness break;— So close - ly I feel His dear
 feel He can hold most se - cure. — In peace, per - fect peace ev - 'ry

dim. *p* *mp* *cresc.*

keep - ing, A place of deep peace I have found. And e - ven with
 fur - or, I rest in the calm of His will. — I rest from all
 pres - ence, No mo - tion or strife dare I make. — My heart can but
 mo - ment, No mat - ter how try - ing the hour; — But I must on

f *dim.* *mp* *dim. e rit.*

wild - est winds beat - ing, My barque t'ward God's ha - ven is bound.
 an - guish and ter - ror, God's love doth my heart sweet - ly fill.
 warm in His sun - shine, While love ev - 'ry fet - ter doth shake. —
 Him keep my vi - sion, And trust in His un - fail - ing pow'r. —

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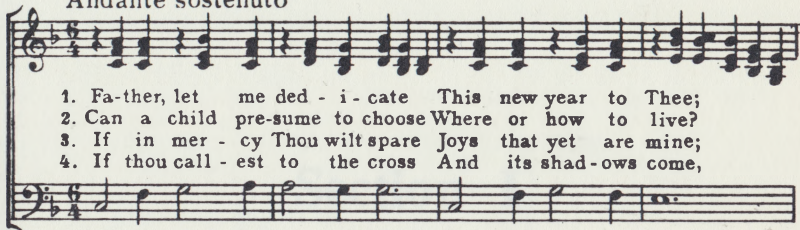
A New Year's Prayer

LAWRENCE TUTTIETT

BASS SOLO

DOROTHY GUTEKUNST FOSTER

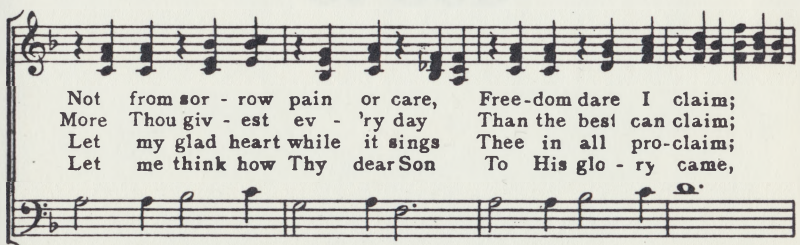
Andante sostenuto



1. Fa-ther, let me ded - i - cate This new year to Thee;
2. Can a child pre - sume to choose Where or how to live?
3. If in mer - cy Thou wilt spare Joys that yet are mine;
4. If thou call - est to the cross And its shad - ows come,



In what - ev - er earth - ly state Thou wilt have me be.
Can a fa - ther's love re - fuse All the best to give?
If on life se - rene and fair Bright - er rays may shine;
Turn - ing all my gain to loss, Shroud - ing heart and home;



Not from sor - row pain or care, Free - dom dare I claim;
More Thou giv - est ev - 'ry day Than the best can claim;
Let my glad heart while it sings Thee in all pro - claim;
Let me think how Thy dear Son To His glo - ry came,



This a - lone shall be my prayer, Glo - ri - fy Thy Name.
Nor with - hold - est aught that may Glo - ri - fy Thy Name.
And what - ere the fu - ture brings, Glo - ri - fy Thy Name.
And in deep - est woe pray on - Glo - ri - fy Thy Name.

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Chapter One

Section I

**THE BIBLE REVELATION
OF GOD**

... after you have read this book
... you will see that the Bible is
... the word of God.



*It's the set of the sails. . .
That bids them where to go.*

Chapter One

The Goal of Life

Introduction: They Hold Their Course

- 1. Heaven?**
- 2. Made in the Image of God**
- 3. "We Know..."**
- 4. "...The Image of His Son"**
- 5. Chastening**
- 6. Wrestling With God**
- 7. Holding God's Hand**

The Goal of Life

Every runner has a goal.¹ He aspires to be the best; he sets out with a purpose to win. He trains his muscles and his mind with that one purpose foremost: to attain the goal. Determination, persistence, and constant vigilance are the price. Only thereby can he hope to win.

Through the ages, great ships have plied the waters of the seven seas. Every ship has a port in view. The captain sets his course. His goal is yonder port. Though storms arise and great waves beat across the bow, he holds his course to that desired haven.

Life, too, is a voyage across a wide and stormy sea. The way is well mapped and charted. But the mariner must determine his goal and hold to his course. The careless and indifferent are strewn upon the rocks and reefs along the way. In the words of Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

One ship drives east and another drives west,
While the self-same breezes blow;
It's the set of the sails and not the gales,
That bids them where to go.

Like the winds of the seas are the ways of the fates,
As we voyage along through life;
It's the set of the soul that decides the goal,
And not the storms or the strife.²

Heaven?

What, then, is the goal of human life? What is the object and desired haven toward which we should hold our course? Is it not that celestial land that we call heaven, where the storms and trials of this earthly pilgrimage will be forever past? Is it not that land of eternal peace where "... God shall wipe all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, . . ." ¹

Ah, yes. That is home. That is our eternal abode after we reach port. But **that is not the goal** nor the object of this earthly race. That is not the primary quest of this voyage across the tempestuous sea of life. We have a far more fundamental objective than just holding on until the storm is past.

If heaven were the primary goal of life, then surely our Heavenly Father would shorten the voyage. We would count them most happy who died in childhood. The course of the hermit would be right. Men of God should withdraw from the busy stream of life and simply wait for that parting day.

But heaven is too cheap a goal for God's crowning creation. It is unbecoming that a man of faith should shun a life of involvement and leadership. His place is in the very center of the stream of human life. He is a man with a destiny, for the Most High has given him a primary role to fill here upon this beautiful planet earth. He was formed to have fellowship with his Maker.

Made in the Image of God

The Creator expressed His purpose for man before He formed him. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion. . . ." ¹ This was the original plan and intention of the Almighty that man should reflect the image of his Maker. The experiences of life are intended of God to mold and shape the man of faith into the likeness of the God whom he serves.

Emulation is the highest form of worship. A boy strives to become like or to emulate his hero. He dreams and plans and practices to look, talk, and act like his great hero. His whole desire is centered about that goal, and his life is molded by those aspirations. A boy or a man becomes like the object of his worship.

The Creator designed His crowning creation, man, to emulate and worship Him. The highest and most worthy goal of man is to become like the Lord. For this lofty purpose, man was formed and put upon this trouble-filled earth. For it takes this kind of environment to produce the kind of man that God planned for His eternal kingdom.

It is in the path of the storms that trees root the deepest and become most sturdy. And it is in the main stream of human turmoil that great souls are developed. Men of faith and character are the product of many years of walking with God in the face of sorrow, disappointment, and opposition. Strong faith and beautiful character are formed in the crucible of life.

“We Know . . .”

Man has been created in the likeness of his God! He is a living being with a spirit and a mind and a will made to live with God through the countless ages of eternity. This earthly life of a possible threescore and ten years is only a brief preparation—an elementary school, as it were—for the full and mature life that lies ahead. The Christian has a really worthwhile objective for living. He has the answer to the “why’s” of this life, to sorrow and shadows, suffering and death.

Romans 8:28 tells us “. . . we know . . .” We do not live in doubt and fear. Thank God, we **know!** We have the answer. God’s plan and purpose for life are clearly outlined and charted before us in the sacred Scriptures.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”¹ The Scriptures recognize that life is beset with many troubles. In fact, they teach us that God **designed** life this way, and that for a purpose! God arranged this life to build Abrahams of great faith; Moseses who would choose the reproach of Christ above the treasures of Egypt; Daniels who fear not the commandments of kings; Samuels, Gideons, and Davids:

Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, [q]uenced the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of

*weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*²

Yes, God created life with its troubles and storms for the building of God-like characters, filled with faith and dauntless trust in their God.

“ . . . The Image of His Son ”

Romans 8:29 very clearly defines the goal of the Christian life: “ . . . **to be conformed to the image of his Son . . .** ” That is it. God has predesigned life to bring about **this** desired goal. He purposes that Christian disciples (you and I) should **become like His Son**. He intends that the image of the Lord Jesus shall be stamped upon men’s hearts, minds, and characters.

“ No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [manifested] him. ”¹ What is God like? The Messiah as described in all the Scriptures is the perfect revelation of our great God.² If we can bear the image of the blessed Messiah, we shall have attained the image of our God.

The pressures and trials of life are intended to have a chastening effect upon us. These come not from an angry God; nay, rather they come through the loving hand of our Heavenly Father. We are taught to receive them as from the Lord, as stepping stones in our quest to reach the goal.

*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted [tested or tried] above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*³

God has in no wise promised us immunity from trials. The Church is not to be a glassed-in and pre-heated nursery where the climate is always perfect and nothing unfavorable can ever arise. Rather, the Church is a militant body in the midst of a world at war with its God.⁴ The storms that inevitably come are intended to build men and women of strong Christian character. The testings that strike

our lives produce Christian growth and spiritual vitality. If we learn to take these trials as from the Lord Himself and bend in loving faith before Him, we will profit: we will grow in His likeness.

God has ordained that a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife and they two shall be one. A successful marriage is built upon love and mutual devotion the one to the other. Where these conditions prevail through many years of life together, a man and a woman develop likeness in thought, in action, and in spirit. They talk alike; they act alike; and they come to think alike. Even their facial expressions develop a distinct similarity.

In like manner, Christian discipleship is based upon devotion to the Master. The disciple that loves Jesus and is truly devoted to Him will certainly grow in His likeness. As the years come and go, he becomes more and more like the One he loves. As he reads the sacred Scriptures, worships the Lord of the Scriptures, and finds pleasure in prayer and communion with Him, his thoughts and spirit and very demeanor become increasingly more like his Lord. Any Christian whose life is not so influenced is certainly only a very distant disciple at best.

Chastening

In all our sorrows and troubles we are taught to look to Jesus,¹ the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is "... touched with the feeling of our infirmities; [for He] was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."² "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; . . ."³

Jehovah has always suffered with His people. This is one of the glories of our God. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; . . ."⁴

We are taught in the Word of God:

*... My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; . . .*⁵

Our children in the flesh give honor to godly parents who correct them; and, conversely, it is evident that children come to despise their parents who in their self-indulgence fail to correct them. There is nothing more beautiful than the love of a little child whose spirit has been bent beneath the chastening rod of a loving parent. Those little arms that encircle his neck proclaim a confidence and affection that could have been born only under the pressure of mutual suffering.

Wrestling With God

We mortals are thrown together constantly: God intended it so. We are a social creation, not a lot of individual hermits. Our association is with men. And we associate most of our troubles with men, usually with individual personalities. Men steal from us, lie about us, smite us, defraud us—the list is endless. Unless we understand the divine purpose behind all this and believe that our God is personally in it, we will but retaliate in kind. We will fight back like the beasts of the woods. Our warfare will certainly be carnal, for our fighting will be with men.

But the Scriptures teach us that the battle is the Lord's. "Sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."¹ ". . . Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith Jehovah."² Then, if we must fight, let us fight with God, not with men. If we will prevail with God in prayer and faith, He will surely take care of our human problems.

Remember the sacred story of Jacob and Esau. On the morrow, Jacob stood well to suffer the destruction both of his own life and that of all his family and goods at the hand of his hateful and vengeful brother, Esau.³ He was ill-prepared for the fight. He was a herdsman with only his flocks and their attendants; but Esau came with four hundred young militia, armed and trained and mounted on camels.

Jacob fled across the River Jabbok to a place of seclusion and spent a night wrestling with God. What a way to prepare for a battle! But at break of day, Jacob returned to camp with the victory. God declared his name should no more be called Jacob ("supplanter"), but Israel ("a prince with God"). He had prevailed with the Almighty! Esau and his formidable little army

of warriors had lost their terror. Their meeting was in peace and respect, the one to the other, because the invisible armies of the living God were also drawn up in battle array. Though Esau did not understand it, the odds were turned entirely in Jacob's favor. Esau's hand was stayed.

Only the grace of God could have saved Jacob before his wronged brother that day. The same grace of God will prevail for our lives, too, if we will but believe and put our trust in Jacob's God. He who is the great Architect and Designer of life will certainly fight our battles too, if we, like Jacob, will do our wrestling with God. All things in our lives, be they griefs or sicknesses or storms, will prove but stepping stones in our paths toward that God-arranged goal of life: conformity to the image of His Son.⁴

Holding God's Hand

God's absolute word to us is, ". . . I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."¹ And this promise stands firm forwards or backwards, "Thee forsake, nor thee leave, never will I."

If the great Jehovah will accompany us into the dark and foreboding valley that lies before us, we should certainly take His hand in ours and leave our fears behind. We should press down the slopes of any valley where He leads, not regarding what may befall us—only that Jehovah goes before.

The Holy Spirit bore witness to the Apostle Paul in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions awaited him at Jerusalem. He responded, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God"²

In Babylon three young men refused to bow down and worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden image. In his anger the king caused the furnace to be heated ". . . seven times more than it was wont to be heated." Then he bound those young men and cast them into the midst of the flames. But Jehovah went into the furnace with them! And the king cried out in his astonishment, ". . . Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."³

His participation in man's distresses has ever been the marvel of our unchanging God. He has not promised to shield His people from the fires of trouble or affliction. Rather His Word assures us that these things are simply common to this pilgrim life.⁴ He has promised to go with us; He has agreed to share our every sorrow.

*. . . Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; . . .*⁵

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Moses

*“And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses,
whom Jehovah knew face to face.” Deuteronomy 34:10*

Chapter Two

A Personal Revelation of God

Introduction: A Personal Encounter With God

- 1. Great Heroes of the Church**
- 2. Obligation of Every Man**
- 3. The Wheat and the Tares**
- 4. A Tried and Proved Formula**
 - a. Read the Scriptures Avidly**
 - b. Surrender Your Will to Christ**
 - c. Worship, Bless, and Praise God Daily**
 - d. Love and Serve Others**

A Personal Revelation of God

It is the wonderful privilege (as well as the paramount duty) of every man to obtain a personal revelation of his God! A second-hand acquaintance will never do. The happiest thing that can ever happen to a man is to have a genuine encounter with the Most High. Regardless of time, place, or cost, every man should find a place of peace at the feet of his Creator.¹ No excuse will stand. “. . . [B]ehold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation.”²

Charles G. Finney wrote of his experience, “There was neither light nor fire in the room; nevertheless it suddenly appeared perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seems as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face.”

In 1821 Finney was twenty-nine years old, a law student in the office of a Mr. Wright. He was inspired to study the Scriptures by the many references to them found in his law books. On a Wednesday morning, he fled to the woods where during the forenoon he prayed through to rest and peace with God. That night, he remained in his office to pray. He further described his experience:

. . . I fell down at His feet, and poured out my soul to Him. I wept aloud like a child, and made such confessions as I could with my choked utterance. It seemed to me that I bathed His feet with my tears. I must have continued in that state a good while, absorbed with the interview. I returned to the front office, and found that the fire that I had made of large wood was nearly burned out. But as I turned and was about to take a

seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism with the Holy Ghost. Without any expectation of it, without ever having the thought in my mind that there was any such thing for me, without any recollection that I had ever heard the thing mentioned by any person in the world, the Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression like a wave of electricity going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love. It seemed like the very breath of God.³

Great Heroes of the Church

The great heroes of faith have all known God in a dynamic way. These men stand out in history, not for their grasp of philosophy about God, but for their personal revelation of the Divine Personality. They lived and spoke and wrote by the inspiration of an intimate acquaintance with the true and living God.

Abraham's communion with God was such that he came to be known as ". . . the Friend of God."¹

Moses' face shown with a divine glow as he tarried on the mountain with the LORD, Jehovah.²

Isaiah's vision of Adonai sitting upon His lofty throne compelled the prophet to cry, ". . . Woe is me! . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts."³

Paul was breathing out death sentences against the Christians when the Lord Jesus smote him down on the Damascus road, and he cried out, ". . . Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? . . ."⁴

Obligation of Every Man

This revelation of God is not reserved for only the few. Every man can and must come to know his God personally. He has invited each man and each woman (whosoever will) to come. ". . . [W]hosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."² God has promised a revelation of Himself to any person that will worship Him according to the Scriptures and ". . . call on the name of the Lord. . . ."³

There is no way to evade this **obligation**. For this purpose men are born. The primary business of life is to know God and to serve

and worship Him. Life challenges every man: Will he live for time alone? Or will he live with eternity in view?

Joshua charged the youth of the generation that followed him, “. . . [C]hoose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served . . . or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: **but as for me and my house, we will serve Jehovah.**”⁴ Likewise, the men of this modern generation must choose between the lusts (loves) of this world and the only true God. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”⁵

The Wheat and the Tares

The great Master Teacher put forth a parable to the people, saying:

. . . The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

He said unto them, An enemy hath done this.

The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

*But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.*¹

This is a hard lesson! But the Scriptures (and all of life) declare it. God is operating this whole vast world-system for but one supreme purpose: **the development of men and women of faith in Christ.** These are the wheat; all else is straw and chaff and tares.

“. . . [F]or there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”² Paul declared, “. . . the gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; . . . as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”³

Jesus Christ is man’s Paschal Lamb; His sacrificial death on Calvary paid the price for every man’s redemption. It is not then a question of man’s merit—how good he is or how bad he is. It is simply a question of what each man chooses to do with that Paschal Lamb, Jesus the Christ. Accept Him and live; reject Him and perish.⁴ It is just that simple!

A Tried and Proved Formula

Christian faith is not just a beautiful theory. It provides the most satisfying and gratifying way of life. By it men have lived and suffered and died triumphantly. As it is written of “. . . Moses, when he was come to years, [he] refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; . . .”¹

The following formula has been proved through many ages by “. . . a great cloud of witnesses. . . .”² It is designed for **triumphant living**. It reflects the living Word of God and is perfectly realistic. If he will honestly and sincerely pattern his life after it, any man can be assured of much victory and gratification throughout his life. He will endure sorrow and suffering, of course.³ But he will reap peace, confidence, assurance, and at last an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.⁴

This formula is conveniently divided into four parts, like the four Gospels. It will do the job for you. Adapt it for your life. Practice it every day. Expect the Holy Spirit to breathe upon you and make the Bible alive and relevant to you. Jesus promised, “. . . when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:”⁵

The Holy Spirit is today falling upon all flesh, as promised by the prophets of old. Sons and daughters, young men and old men, servants and handmaidens, are receiving this wonderful Holy Spirit into their lives.⁶ Open your heart and mind to the lovely Comforter by active worship of the adorable Messiah.⁷

a. Read the Scriptures Avidly

Peter, James, and John were with Jesus on the mount when the Master “. . . was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.”¹ Years later, Peter wrote, “. . . [We] were eyewitnesses 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.”² But Peter added profound words when he pointed his hearers to the Scripture as “. . . a more sure word of prophecy; . . .”³ The great Jehovah has given us the written Word for our instruction and guidance through life. These Scriptures have been given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the infallible and authoritative Word of God.

The Scriptures, recorded through some sixteen centuries by holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,⁴ are designed to communicate the mind of God to men. Happy are they who hide it in their hearts that they might not sin against the Lord.⁵ Jehovah assured the prophet Isaiah that He was interested not in the high and the proud among men, “. . . but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.”⁶ The word of man is vain and empty, but “. . . the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, . . .”⁷

We sometimes call the Scriptures “God’s love letters.” For they are written by a God who loves men, as it is written, “. . . God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”⁸ And again, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”⁹ “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: . . .”¹⁰

Since the Author of the Scriptures loves us and has given His “love letters” for our instruction,¹¹ we should read and study them daily throughout our lives. Ezra the scribe declared, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”¹²

The apostle Paul said that “. . . faith cometh by hearing . . . the word of God.”¹³ Herein is the source of strong faith. Read it. Study and memorize it. Love it. You will grow stalwart in the faith.

b. Surrender Your Will to Christ

Man's **will** is the throne of his life. Every man must choose who shall reign there. Most men choose **self** to hold that exalted place. Lucifer, son of the morning, was brought down from the exaltation of heaven to the lowest hell because of his self-assertion.¹ And a selfish will can but do the same for men.

Put Christ there! Let him reign upon the throne of your heart. Surrender your will to the Master. "Know ye that Jehovah he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."² Jesus said, "... My meat is to do **the will of him** that sent me, . . ." ³ May we, too, find our greatest delight in doing the will of Him whose we are and whom we serve. ⁴

Christ is Lord! Make Him every whit the Lord of your life. He demanded of His disciples, "... if any man will come after me, let him **deny himself**, and take up his cross, and follow me."⁵ In the supreme hour of His temptation, Jesus cried, "Father, . . . not my will, but thine, be done."⁶ And an angel from heaven appeared unto Him, strengthening Him.

This is the Christian distinctive: He loves us and we love Him. And in loving Him, we sell out in total abandonment to His perfect will. Christ is Lord of all, and we must own Him so. Only a continual renewing of our surrender throughout life will be effective, for we are so prone to forget. Man by nature is fickle. Only the grace of the great Jehovah Himself can keep us true. We are all inadequate, even abysmal failures. We must cast ourselves upon Him afresh every day and then abide in His strength.

As on the eve of the Lord's betrayal, Peter was confident, "... Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended."⁷ Peter thought he was well able to stand. "... Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." But it was only a few hours later that Peter chickened out before the accusing finger of a little girl. "Then began he to curse and swear, saying, I know not the man."⁸ As Peter's did a little later, may our hearts break before our Lord and our surrender before Him be constant and complete.

c. **Worship, Bless, and Praise God Daily**

“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God:”¹ Our blessed God loves us with a divine and matchless love. He loved us when we were yet sinners; the Messiah, Jesus, laid down His very life for us.² And God wants our love in return. Jesus declared to the Samaritan woman that the Father seeks out people to worship Him in spirit and in truth.³

The first and great commandment of the Scripture is, “. . . thou shalt love Jehovah thy Elohim with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”⁴ This command shows the nature of our God who created us to worship Him, for worship is love and adoration.

King David sang psalms of prayer and praise, born out of great distress in his life.

*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel.*⁵

Like David, the Christian will find his strength in the Lord. He is instructed to “Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”⁶

Paul preached:

*. . . be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; . . .*⁷

Worship and praise are exercises of faith. Each Christian should make love to his God every day. Love Him. Worship Him. Yearn to be like Him. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”⁸

d. Love and Serve Others

Love and service begin at home. A man's first responsibility is to his father and mother, his wife, and his children. He must love his own and plan and provide for them. Neglect of one's own family is denying the faith of God and is worse than being an infidel.¹ Love at home is basic to a godly life. No faith or spiritual attainment can excuse this fundamental responsibility.

And yet, there is a more enduring relationship than that of the human family. The Master declared, "... whosoever shall do the will of the Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."² The household of faith becomes an even more close and permanent kinship than one's blood relations. For we have been born by the Holy Spirit into the family of God.³

On that most eventful evening in which He was betrayed, the Master broke bread with His disciples. Then He, their Lord and Master, knelt down and washed their feet. He gave them this tremendous personal example with the instruction, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."⁴ Then he added that singular and very powerful law of His Church, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; . . . **By this** shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."⁵ Love of the brethren is the distinctive mark or insignia of the Church of Jesus Christ.⁶

And still, the Christian's love goes on beyond his family and his church. His God so loved the world (sinful man) that He gave His only begotten Son.⁷ The Christian is taught to love with compassion the sinful, the lost, and the perishing. Again the Master taught from the Law of the Scriptures, "... Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."⁸ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."⁹

The follower of Jesus Christ is a love-slave to his Master. He is an ideal husband and father: he loves his family. He is a devoted Christian: he loves the brethren.¹⁰ He is an outstanding citizen: he loves and serves the needy, small or great, wherever he finds them. He worships and emulates the great God "... full of grace and truth."¹¹ Remember, Practice forms habit,

Habit molds character, and Character determines destiny.

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Simeon and the Infant Messiah

The Messiah is Jehovah's supreme revelation of Himself.

*"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son,
which is in the bosom of the Father,
he hath declared [manifested] him." John 1:18*

Chapter Three

The Adorable Godhead

Introduction: Our Great God

- 1. Plurality of the Godhead**
- 2. Compound Unity**
- 3. Threefold**
- 4. The Baptism**
- 5. What Jesus Taught**
- 6. What His Disciples Taught**

The Adorable Godhead

Nowhere in the Scriptures does the great God endeavor to defend His being or His personality. He simply is God and needs no defense. As the apostle Paul states, “. . . we know . . . that there is none other God but one. For though there be . . . gods many, and lords many, . . . to us there is but one God, the Father, . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ, . . .”¹ He, the almighty Creator of this universe is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, eternal; immutable, invisible, incomprehensible; holy, just, faithful, merciful, compassionate, and true. His glorious attributes are numberless.

Jesus told the woman at the well, “. . . true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.”² We adore and extol Him, and we love and serve Him.

Plurality of the Godhead

The sacred record begins with an expression of great majesty, “In the beginning Elohim. . . .”¹ This is our simple yet profound introduction to the fathomless God who fills and dominates the boundless universe.

Elohim is a plural noun, giving us our first glimpse of the divine Trinity, which is shrouded in mystery throughout the Bible. The Moslem uses fundamentally the same word for Deity. **Allah** is the Arabic equivalent of **Elohim**. Its meaning is the same. But in contrast with the Hebrew name, **Allah** is a singular noun.

Consistently with the plural name **Elohim**, the Scriptures use plural pronouns such as, “And Elohim said, Let **us** make man in

our image, after our likeness: . . . ”² “And Jehovah Elohim said, Behold, the man is become as one of us to know good and evil: . . . ”³ “Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, . . . ”⁴ “Also I heard the voice of Adonai, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?”⁵

Compound Unity

The unity¹ or oneness of God is the burden of the Old Testament Scriptures. But this is definitely compound unity and not absolute unity. The Hebrew word **echad**, meaning “one” in a compound sense, is always used in reference to the Godhead. **Echad** is used in connection with husband and wife, “. . . they shall be **one** flesh.”² And again with people, “. . . Behold, the people is **one**, . . . ”³

The God of the Scriptures is positively declared to be a perfect unity. There is always perfect oneness in our God, as Moses cried, “Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our Elohim is **one** Jehovah: . . . ”⁴ “Know therefore . . . and consider it in thine heart, that Jehovah he is Elohim in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else.”⁵ Solomon prayed at the dedication of the beautiful temple, “That all the people of the earth may know that Jehovah is Elohim, and that there is none else.”⁶ Likewise, Hezekiah prayed, “O Jehovah Elohim of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the Elohim, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; . . . ”⁷ The prophet of Israel proclaimed:

*Thus saith Jehovah the King of Israel, . . . I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no Elohim. . . . [Y]e are even my witnesses. Is there [an] Elohim beside me? yea, there is no Elohim; I know not any.*⁸

Jesus responded to Philip’s request to show the Father to the disciples, with that marvelous declaration, “. . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; . . . I am in the Father, and the Father in me. . . . [T]he Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.”⁹ Then in prayer with the disciples He cried:

[T]his is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true

*God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. . . . And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. . . . That they all [all His disciples] may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*¹⁰

Threefold

The plurality of the divine Godhead is affirmed by the three primary names of Deity used throughout the Old Testament Scriptures, as illustrated in King David's prayers. David used all three primary names in each of the following prayers. "And now, O Adonai Jehovah, thou art that Elohim, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant: . . ." ¹ "For in thee, O Jehovah, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Adonai my Elohim." ² And again, "Forsake me not, O Jehovah: O my Elohim, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Adonai my salvation." ³

Isaiah's prophecy of the coming Messiah was in the same strain:

*The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of Jehovah, make straight in the desert a highway for our Elohim. . . . [S]ay unto the cities of Judah, Behold your Elohim! Behold, Adonai Jehovah will come. . . .*⁴

Likewise the ascriptions of the seraphim strongly suggest plurality, "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah Sabaoth: the whole earth is full of his glory." ⁵ ". . . [A]nd they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." ⁶

In the Old Testament Scriptures the Father⁷ and the Son⁸ and the Holy Spirit⁹ are clearly seen. And in the New Testament the Trinity becomes sharply defined, as witnessed by the following passages:

a. "Go . . . and teach . . . baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: . . ." ¹⁰

b. The promise of the Lord Jesus, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things," ¹¹

c. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." ¹²

d. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost:" ¹³

It is also significant that the Tabernacle which was patterned after Jehovah's heavenly throne ¹⁴ consisted of three distinct areas, namely, the holy of holies where Jehovah Elohim dwelt between the cherubim, the holy place where the priests ministered, and the outer court where sacrifices were offered. Moreover, there were three openings between the holy place and the holy of holies. Originally there was a great veil closing these openings. But the veil is gone. The angels of God rent it asunder the hour that Jesus died on the cross of Calvary. The three openings remained, formed by the four pillars that had supported the veil through the centuries until Calvary.

Then, finally, God created man a triune being after His own likeness. ¹⁵ Man consists of three distinct areas: spirit, soul, and body. ¹⁶ His spirit is the holy of holies of his life wherein God desires to dwell. His soul is the citadel of his personality, mind, and will. And his body is the outer court of his being. Man was created as a tabernacle or temple for Jehovah's dwelling.

The Baptism

When the Messiah, the man Jesus Christ, was baptized of John in the waters of Jordan, ". . . lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹ Herein were manifested the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Undeniably this New Testament incident described by the three Gospel writers forcefully represents the trinity of the Godhead. Also, John the Baptist bore

record of the same wonderful manifestation, saying:

I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.²

This same remarkable man, Jesus Christ, who is declared to be the incarnation of the Word of God, and the only begotten of the Father,³ is further said to be the Son of God⁴ and heir of all things, and the One by whom also God made the worlds.⁵ In Him, the apostle wrote, dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.⁶

What Jesus Taught

Jesus freely taught His disciples of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I."¹ "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."² "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:"³

The disciples heard their Master pray, ". . . I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."⁴

On that fearful night of His betrayal, Jesus prayed with His disciples:

. . . O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. . . . That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:"⁵

In the garden He prayed, "...Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."⁶ And hanging on the cruel cross of agony, He cried, "...Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."⁷

After His triumphant resurrection from death and the tomb, Jesus commissioned Mary, "... go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."⁸ And when He met His disciples, He said unto them, "... Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:...."⁹ "...All power [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:...."¹⁰

What His Disciples Taught

The disciples uniformly reflected the teachings of their Master. They recounted over and over what He said and did. In the four Gospels they compiled the essence¹ of what they heard Him teach and what they and the church continued to teach.

Peter wrote:

... [W]e have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses 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.²

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all three recount this important incident of His transfiguration and the voice of the Father that honored Him there before His disciples.³

In his first epistle Peter writes to the saints, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: . . ."⁴ Herein he sets forth the divine trinity of the Godhead. Likewise, the physician Luke recounts the message of the angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary, regarding her Child:

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God [Jehovah Elohim] shall give unto him the throne of his father David: . . . The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee:

. . . .⁵

It is interesting to note that Saint John names the Father and the Son and the Spirit more often than any other of the New Testament writers. In his Gospel, his three epistles, and Revelation, he refers to the Father 135 times, to the Son 71 times, and to the Spirit 27 times. He declares that “. . . there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.”⁶

When the devoted Mary Magdalene stood before the open tomb on that first resurrection morning, and asked through her tears where the body of her Lord had been laid:

Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.⁷

Then a little later He met with His disciples and said to them, “. . . as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: . . .”⁸ This they did receive a few days later when the Day of Pentecost had fully come.⁹

It was given to the apostle Paul to write a large portion of the New Testament. He very carefully stated and explained most of the great doctrines of the Scriptures. He affirmed that through **Christ** both Jew and Gentile have access by one **Spirit** unto the **Father**.¹⁰ He counted himself to be a special minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. He admonished both Jew and Gentile

. . . to be likeminded one toward another. . . . That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . [T]hat the offering up of the Gentiles

*might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost!*¹¹

To the Corinthian Church he wrote:

... when Christ comes back, all his people will become alive again.

*After that the end will come when he will turn the kingdom over to God the Father, having put down all enemies of every kind. For Christ will be King until he has defeated all his enemies, including the last enemy—death. This too must be defeated and ended. For the rule and authority over all things has been given to Christ by his Father; except, of course, Christ does not rule over the Father himself, who gave him this power to rule. When Christ has finally won the battle against all his enemies, then he, the Son of God, will put himself also under his Father's orders, so that God who has given him the victory over everything else will be utterly supreme.*¹²

Then he so aptly closed his second letter to the Corinthians with the benediction, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."¹³

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6. What His Disciples Taught

- | | |
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The Good Shepherd
by Bernard Plockhorst

"Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want." Psalm 23:1
"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." Isaiah 40:11

Chapter Four

Names of Deity

Introduction: The Great and Fathomless God

1. Three Primary Names

- a. **El, Elah, or Elohim** = God
- b. **Jehovah (Yahweh)** = LORD, GOD
- c. **Adon or Adonai** = Lord

2. Compound Primary Names

- a. **Jehovah Elohim** = LORD God
- b. **Adonai Jehovah** = Lord GOD

3. Compound Names With Elohim

- a. **El Elyon** = Most High God
- b. **El Olam** = Everlasting God
- c. **El Shaddai** = Almighty God

4. Compound Names With Jehovah

- a. **Jehovah-Jireh** = Jehovah Will Provide
- b. **Jehovah-Rapha** = Jehovah That Healeth Thee
- c. **Jehovah-Nissi** = Jehovah My Banner
- d. **Jehovah-M'Kaddesh** = Jehovah Who Sanctifies
- e. **Jehovah-Shalom** = Jehovah Our Peace
- f. **Jehovah-Ra-ah** = Jehovah My Shepherd
- g. **Jehovah-Tsidkenu** = Jehovah Our Righteousness
- h. **Jehovah-Shammah** = Jehovah Is Present
- i. **Jehovah-Sabaoth** = Jehovah of Hosts

Names of Deity

O LORD OUR God, the majesty and glory of your name fills all the earth and overflows the heavens. You have taught the little children to praise you perfectly. May their example shame and silence your enemies!

When I look up into the night skies and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you have made—I cannot understand how you can bother with mere puny man, to pay any attention to him! And yet you have made him only a little lower than the angels, and placed a crown of glory and honor upon his head.

You have put him in charge of everything you made; everything is put under his authority: all sheep and oxen, and wild animals too, the birds and fish, and all the life in the sea. O Jehovah, our Lord, the majesty and glory of your name fills the earth.¹

For the truth about God is known to [men] instinctively; God has put this knowledge in their hearts. Since earliest times men have seen the earth and sky and all God made, and have known of his existence and great eternal power.²

The revelation of the fathomless God of the universe is the subject of the Scriptures. Through these six millenniums of man's history, God has been making Himself known to the sons of men.

He is without beginning and without ending, unchanging, and forever the same. He suffers no bounds nor limits in time, space, or knowledge. He is infinite in every area: He is infinite in time;

He is infinite in space; He is infinite in power; He is infinite in love. In greatness and grandeur and in glory, majesty, and power He dwarfs the human imagination. He is the eternal God of the universe; He created it and controls its myriad constellations of planets and suns through the billions of light-years of distance and space.

And yet the Scriptures describe this glorious God as a personal God, loving, planning for, and manifesting Himself to individual men. Furthermore, the Scriptural **names** of our God give us a marvelous revelation of Deity.

Three Primary Names

a. **El, Elah, or Elohim** = God

The book of Genesis ("origin, creation") begins with the awesome statement, "In the beginning God. . . ." This word **God** is a translation of the Hebrew **Elohim** or sometimes **El** or **Elah**. **Elohim** is formed from **El**, which conveys the meaning of "the Strong One" (imponderable might), and **Alah**, which means "to swear or to bind oneself by an oath," thus implying faithfulness. **Elohim** is both strong beyond human imagination and absolutely faithful. **Elohim** cannot lie. **Elohim** cannot fail.

Elohim, then, conveys the dual meaning of "all-powerful" and "all-faithful." This is the primary revelation of our exalted and majestic God. Everything that has been shown to us of God through the many ages is resident in the **Elohim** of Genesis 1:1. He has never changed. He has neither increased nor diminished. He is the fullness of all that we know of God. Anything further is simply a development of this original revelation.

The name **Elohim** is used some 2500 times in the Old Testament Scriptures, as the only living God. **Elohim** is the basic expression of God to men. He is eternally the same. He is both ancient and modern. **Elohim** is our God, the God of the faithful whether they be Jew or Gentile, bond or free.

b. **Jehovah (Yahweh)** = LORD, GOD

In the second chapter of Genesis the Scriptures begin use of the second primary name of Deity, namely, Jehovah or **Yahweh**, translated in our King James version as LORD¹ or GOD.² But the

special significance of the name Jehovah was later made known to Moses while he watched over the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro, in the wilderness of Sinai. He was then eighty years old, well-seasoned in experience and in his exercise of faith in **Elohim**.

Moses was alone with the flocks when he observed a rather unusual thing. A desert bush had got on fire, and though it burned intensely, it was not consumed. He turned aside to see why the bush did not burn up. And **Elohim** called to him out of the midst of the bush, "...Moses, Moses... [P]ut off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."³ Moreover, **Elohim** announced to Moses:

*... I AM THAT I AM: . . . Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. . . . Jehovah Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.*⁴

Moreover, **Elohim** continued to Moses, "...I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of El Shaddai, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them."⁵ **Jehovah** means "the self-existent One," "the Eternal I AM." The name is based on **Havah**, meaning "to become (known)." This gives us the full meaning of **Jehovah** as "the self-existent One who reveals Himself." He is both self-existent and self-revealing.

Jehovah is translated in our King James Bible as LORD or GOD, and it appears some 6200 times in the Old Testament. Jehovah is man's Redeemer. He redeemed Israel from under the burdens of the Egyptians; He led them forth in victory and made them a great nation. Isaiah proclaimed to this people, "... thy Maker is thine husband; Jehovah of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the Elohim of the whole earth shall he be called."⁶ And Malachi exclaimed of Him, "... I am Jehovah, I change not; . . ."⁷ Jehovah **Elohim** is the supreme and peerless God. He has never changed, age upon age, aeon upon aeon. He is our eternal God. We worship Him.

c. **Adon** or **Adonai** = Lord

Adonai is the third in the trinity of primary names of Deity used in the Old Testament Scriptures. Its meaning is that of Lord and Master and absolute Owner. The same word is used as a title of honor for men. The King James translators used a capital letter (Lord) to designate Deity and a small letter (lord) to designate man. **Adonai** is used of God some 450 times, presenting Him in the delightful relationship of Lord and Master to those who love Him. Jehovah is "...the Adonai of all the earth,..."¹

David speaks of the exaltation of the Messiah, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: Adonai shall have them in derision. . . . Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."² He begins and ends the beautiful eighth Psalm with the chant, "O Jehovah our Adonai, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"³ And again, "Blessed be Adonai, who daily loadeth us with benefits, . . ."⁴

Moses gave commandment to Israel, "Thrice in the year shall all your menchildren appear before Adonai Jehovah, the Elohim of Israel."⁵ And of Daniel it is written, "And I set my face unto Adonai Elohim, to seek by prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes: And I prayed unto Jehovah my Elohim, and made my confession, and said, O Adonai, the great and dreadful Elohim, . . ."⁶

David uses all three primary names of Deity freely and interchangeably: "For in thee, O Jehovah, do I hope: thou wilt hear, O Adonai my Elohim."⁷ And again, "Forsake me not, O Jehovah: O my Elohim, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Adonai my salvation."⁸ "Let not them that wait on thee, O Adonai Elohim of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, O Elohim of Israel."⁹ And David's God is the God of every God-fearing, Bible-believing child of Adam's race. He has not changed. His revelation of Himself has simply continued to unfold.

Compound Primary Names

a. Jehovah **Elohim** = LORD God

The three primary names are used in combination to compound the meaning of the names of the Deity that they

represent. Such use lends emphasis to the greatness and sovereign majesty of our God. It magnifies His name and bolsters up the faith of the men who use it.

Jehovah **Elohim** is a compounding of the first two primary names. It accents the utterly limitless power and resourcefulness of our God. There is no God but Jehovah **Elohim**. He fills and dominates the boundless universe and every detail in it.

It was “. . . Jehovah Elohim [that] made the earth and the heavens, And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew:”¹ It was “. . . Jehovah Elohim [that] formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”²

It was

*. . . Jehovah Elohim [that] caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which Jehovah Elohim had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: . . . Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*³

It was “. . . the voice of Jehovah Elohim walking in the garden in the cool of the day . . . [that] called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?”⁴ It was “. . . Jehovah Elohim [that] said unto the serpent, . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”⁵

Finally, it was Jehovah **Elohim** that made coats of skins (from slain lambs) and clothed Adam and Eve.⁶ This is the first recorded instance of God’s provision of a slain lamb for man’s redemption.

b. **Adonai** Jehovah = Lord GOD

Adonai Jehovah is a compounding of Jehovah with the third primary name. It emphasizes the lordship of Jehovah. **Adonai** Jehovah is our mighty Lord and Master. As our glorious Deity, He is worthy of our service, worship, and adoration.

Jehovah had said to the patriarch Abram:

... Eliezer of Damascus. . . shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. . . . Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.¹

And Abram answered, “. . . Adonai Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?”² Whereupon **Adonai** Jehovah entered into a solemn covenant-sealing ceremony with Abram, binding Himself eternally and immutably to fulfill His promises to Abram and to his children after him. Only one condition was ever imposed, that Abram should believe the word of Jehovah. Abram did; and Jehovah “. . . counted it to him for righteousness.”³

Later, when God promised King David that He would build him an everlasting kingdom and that He would raise up his son to sit upon his throne forever,⁴ David went into the tabernacle

. . . and sat before Jehovah, and he said, Who am I, O Adonai Jehovah? and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in thy sight, O Adonai Jehovah; but thou hast spoken also of thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Adonai Jehovah? And what can David say more unto thee? for thou, Adonai Jehovah, knowest thy servant. . . . Wherefore thou art great, O Jehovah Elohim: for there is none like thee, neither is there any Elohim beside thee, And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom Elohim went to redeem for a people to himself, And now, O Jehovah Elohim, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said. . . . O Adonai Jehovah, thou art that Elohim, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant:⁵

It is interesting to note that the compound name Jehovah **Elohim** was used by the patriarchs of the Old Covenant through the

time of King David some 215 times, and **Adonai** Jehovah only 19 times. Whereas Jehovah **Elohim** was used by the prophets after the time of King David only 17 times, and **Adonai** Jehovah was used some 292 times. The emphasis of the patriarchs (Genesis through Psalms) was upon His great power and majesty. The emphasis of the prophets (Isaiah through Malachi) was upon His divine lordship.

The prophet Amos combined all three primary names in his message to Israel, “Hear ye, and testify in the house of Jacob, saith Adonai Jehovah, the Elohim of hosts,”⁶ “. . . [I]t may be that Jehovah Elohim of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph. Therefore Jehovah, the Elohim of hosts, Adonai, saith thus;”⁷ “Adonai Jehovah hath sworn by himself, saith Jehovah the Elohim of hosts [the hosts of heaven],”⁸

Compound Names With Elohim

a. **El Elyon** = Most High God

When Abraham and his 318 trained servants returned from the slaughter of the kings, Melchizedek met him with bread and wine. Now this Melchizedek was both King of Salem¹ (meaning “peace” **Jerusalem** means “city of peace”) and priest of the Most High God (**El Elyon**).² This is the first of three compound names with **Elohim**. It presents Abraham’s God as the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth. There is no other God like our God! As Moses reminded Israel, “For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.”³

b. **El Olam** = Everlasting God

El Olam is the Hebrew name of the everlasting **Elohim**. Abraham planted a grove in Beersheba, and called there on the name of Jehovah, the **El Olam**.¹ Isaiah cried to Israel, “. . . [H]ast thou not heard, that the everlasting God [**El Olam**], Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?”² He is from everlasting to everlasting,³ from infinity to infinity. He shall continue with eternal duration. He will never vary nor change.

c. **El Shaddai** = Almighty God (All-Sufficient God)

As a young man in Ur of the Chaldees, Abram took his lovely bride, Sarai, to be his lifelong companion. Together they worshiped their great **Elohim**, and basked in the divine promises of the Most High. **Elohim** promised them a vast inheritance and an innumerable posterity, too. But many years rolled by and they had no children.

Abram moved with his father's family from Ur up the Euphrates River to the land of Haran. His communion with **Elohim** continued strong and the promises became brighter with the years. But, after so long a time, Sarai still bore him no children.

Abram was seventy-five years old when his father died in Haran. He had nothing further to hold him, so in obedience to his faith in the call of **Elohim**, he and Sarai moved from Haran and his father's family into Canaan, the Promised Land. There he dwelt as a pilgrim and a stranger among a foreign people, but **Elohim**, his God, was with him and blessed him both materially and spiritually. Abram enjoyed marvelous communion with his God.

Not until Abram was ninety and nine years old and Sarai ten years younger, did **Elohim** choose to give them the promised son. Their faith had stood the test of the years. They believed the one and only, true and living God, **Elohim**.

Abram arose early one morning and sat under a gnarled olive tree as the sun crept over the horizon of Moab. With his eyes he surveyed his flocks and his herds and his servants; **Elohim** had prospered him abundantly. And as he mused upon these matters and worshiped, **Elohim** spoke to him, “. . . I am El Shaddai; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.”¹

Shad means “breast,” as a mother's breast. **Elohim Shaddai** means “the breasted God” or “the all-sufficient God” or “the Almighty God.” Abram and Sarai were now too old to have children. But nothing is too hard for **El Shaddai**! The Creator had deliberately withheld children from His devoted servants that now their faith might shine forth all the more brilliantly. Their **El Shaddai** changed their names from Abram (“high father”) and Sarai (“contentious”) to Abraham² (“father of a great multitude”)

and Sarah³ (“princess”) and gave them a son whom they named, Isaac⁴ (“laughter”) for with **El Shaddai** they could laugh at any impossibilities.

El Shaddai is used forty-seven times in the Old Testament, thirty-one times in Job. It reveals our God as both almighty and all-sufficient for our every need. It is used chiefly with testing; for **El Shaddai** is our Nourisher and our Strength-Giver in the midst of trials and tests.⁵

Compound Names with Jehovah

Throughout the ages names have been given to signify the nature and special features of individuals. This rule holds true for Bible characters. Likewise, the names of Deity tell us about our God. They describe His innate nature, character, and personality.

The name Jehovah tells us that He is the eternal, self-existent God, manifesting Himself to men. He has always sought to reveal Himself to His people. His further names are the result of special revelations of Himself to individuals. The name Jehovah is combined with other words to form a number of compound names which manifest Him in all His marvelous provision for His people. These compoundings become vital to us when we enter into experiences wherein these particular areas of His grace are exemplified. Following are the most prominent compound names of Jehovah.

a. Jehovah-**Jireh** = The LORD Will Provide¹

As they climbed the little mountain called Moriah, Isaac looked at his father and asked, “. . . Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb. . . .” And He did. A ram was “. . . caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.”²

That ram was a type or prophecy of God’s Messiah. Jehovah will provide Himself a Ram who will die in the stead of His people. The Anointed One as Heaven’s only begotten Son will come in God’s perfect time. He will be led out to that final altar called Calvary. There He will be offered in sacrifice for the sins of the

whole wide world.

And in a broader sense also, Jehovah will provide for His people. He is all sufficient for our every need, whatever it may be. As He fed, clothed, and cared for the nation of Israel while they traveled through the trackless wilderness from Egypt to Canaan land, so He will care for His own today. He has not changed. Jesus said:

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these . . . [S]hall [God] not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? ³

b. Jehovah-**Rapha** = The LORD That Healeth Thee¹

That is His very name. It describes His nature. He led a nation over the Arabian Desert for forty years, and He was their only physician all the way. He is no different today. He is still Jehovah-**Rapha** to all His people, whether or not we appropriate His healing virtues. The prophet Isaiah declared, “. . . Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”² What a pity that we are so reluctant to believe and trust Him.

Israel marched three days from the Red Sea into the dry and hostile desert and came to a fountain of bitter and disappointing waters which they could not drink. Then “. . . Jehovah shewed [Moses] a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: . . .”³ (This tree typified the cross on which the Messiah should die for His people.)

Jehovah said to Israel:

If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy Elohim, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am Jehovah that healeth thee.⁴

c. Jehovah-**Nissi** = The LORD My Banner¹

When Moses held up the rod of God, the army of Israel

prevailed over the Amalekites. When he let his hand down, the Amalekites prevailed. So Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands until the going down of the sun, and Israel destroyed the Amalekites—it was really the invisible and invincible army of Jehovah that smote them. They did not have a chance.

And Jehovah is still and always will be the Banner of His people.² He will fight our battles, if we will trust Him. And so it is written, “. . . If God be for us, who can be against us?”³ David sang of the Lord, “Jehovah is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?”⁴

d. **Jehovah-M'Kaddesh** = The LORD Who Sanctifies¹

“Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: . . . I am Jehovah-M'Kaddesh.”¹ Our God is absolutely holy.² If we purpose to serve Him, we must become holy like Him. Such holiness is possible only through the grace of our God, Jehovah-M'Kaddesh, whose very name means, “the LORD who sanctifies.”

The Scriptures teach that there are three elements our God has provided for the sanctification of his people, namely:

- (1) His blood. Men are sanctified by faith in the shed blood of the Messiah.³
- (2) His Word. The Word of God, the Scriptures, will sanctify our lives, if we will study and obey it.⁴
- (3) His Holy Spirit. The Messiah will save His people from their sins and fill them with the sanctifying Holy Spirit.⁵

e. **Jehovah-Shalom** = The LORD Our Peace¹

When Gideon's meager 300 had smitten the Midianite hosts of 135,000, that lay along the valley like grasshoppers and as the sand of the sea for multitude, Israel enjoyed peace from her enemies. It was by faith that Gideon built the altar of Jehovah-Shalom. And God gave them peace.

The coming Messiah would be the Prince of Peace.² The angels who heralded His birth sang to the shepherds, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”³ For through His atoning work on Calvary, He would give His

people peace with God.⁴ He is Jehovah-**Shalom** to all who know Him.

f. Jehovah-**Ra-ah** = The LORD My Shepherd¹

David spent his youth caring for his father's sheep. He protected them from all enemies as every true shepherd would.

*...Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear*²

It was King David who professed the name of his God to be Jehovah-**Ra-ah**. He lived under the watchful care of the divine Shepherd all the years of his life: "Jehovah is my shepherd;³ I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters."⁴

The prophets foresaw the coming Messiah as the good Shepherd of His people. "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."⁴

And when He came, that compassionate man of Galilee, He showed Himself to be everything that the prophets said He would. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep . . . My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life;"⁵

g. Jehovah-**Tsidkenu** = The LORD Our Righteousness¹

"...[T]his is his name whereby he [the Messiah] shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." He has always been and He will always be the spring and only source of man's righteousness. There is no other. Only God's righteousness imputed to a man because of his faith will make him righteous before God.²

No animal sacrifices have any righteousness that they can impart to men. "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of

goats should take away sins.”³ Animal sacrifices never did take away sin. They merely expressed the worshiper’s faith in God’s promise of a divine Messiah whose blood would take away sin. As it is written, “For he hath made him [the Messiah] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”⁴

Nor could the law of Moses avail man of any righteousness. “. . . [N]o man is justified by the law in the sight of God, . . . for, The just shall live by faith.⁵ And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.”⁶

Rather it is through the gospel of the Messiah that the righteousness of God is revealed to men. For the gospel “. . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. . . .”⁷ The Messiah is made unto us “. . . righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. . . .”⁸

h. Jehovah-Shammah = The LORD Is There¹

Our God abides with His people constantly. He is with us on the mountain and in the lowest valley. He is ~~is~~ here with us on the job, and in the home, or wherever we may go. Our God is Jehovah-Shammah. He neither slumbers nor sleeps.² He is always present to help and to sustain and to deliver.

Jehovah is everywhere. His presence fills the whole vast universe and every little cranny of life. There is no place where He is absent. The psalmist sang:

Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

*Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.*³

Jonah the prophet sought to flee from Jehovah. He took a ship to Tarshish.⁴ But his effort was folly and he knew it. Jehovah sent out a tempestuous storm upon the sea. So the sailors tossed Jonah overboard and a great fish swallowed him up. There in the belly of the fish Jonah sought God, crying out by reason of his affliction. The fish vomited him out on the shore and he proceeded to carry out his errand for the Lord.

The prophet Hanani reminded King Asa, "For the eyes of Jehovah run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him."⁵

And Jehovah stressed to the man Joshua, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for Jehovah thy Elohim is with thee whithersoever thou goest."⁶

i. Jehovah-Sabaoth = The LORD of Hosts ¹

"Who is this King of glory? Jehovah Sabaoth, he is the King of glory."² No words can adequately describe the majesty and power of our great God! "... [H]e removeth kings, and setteth up kings:..."³ "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: Adonai shall have them in derision."⁴ As it is written, "I am Jehovah, and there is none else, there is no God beside me:..."⁵ Therefore, the prophet counseled Israel, "Sanctify Jehovah Sabaoth himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."⁶

When the young man Isaiah beheld Adonai sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and when he heard the seraphim cry, "... Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah Sabaoth: the whole earth is full of his glory," he cried out in anguish of spirit, "... Woe is me! for I am undone;...for mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah Sabaoth."⁷

Daniel had the same vision, declaring, "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands [1,000,000] ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand [100,000,000] stood before him:..."⁸

The vision of Saint John was very similar except that "... the

Lion of the tribe of Juda . . . a Lamb as it had been slain . . .” dominates the scene. John says:

*And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts [living creatures] and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand [100,000,000], and thousands of thousands;*⁹

Actually, the hosts of Jehovah are an innumerable company with fathomless and boundless strength and might.

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1. Three Primary Names**a. El, Elah, or Elohim = God**

1. Genesis 1:1

b. Jehovah (Yahweh) = LORD GOD

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|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Genesis 2:4 | 5. Exodus 6:3 |
| 2. Genesis 15:2 | 6. Isaiah 54:5 |
| 3. Exodus 3:4,5 | 7. Malachi 3:6 |
| 4. Exodus 3:14,15 | |

c. Adon or Adonai = Lord

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Joshua 3:13 | 6. Daniel 9:3,4 |
| 2. Psalm 2:4,6 | 7. Psalm 38:15 |
| 3. Psalm 8:1,9 | 8. Psalm 38:21,22 |
| 4. Psalm 68:19 | 9. Psalm 69:6 |
| 5. Exodus 34:23 | |

2. Compound Primary Names**a. Jehovah-Elohim = LORD-God**

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| 1. Genesis 2:4,5 | 4. Genesis 3:8,9 |
| 2. Genesis 2:7 | 5. Genesis 3:14,15 |
| 3. Genesis 2:21-24 | 6. Genesis 3:21 |

b. Adonai-Jehovah = Lord-GOD

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| 1. Genesis 15:2-5 | 4. II Samuel 7:11-16 |
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| 3. Genesis 15:6 | 6. Amos 3:13 |
| Romans 4:3 | 7. Amos 5:15,16 |
| Galatians 3:6 | 8. Amos 6:8 |

3. Compound Names With Elohim**a. El Elyon = Most High God**

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c. **El Shaddai** = Almighty God

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2. Genesis 17:5
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4. **Compound Names With Jehovah**a. **Jehovah-Jireh**

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2. Genesis 22:7,8,13

3. Matthew 6:28-30

b. **Jehovah-Rapha**

1. Exodus 15:26
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4. Exodus 15:26

c. **Jehovah-Nissi**

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d. **Jehovah-M'Kaddesh**

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3. Hebrews 13:12
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e. **Jehovah-Shalom**

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g. **Jehovah-Tsidkenu**

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i. **Jehovah-Sabaoth**

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Chapter Five

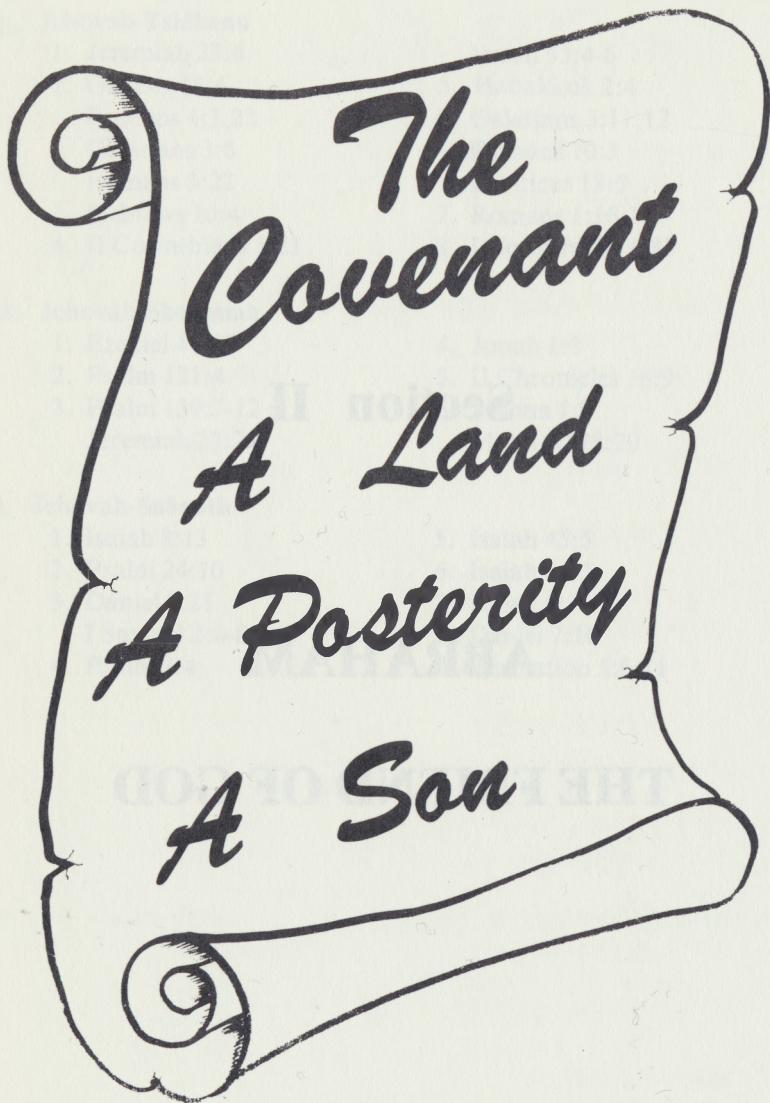
The Everlasting Covenant
God's Irrevocable
and Unchangeable Promise

Section II

ABRAHAM

THE FRIEND OF GOD

- 1. Introduction
- 2. The Everlasting Covenant
- 3. A God of Promise
- 4. The Promise of All Nations
- 5. The Promise of a Messiah
- 6. Isaac, the Child of Promise
- 7. The Covenant Confirmed to Isaac
- 8. Confirmed by a Rebekah



Chapter Five

God's Irrevocable and Unalterable Covenant

Introduction: Elohim's Covenant Promises

- 1. The Promised Land**
- 2. A Great Nation**
- 3. Blessing to All Nations**
- 4. The Covenant Sealed**
- 5. A Spiritual Covenant**
- 6. Isaac, the Child of Promise**
- 7. The Covenant Confirmed in Isaac**
- 8. Confirmed by an Oath**

God's Irrevocable and Unalterable Covenant

Abraham was a Chaldean, a Gentile. He grew to manhood in the plains country of Ur on the Euphrates River, about the year 2000 B.C. He lived among idolatrous people and his fathers served many gods.¹ He married a Chaldean girl named Sarai, and they two covenanted together to serve Elohim, the true and only living God. From the Acts we read Stephen's beautiful account:

... The glorious Elohim appeared to our ancestor Abraham in Iraq before he moved to Syria, and told him to leave his native land, to say good-bye to his relatives and to start out for a country that God would direct him to.²

Moreover,

... Jehovah had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.³

These were Elohim's Covenant promises to Abram. They reduce to three basic propositions, namely:

A Promised Land,

A great nation or posterity,

A blessing to all families and nations.

The Promised Land

“So he left the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran, in Syria, until his father died. Then God brought him here to the land of Israel, . . .”¹ At Shechem, Abram built an altar and worshiped. And Jehovah appeared to him there, saying, “. . . Unto thy seed will I give this land: . . .”²

Abram was now seventy-five years old and Sarai, sixty-five. They were in the Promised Land and Elohim was with them and constantly near them. He blessed and prospered them so that after a few years it was necessary for Abram's nephew, Lot, to separate himself from them, because their flocks were too large to remain together. Lot chose the well-watered Jordan valley; so Abram dwelt in the highlands of Canaan and built an altar between Bethel and Ai. And Jehovah met him there and repeated His Covenant promises to His servant:

*. . . Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. . . . Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.*³

Thus Canaan land was unequivocally covenanted to Abram and to his posterity after him. There can be no question but that Elohim, who always sees the whole scope of everything, the end from the beginning, promised this land to the patriarch, Abram. It should belong to Abram's seed forever.

A Great Nation

In addition Jehovah said to Abram, “. . . I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.”¹

Jehovah promised Abram not only the land of Canaan as far as he could see, north and south and east and west. He assured him also of an incalculable host of descendants. “And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.”²

Count the stars! Have you ever tried it? Hipparchus (150 B.C.) did. He said there were exactly 1026 stars. Later Ptolemy said, "No, Hipparchus missed a few. There are 1056." But hold everything! Modern science has kept on counting. With the naked eye, man can count about 3000 stars. And with all their marvelous equipment, scientists tells us that there are about 100 million stars in our galaxy alone. And we see billions of such galaxies!

The Covenant promises of the boundless Elohim to His servant Abram not only embraced the land, and that promise was positive and unquestionable, but also assured Abram a great and numberless posterity. His seed should multiply as the dust upon the earth and as the stars that shine in the heavens. His children should become a great nation and possess the Promised Land.

Blessing to All Nations

Even back in Ur, Jehovah had said unto Abram, ". . . thou shalt be a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."¹ The Covenant promised not only that Abram would have a homeland called Canaan and an innumerable posterity, but also that he would be the channel of great blessing to all the peoples of the earth.

This third facet of the Covenant made it universal. Thus it extended far beyond the borders of Canaan, and far beyond Abram's children who would inhabit the land. It provided marvelous benefits through Abram to all the ". . . families of the earth. . . ." This promise foresaw the coming of the Messiah, as Haggai the prophet proclaimed in later years, ". . . the desire of all nations shall come: . . ."²

From the very beginning Jehovah had planned the advent of the Messiah. The Covenant to Abram foresaw the long line of his descendents through Isaac and Jacob, to that beautiful night in Bethlehem when angels would herald the birth of the Christ Child.³ He would be the long-awaited Son of whom Elohim had spoken to Abram. The birth of son Isaac would be but a type or shadow of that greater Son to whom the promises unerringly pointed.⁴

So we see that Elohim's Covenant to Abram embraced these three basic areas:

The **land of Canaan** as a national home,

The **multiplying of Abram's children** into a great nation,

The **birth of a Son**, through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed.

The Covenant Sealed

One beautiful summer night, Abram left his tent and walked out to meditate beneath the glories of the heavens. As he looked into the canopy above, Elohim spoke to him, “. . . tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, **So shall thy seed be.**”¹ And Abram believed the Covenant promises of Jehovah; and Jehovah counted it to him for righteousness.²

These were marvelous days to Abram. He was blessed with all material wealth and with the favor of the Most High. But the years were rolling by, and Abram and Sarai had no son. “And Abram said, Adonai Jehovah, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?”³

Could not the great Jehovah Elohim give Abram a son? Or must this Syrian become Abram's heir? No! A thousand times, no! “. . . [H]e that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.”⁴

And Abram believed the word of Jehovah! That is the divine record. Though Abram was a Gentile from Chaldea,⁵ Jehovah ascribed righteousness to him on the basis of his faith and acceptance of the Covenant.⁶ Abram's faith pleased God; and the Creator smiled upon him and called him His friend.⁷

“And [Abram] said, Adonai Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?”⁸

In answer, we behold the magnificent graciousness of our God. “. . . Take me an heifer . . . a she goat . . . a ram . . . a turtledove, and a young pigeon.”⁹ With these Jehovah Himself would enter into and confirm His solemn Covenant with Abram.

While they still live, the makers of a covenant or will may change the provisions thereof, but after their death, they can never alter it. It is forever sealed by death.¹⁰ It appears that Eastern custom in Abram's day provided for a ceremony whereby men might pass through the form of death, thereby sealing their agreement irrevocably and unalterably, and yet live.

Following this custom, Jehovah told Abram to prepare these sacrifices that He (Jehovah) might come down and by His passing through the form of death, so seal and confirm His Covenant with Abram that there could never be the slightest trace of doubt regarding its permanent character. God was confirming an **everlasting Covenant** with His beloved servant.

Abram prepared these sacrifices according to custom, placing half of each of the animal carcasses on one side and half on the other side, leaving a passage between them. Then he waited for Jehovah. The afternoon slipped by, evening came on, and darkness settled over the earth. Then there appeared a smoking furnace and a burning lamp that slowly passed between those pieces. It was Jehovah! Abram's Jehovah Elohim Adonai, the Creator and Sustainer of the whole vast universe (in the form of a smoking furnace and a burning lamp), walked slowly through the path of death, between the carcasses. The Creator Himself was confirming to His servant a Covenant with such solemn assurance that Abram might know assuredly (and all his children might know assuredly) that this Covenant could never, never be abrogated. Stupendous, the condescension of our God!

God cannot lie. His naked word will stand and never fail.¹¹ But He was willing more abundantly to confirm His promise to Abram that His beloved servant and his posterity after him might know of a surety that God's promises to them would **stand unaltered eternally**. Not a thing that might ever arise could annul or abrogate this Covenant. **Nothing could relieve Jehovah of the solemn obligation** of fulfilling it to Abram and his children forever.

Nothing. Absolutely nothing could ever alter or revoke this Covenant with Abram and his seed after him! It was forever established in heaven above and here on earth below. Nothing can ever change or rescind the Covenant promises made to Abram! Jehovah bound Himself with a permanent obligation to fulfill His Covenant to Abram and to his children.

A Spiritual Covenant

Abram came back victorious from a war with the kings.¹ But his tent was empty and he and Sarai were growing old. They had no children. There were just the two of them, and Abram's spirit

was low. Their's was a childless home. They were a lonely old couple.

But in the night season, Jehovah whispered consolation to his faithful servant, “. . . Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.”² Though you are an old man and childless, do not be fearful. I am thy defense. And I am thy exceeding great reward. If you have Jehovah, you need never be afraid. If you abide under the shadow of the Almighty, you have reward exceedingly beyond your fondest imagination. Abram, if you have the fathomless Jehovah, the source and fountain of all life and all substance, you have everything.³

This Covenant that Jehovah had made with Abram was not a carnal thing. It was not limited to a parcel of real estate called Palestine, nor was it limited to a nation of people called the Jews. Jehovah spoke in His Covenant of natural things, but His words were spiritual. They went far beyond the earthly and the natural. As Jesus told the people, “. . . the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”⁴

The Scriptures teach us that the things which are seen are only temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.⁵ The Covenant of the great Jehovah to Abram was a spiritual Covenant. We must not limit the words of the boundless Jehovah Elohim to a small carnal arrangement.

Jehovah's irrevocable and unalterable Covenant to Abram went far beyond the land of Canaan to the whole vast world, as it is written, “So it is clear that God's promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendents was not because Abraham obeyed God's laws but because he trusted God to keep His promise.”⁶

And the Covenant went far beyond the natural posterity of Abram to all the peoples and families of the earth. For we read, “This is what the Scriptures mean when they say that God made Abraham the father of many nations. God will accept all people in every nation who trust God as Abraham did.”⁷

Isaac, the Child of Promise

Abram was seventy-five years old when his father died in Haran, and he and Sarai and nephew Lot responded to the heavenly call and moved southward into the Promised Land. Since

then many things have happened. They have enjoyed great blessing materially and spiritually as they have worshiped their God. But one important thing has **not** happened. Twenty-four years have rolled by—Abram is nearing the century mark and Sarai nearing ninety. And yet, Jehovah has given them no son.

Then “. . . Jehovah appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am El Shaddai [“the all-faithful, all-powerful, and all-sufficient God”]; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee,”¹ And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him.

First, Jehovah changed their names. Abram (“high father”) was changed to Abraham (“father of many nations”); and Sarai (“contentious”) was changed to Sarah (“princess”).

Then Jehovah repeated His promises to the patriarch, “. . . I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant,”²

“And Elohim said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac [meaning “laughter”]: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.”³

It was at this time, in Abraham’s ninety-ninth year, that God instituted circumcision, setting aside Abraham and his family as the singular people of Jehovah. The Jewish or Hebrew nation was formally launched by this rite of circumcision. They should ever be a holy people, separated and cut away from the idolatrous peoples of the world. Abraham was no longer a Chaldean: he was now a Hebrew, the father of the Jewish nation, which was especially chosen to be the custodian of the great truths of the one and only Jehovah Elohim.

“And Jehovah visited Sarah as he had said, and Jehovah did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age,”⁴ The child Isaac was born into the home: a very special child, a child of promise.

Abraham loved Isaac, this long-awaited son. The lad was the joy and delight of his fond parents through the ensuing years. He was the heir of God’s Covenant, Abraham’s most cherished possession, as well as heir of all Abraham’s earthly assets which had grown to immense proportions. There could no greater joy

and satisfaction fill the heart of this old man than of walking in the cool of the evening with his son and of their communing together with God. Elohim was their God. His Covenant was their Covenant. No people on earth were so privileged as they.

The Covenant Confirmed in Isaac

Then there came another splendid summer night. Abraham awakened in the wee still hours of the morning. He gazed out through the open flap of his tent door at God's good earth shrouded with night and at the heavens studded with their myriad of jewels. His heart was filled with pleasure, as in the presence of Jehovah he meditated upon the Creator's handiwork and His glorious Covenant promises to him.¹

His fond glance turned to the lad peacefully sleeping but an arm's length from him. The brightness of the eastern night crept in, outlining the form of the sleeping boy and faintly illuminating his upturned face.

Abraham's thoughts wandered back to that beautiful night so like this one but years past, when Jehovah had promised him that his children should be as the stars in the heavens for multitude. He then had had no son, but God had insisted that he would have and that such should fill his heart with laughter. Years had rolled by and near him lay the promised child, now a young man about sixteen years old—a cause of laughter and delight to his doubly-fond parents.

But hark! Someone speaks! It is the voice of Jehovah, "Abraham."

And he answered, "Behold, here I am."

And Jehovah said, "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee unto the land of Moriah: and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of."²

That was all. Just a simple word of command from the LORD, Jehovah. But Abraham was stunned. Did God really mean that? He struggled desperately within his own soul. What a staggering blow!

Abraham was accustomed to obeying God. He had confirmed to his heart's fullest satisfaction through the years that Jehovah

Elohim loved him. And even in this crucial hour he was conscious of the Divine Presence there in his tent awaiting his response. This continual walk with God had given his faith a strength that had stood fast under every trial. But this demand, "offer thy son," was like a great avalanche crushing down upon him. Offer thy son, thine only son, Isaac! How could God fulfill His Covenant if Isaac were slain? How could God require something so absolutely contrary to all reason? If he offered his son as a burnt-offering, God's Covenant would fail. For God's Covenant was confirmed in Isaac for an **everlasting Covenant**.

How? Oh, how? But Jehovah did not require that Abraham answer the "how." Jehovah required only that Abraham believe His word and leave the rest with Him. And this he did. Abraham's faith mustered up strength to believe that Jehovah was able to raise his son even from the dead, and thus to fulfill His Covenant. For Jehovah's promise could not fail.

Early that morning the household of the patriarch was astir. Abraham with his beloved Isaac and two servants saddled an ass, prepared a bundle of wood, a torch of fire, and other necessary provisions, and set out on a journey to Mount Moriah to offer a sacrifice unto the LORD, Jehovah.

On the third morning out, Abraham told the two servants they might stay by the camp while he and the lad went to yonder mountain to sacrifice unto their God. Isaac carried the wood while his father carried the fire and a knife. What determined deliberation! All possible hindrance was left behind. Abraham purposed to obey God.

There on the mount they set about building an altar. No ecstasy filled their hearts—only a man's will trained by years of walking with God. Abraham's understanding was filled with darkness. There was no light anywhere. He did not understand, but **he believed God**.

Loving hands and a breaking heart bound the lad hand and foot and placed him upon the altar. Abraham reached forth and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of Jehovah called to him out of heaven. ". . . Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."³

The trial of Abraham's faith was complete. It had stood the test of the fire, proving it more precious than the finest of gold. God was manifestly pleased. He would reward such faith.

Confirmed by an Oath

Jehovah had confirmed His Covenant promises with Abraham. Through the countless ages to come, they were sure, irrevocable, and unalterable. But God, being “. . . willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: . . .”¹

Could God lie? Is it possible for the eternal Jehovah Elohim Adonai to be found in falsehood? Might His promise eventually fail, being annulled or forgotten through the millenniums of time that were to come, thus proving Him unfaithful and making Him a liar?

God knows how quickly our darkened hearts forget Him. Therefore, He called Abraham, his son Isaac, and them of all the ages to come, including you and me in this wicked twentieth century after Christ, to stand by as witnesses, while He, the unchangeable Jehovah Elohim, **took an oath of faithfulness, swearing by Himself² (for there is none greater) that He would fulfill His everlasting Covenant! Jehovah's Covenant promises made to Abraham will stand forever!**

Many centuries later the apostle wrote of this solemn occasion to the Hebrew Christians:

*Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things [His promise and His oath] in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil [into heaven itself]; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, . . .*³

Jehovah has sworn by Himself that the Covenant will be fulfilled. As sure as there is an omnipotent God in heaven, just so

sure are the promises.⁴ The Christian's hope is built upon the Solid Rock. He can sing with the song writer:

*His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood;
When all around my soul gives way,
He then is all my hope and stay.*

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7. The Covenant Confirmed in Isaac

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Patriarchal Caravan

*“And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.
And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, . . .”
Genesis 13:2,3*

Chapter Six

The Covenant Fulfilled in the Messiah

Introduction: First Natural, Then Spiritual

- 1. Dual Application of the Promises**
- 2. Essential to the Scriptures**
- 3. Abraham's Seed Was the Messiah**
- 4. Primary Theme of the Bible**
- 5. Pilgrims in a Strange Land**
- 6. Children of Abraham**
- 7. The Law Given 430 Years Later**

The Covenant

Fulfilled in the Messiah

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:”² These are the words of our Lord Jesus, and they are timeless and eternally true. The things of the flesh and of this world are only temporal; they are destined to pass away with time. On the other hand, the things of the Holy Spirit will endure forever.

Paul was touching on the same theme when he wrote, “. . . that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.”³ This life is only natural and carnal. “. . . [F]lesh and blood [our natural bodies] cannot inherit the kingdom of God;”⁴ Now we bear the image of the earthy, but we shall be changed and bear the image of the heavenly.

Dual Application of the Promises

Elohim’s Covenant with Abraham was given to a man in the flesh. It had a primary application to man’s natural life in this world. But Elohim is not a mortal. And His promises to men were never limited to this mortal life.

The blessed and everlasting Covenant that Elohim confirmed to Abraham did not end with his earthly life of 175 years. It definitely had a dual application or fulfillment. Timewise, it first involved the birth of Isaac and Jacob and their posterity after them, and the acquisition of the land of Canaan as a national home. But secondly, and far more fundamentally, it involved the birth and ministry of Abraham’s greater Son, the Messiah, through whom “. . . all families of the earth [should] be blessed.”¹

The promises were fulfilled in the natural realm. Abraham’s natural descendants did multiply and become a great nation. They did take over Canaan land and possess it. And these blessings have prevailed to this earthly people to the extent of their fidelity to their

God through the centuries since. They still have a claim on the Promised Land and they still play a part in God's prophetic plan.

But the Messiah came in His appointed time and died upon the wretched cross of Calvary for this people, Israel, besides all them in every nation who would receive Him and believe on His name.² Abraham's posterity through His Son, the Messiah, has truly become numberless as the stars that shine from the heavens and as the sands upon the seashore,³ and that heavenly Canaan land has become their undisputed home.

Essential to the Scriptures

This principle of dual application and fulfillment is common and essential to the Scriptures. The first is earthly, natural, and temporal; the second is spiritual and eternal.

We know that the Passover in Egypt was a direct type of the crucifixion of the Messiah.¹ It was worked out and experienced in a natural and earthly fashion. But it was designed of God to be a beautiful type of something infinitely greater, spiritual and eternal. Jesus was that Paschal "... Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."² Paul declared that "... all these things happened unto them [to Israel] for ensamples [types and patterns]: and they are written for our admonition,..."³ The Tabernacle itself, which was built at Sinai, and eventually the temple in Jerusalem, are declared to be a shadow and pattern of things in heaven.⁴

It is always "... that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."⁵ So we are admonished as we travel this pilgrim way, suffering

*... our light affliction, which is but for a moment, ... [to] look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*⁶

Abraham's Seed Was the Messiah

When He made the promise to Abraham, God's finger was pointing way beyond Isaac, directly at the Messiah. Isaac was the natural son; Messiah was the spiritual Son. The Covenant was confirmed in Isaac; it was fulfilled in the Messiah. "Now to

Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, **which is the Messiah.**"¹ The promises or Covenant confirmed to Abraham and to his posterity were to be realized through the Son who was the Messiah.

The gospel, or good news of salvation through faith in the Messiah, was preached to Abraham. For God said to Abraham, "...In thee shall all nations be blessed." By this God meant that He "...would justify the heathen through faith,..."² "That is what the Scriptures mean when they say that God made Abraham the father of many nations. God will accept all people in every nation who trust God as Abraham did."³

Isaac was a type of the Messiah. He was a child of promise. When He first communed with Abram in his native home in Ur of Chaldea, Elohim told him of a son, "...I will make of thee a great nation,..."⁴ When Abram reached Shechem in the land of Canaan and built an altar of worship, Elohim said, "...Unto thy seed will I give this land:..."⁵

Eliezer, the Syrian servant, became Abram's trusted steward. At one time it appeared that he might become Abram's heir. But not so! "...This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir."⁶

Finally, Ishmael was born to Abram of the Egyptian slave, Hagar. And Abram prayed to Elohim, "...O that Ishmael might live before thee!"⁷ But again, God said, emphatically, No!

*... Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.... [M]y covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee....*⁸

Primary Theme of the Bible

We should thoroughly understand that God's promised Messiah was the central theme of all the Scriptures. His coming was the burden of the prophets. They all

...enquired and searched diligently, ... Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Messiah which was in them

*did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of the Messiah, and the glory that should follow.*¹

After His resurrection, Jesus spoke sharply to His disciples:

*. . . O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not the Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. . . . These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.*²

Shortly after that wonderful Day of Pentecost, ten days after the ascension of our Lord, Peter and John went up into the temple at the hour of prayer. A certain man lame from birth sat at the gate called Beautiful asking alms. The two disciples, being full of the Holy Spirit, responded to his need:

*. . . In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And [Peter] took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.*³

Then Peter preached to the multitude that gathered:

The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; . . . God hath raised [Him] from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: . . . Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. . . . Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our

*fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.*⁴

Pilgrims in a Strange Land

Abraham lived in Canaan for a full century (100 years), not in possession, but as a pilgrim and a stranger.¹ "...[God] gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child."² Either the Covenant promise had a heavenly-land purpose and application; or else God was trifling with His servant! Evidently Abraham believed the former, and so do we. Abraham's faith and confidence looked forward to a spiritual and eternal land of promise.

Abraham's son Isaac dwelt in the same Promised Land 180 years, and his son Jacob, 130 years, but they received no inheritance in it. "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off. . . [declaring] plainly that they seek a country. . . that is, [a] heavenly [country]."³

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews is often called the Westminster Cathedral of the Bible, because in it are buried the long list of the Worthies of Faith. This shining galaxy of great men and women concludes with these words: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."⁴ The **Living Letters** states it this way, "Though they trusted God and won His approval, they didn't receive all God had promised them; For God had arranged even better rewards for us and He wanted them to wait and share them with us."⁵

It is evident that God's immutable Covenant with Abraham was not intended of God and was not received by Abraham, as a carnal thing of this world. If the Covenant had involved merely children and possession of the land, God could have given Abraham a full bevy of sons and daughters and He could have given him the whole land of Canaan then and there. But the Covenant to Abraham was merely a strong link in the Creator's total plan of redemption through His adorable Son, the man Christ Jesus.

Children of Abraham

Abraham loved his son, Ishmael, though he was the child of a slave woman. And God consented to bless the lad and make of him a great nation.¹ (And he did; Ishmael became the father of the Arab nations.) “But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee. . . .”² For the Covenant was not a carnal nor fleshly arrangement; it was built upon the sure promise of a Son, the Messiah, who would redeem men from their sins. And it was conditioned by **faith**, by faith alone. “. . . Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.”³

Abraham was accounted of God as the **Father of the Faithful**. Children not of promise were not necessarily counted as children of the Covenant.

*Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise [men of faith] are counted for the seed.*⁴

“Know ye therefore that they which are of faith [in the Messiah], the same are the children of Abraham.”⁵ These are the children that God primarily had in mind when He said to Abraham, “Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.”⁶

Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians:

*. . . ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*⁷

To the Romans Paul wrote:

. . . the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was. . . to Abraham, [and] to his seed, . . . through the righteousness of

*faith. . . that. . . the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) . . .*⁸

The Law Given 430 Years Later

. . . God's promise to save through faith—and God wrote this promise down and signed it—could not be canceled or changed four hundred and thirty years later when God gave the Ten Commandments.

If obeying those laws could save us, then it is obvious that we would not be saved in the same way Abraham was, by accepting God's promise.

*Well then, why were the laws given? They were added, after the promise was given, to show men they are guilty and in need of God's help that comes from having faith. But this system of law was to last only until the coming of the Messiah, the Child to whom God's promise was made.*¹

In his Corinthian letter, Paul contrasted the Law or Old Covenant with the Spirit or New Covenant. The former was a carnal, earthly, and temporal type of the second. The giving of the Law was commemorated through the centuries on the Day of Pentecost. It was a type of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit by the risen and glorified Messiah, Jesus.² The former law was carnal and written on tables of stone; the latter was the Holy Spirit of God. It was God's law written by the Spirit upon the ". . . fleshy tables of the heart."³ Let us follow Paul's comparison from the **Living Letters**:

*The old way, . . . the Ten Commandments, ends in death;
in the new way, the Holy Spirit gives them life.*

*Yet that old system. . . [began] with such glory. . . soon began to
fade away.*

. . . [E]xpect far greater glory. . . when the Holy Spirit is

giving life.

*If the plan that leads to doom was glorious,
much more glorious is the plan that makes men right with
God.*

*... [T]hat first glory as shown in Moses' face is worth nothing
at all
in comparison with Christ's overwhelming glory.*

*... [T]he old system... came to an end...
the glory we have now... goes on forever.⁴*

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, . . . That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.”⁵

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1. Dual Application of the Promises

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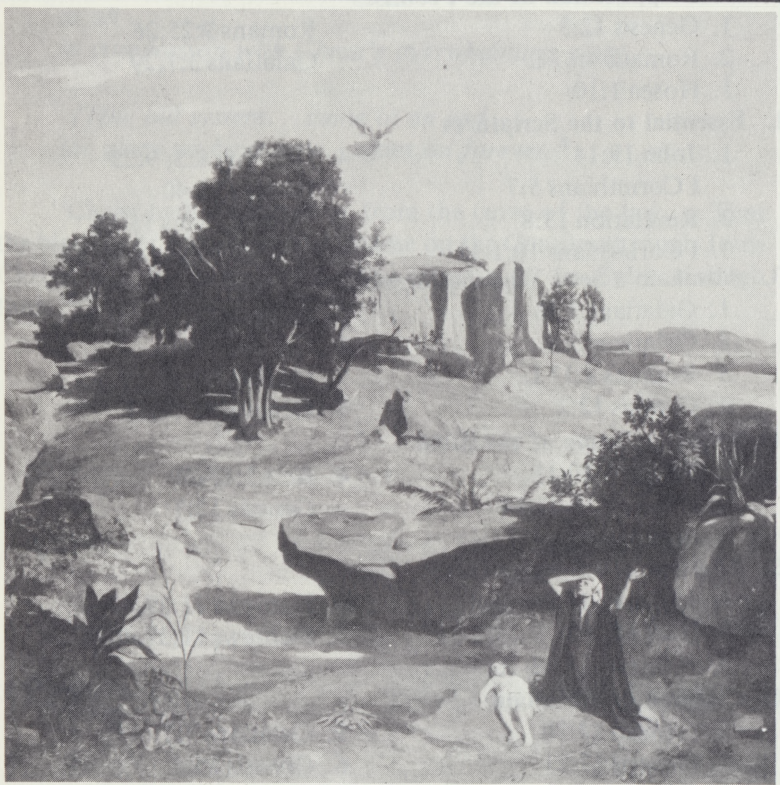
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Hagar in the Wilderness
by Jean Baptiste Camille Corot, 1796-1875
The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
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Chapter Seven

Those Divine Allegories

Introduction: Promise Versus Flesh

1. Blessed of God, but No Son

2. Ishmael, a Son

3. Hagar and Strife

4. The Promise

5. Cast out the Bondwoman

6. Esau or Jacob

7. Two Opposite Claims

8. The Claim of Faith Prevails

Those Divine Allegories

... [I]t is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. . . . But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.¹

In this stirring allegorical story the apostle Paul describes some of his deepest convictions: **the children of promise** can never share their heavenly inheritance with **the children of good works** (the natural flesh). Men do not inherit the eternal blessings of God by natural means or lineage. God's favors are attained through the channel of faith and grace alone. The Old Covenant given through Moses at Mount Sinai was a Covenant of good works. Its rewards were obtained by the physical efforts of men. It, like the birth of Ishmael, was natural to this world.

The New Covenant was never so. It was based solely upon faith in the sure word of Jehovah. Its fulfillment could be realized only through the miraculous provision of El Shaddai. Only by a divine miracle could Isaac be born. And so it is written, "...if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God.² For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."³

Blessed of God, but No Son

Abram had dwelt in the land of Canaan ten full years. He had

walked the length and breadth of it, viewing its rolling hills and valleys, and reveling in its beauty. In spite of the fact that it was owned and possessed by a strong Canaanite people, God had surely said, “. . . to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.”¹

His cattle and sheep and camels, yes, all his goods had multiplied greatly, for God had wonderfully blessed him, but he had no son! His material blessings seemed endless, and God’s promises of a great posterity were tremendous indeed; but Abram and his beloved Sarai were growing old. Fully three quarters of a century had dispelled her youth and a decade more his own. Abram was now eighty-five years old! The possibility of their home’s enjoying the laughter of children was fading rapidly with the vanishing years. Jehovah’s promise of a son simply had not materialized.

Ishmael, a Son

Abram’s faith in God’s word had stood dauntless before the onslaught of the relentless years. But now at last even he yielded to a questionable expediency. Sarai suggested, Take now my Egyptian handmaid, Hagar, to wife. Perchance God will give us children by her. Thus in his old age, there was born to the patriarch a son, Ishmael.¹

But the fond slave mother was not wise. In her joy she became lifted up and she despised her erstwhile mistress. She fondled her precious babe and looked out over the vast wealth of her lord, envisioning the large inheritance that would surely fall to this her son, Abram’s first-born and only heir. Her folly brought her grief. Sarai dealt sharply with her, for after all, she was only a slave. Even so, Hagar’s hopes were well-founded. Abram himself looked upon the child, though born of this Egyptian slave, as his proper and only heir.

Hagar and Strife

Fourteen more years rolled by. Ishmael was becoming a young man. One day Abram rested beneath the abundant shade of an old olive tree. He was lost in thought. His meditations carried him back over a full life that spanned a century. Before him passed in deliberate succession the panorama of the years—from his being a

young man in Ur of the Chaldees, to that never-to-be-forgotten afternoon when he and Sarai together with nephew Lot and with all their earthly possessions had first set foot on the verdant soil of Canaan. He had there erected an altar to Jehovah and worshiped. Elohim had spoken from heaven, making with him a Covenant filled with marvelous assurances to him and to his posterity after him.

Then there was that beautiful night beneath the star-studded heavens when God had declared, "...So shall thy seed be." God had confirmed these promises by the passing of the smoking furnace and the burning lamp through the path of death between the carcasses.¹

Finally he had taken the Egyptian slave to wife and Ishmael had been born.² But contrary to all expectations, the home had been filled with continual strife ever since. God had promised him a son. But Ishmael had brought only division and dissension into the home. Had he missed God's plan in taking Hagar? How else could the promises be fulfilled? Surely Ishmael was his proper heir?³

The Promise

As Abram thus mused, Jehovah appeared to him, saying, "...I am El Shaddai; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly."¹

Abram fell upon his face before the LORD and listened. Elohim reiterated His Covenant with His servant, confirming its eternal and unchangeable character. It was at this time that God changed Abram's name to Abraham, "father of many nations." Moreover, God declared that his wife, too, would no longer be called Sarai, meaning "contentious," but Sarah, "princess," would her name be called. And she would bear him a son indeed.

Abraham's faith struggled with the greatness of God's promise, "...Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? ... O that Ishmael might live before thee!"²

But stand by and listen, all ye ages of men. Is anything too hard for El Shaddai, the almighty Elohim? This princess, Sarah

should bear Abraham a son indeed; and he would call his name Isaac, meaning "laughter." God's promises laugh at impossibilities. "... I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."³

God heard Abraham's plea. He would bless Ishmael and make of him a great nation. (Ishmael became the father of the Arab nations.) But one born of an Egyptian slave could never be Abraham's spiritual heir. The heir of promise must be a child of promise. A Covenant conditioned by faith must be inherited by a miraculous son of faith, even the child Isaac.

By natural custom and the usage of this world, Ishmael, being Abraham's first-born son, should be heir to all the blessings and wealth of the patriarch. But not so in God's economy. Abraham was a man of faith. God had given him a Covenant conditioned by faith. Therefore, his heir must be a child of faith, regardless of all other conditions. Both Ishmael and Isaac were born of Abraham, but only one could be the true heir. Their claims were at absolute antipodes: that of the flesh and that of the promise. The one was earthly and temporal; the other was spiritual and eternal.

Cast out the Bondwoman

Herein is displayed an eternal principle in God's dealing with men. Paul the apostle refers to it in Romans, saying, "... They which are the children of the flesh [as Ishmael was], these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."¹ By all earthly laws, Ishmael had full title as heir to all his father's wealth; Isaac, fourteen years younger had none. But God's heirs receive their title by grace, through faith, as Isaac did! Elohim's later word to Abraham is very significant, "Take now thy son **thine only son** Isaac, . . ."² Ishmael was completely ignored. Isaac was Abraham's **only son**! Certainly, Isaac was the promised child and heir of the divine Covenant.

The contention in Abraham's home between Sarah and Hagar finally reached a climax at a feast prepared in honor of the baby Isaac on the day that he was weaned. Sarah saw the fourteen-year-old Ishmael mocking her child. "... [H]e that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, . . ."³ So it has always been. "Wherefore she said to Abraham,

Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son even with Isaac.” Now this thing was deeply grievous in the sight of Abraham; nevertheless it was from the LORD. Jehovah said, “. . . [H]earken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.”⁴

WHAT IF . . .



“Stop worrying, Abraham. Isaac’s and Ishmael’s descendants will probably never run into one another.”

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This is a hard saying. It is still grievous in man’s eyes. But God has always declared it, “. . . the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”⁵ “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. . . Except a man be born. . . of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”⁶ “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”⁷ “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”⁸ Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with Isaac. And that, Brethren, is Jehovah’s final word!⁹

Esau or Jacob

By faith, Isaac, Abraham’s child of promise, sojourned in the land of Canaan. To him were born two sons: Esau the elder and Jacob the younger. God sets them forth in the Scriptures as another beautiful allegory of His dealings in grace.

The birthright or inheritance belonged to the firstborn Esau, but God promised it to Jacob, even before either of them was born. Jehovah said to their mother, Rebekah, “. . . Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people. . . the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the

younger.”¹ (The greater or stronger shall serve the lesser.) “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated [abominated].”²

God has always dealt with men on the basis of divine grace and mercy, not merit nor human effort. Jehovah chose Jacob because he foreknew³ that Jacob would prevail in his life through faith.⁴ He rejected Esau because he foresaw a bitter and profane person without faith. Esau sought the blessing of his father with tears.⁵ But it was the earthly inheritance that he desired, not the heavenly. He was a carnal man.

Two Opposite Claims

The all-seeing eye of Jehovah foresaw the spirit that would dominate the lives of these two sons. Esau was an earthly-minded man without faith to appreciate or value the Covenant. The only articles of value in his estimation were the things of time and of this earth, material things. He did prize his father’s herds of cattle, sheep, camels, and oxen. But eternal things and things of the Spirit interested him but little. The Scriptures declare, “. . . without faith it is impossible to please [God]: . . .”¹ Obviously, then, Esau could not please God. So we understand the divine statement, Esau have I hated or abominated—a man in whom is no faith. He very much wanted the earthly possessions, but had very little interest in the promises.

In contrast, Jacob, though proverbial for his cunning and craftiness, had a heart of faith to believe God. The inheritance of the Covenant that his grandfather Abraham had so highly prized and that was now the joy and confidence of his father Isaac, was precious in the eyes of this young man. Moreover he was well aware of God’s promise that the inheritance should be his even though he was the younger.

But Jacob manifested the same impatience current among men of all the ages. Rather than abide God’s time which would most surely have come in its due season, he seized upon an opportunity to deceitfully wrest the birthright from his elder brother. In thus rushing God’s hand, he came into possession of not only the blessing that God had surely given him, but also much trouble and sorrow besides. As we may well say, he received the birthright, not

because of, but in spite of his cunning and deceit. Deep down in his soul was a living faith that Jehovah saw and loved. It eventually burst forth, overcoming and prevailing against those baser traits in his life.²

The Claim of Faith Prevails

Again, we face the fact that God's Covenant with Abraham and his children after him was a Covenant conditioned by faith, to be inherited, not by the natural children (sons of the flesh), but by the children of faith. Paul wrote regarding the Jewish people to the Roman Christians:

... [T]hey are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.¹

Therefore, it is written, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise."² If we belong to the Messiah, and are committed to Him by a living faith, then are we Abraham's children and heirs with Isaac and with Jacob.³ We are the children of God by faith in the Messiah, Christ Jesus.⁴

Jehovah's Covenant was given to Abraham by grace through the righteousness of faith.⁵ This same Covenant has been handed down through the ages to succeeding generations on exactly the same basis. By grace men are saved through faith. Not by works, it is the gift of God.⁶

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7. Two Opposite Claims

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8. The Claim of Faith Prevails

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Section III

THE

KINGDOM OF JEHOVAH



The Blood of the Lamb

*“And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop,
and dip it in the blood that is in the bason,
and strike the lintel and the two side posts
with the blood that is in the bason; . . .”*

*“ . . . [A]nd when he seeth the blood upon the lintel,
and on the two side posts, Jehovah will pass over the door,
and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses
to smite you.” Exodus 12:22,23.*

Chapter Eight

The First Passover or The Birth of a Nation

Introduction: Abraham

1. Joseph Sold Into Egypt

2. The Iron Furnace

3. Moses Is Born

4. The Burning Bush

5. Ten Grievous Plagues

6. The Passover

7. The Great Red Sea

8. A Nation Is Born

9. Foreshadowing the Messiah

The First Passover

And he [Abram] said, Adonai Jehovah, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?... And when the sun was going down, . . . lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he [Adonai Jehovah] said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not their's, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; And also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. ¹

It was no secret to the patriarchs that their children would develop into a nation under the heel of a foreign oppressor. For Adonai Jehovah had told Abraham about it in very plain terms. And Abraham repeated it over and over to his children and to his grandchildren. It was a part of the scriptural record that was handed down from generation to generation.

God told Abraham that there was a dark, searing furnace of affliction ahead for his children, and that in it they would develop into a mighty nation. Tribulation has ever been the path through which Jehovah has led His people. They have always been pilgrims and sojourners in this world. They grow best in the grace of God under the pressure of persecution. That is the basic reason that God is operating this world with all its disappointments and cares. He is raising Christians—men and women of great faith in their God.²

Joseph Sold Into Egypt

A dark day dawned in Jacob's life when his son, Joseph, was sold by his brethren to the Ishmaelite traders, who carried him to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard. But

God's plan for Israel was beginning to unfold. Joseph was a dreamer of dreams and God was in it. His heart was tender toward his God. He cherished a living faith in Jehovah as had Abraham and Isaac and his father, Jacob, before him.

Joseph went to Egypt as a slave, but God lifted him up to the throne at the right hand of Pharaoh. Under his guidance, food was stored in granaries for a famine that Joseph's God said was coming.

When it hit, the famine hit hard, not only in Egypt but throughout Canaan as well. So Jacob and his children and his grandchildren moved down into Egypt where there was food, seventy-five souls in all.¹ And Jehovah said to Jacob, "... I am Elohim, the Elohim of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: **I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: . . .**"²

Jehovah did not send Jacob and his family into the Egyptian furnace by themselves. **He went with them!** Jehovah has always stood close to His people in their sufferings and tribulations. He went down into Egypt with them and He walked with them through all the four hundred years of their sojourn as strangers and as slaves to their Egyptian masters.

The Iron Furnace of Affliction¹

For many years Jacob's children enjoyed the best that Egypt could provide. And the family grew and multiplied exceedingly. Then

*... there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: . . . Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. . . . And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, . . .*²

About four centuries crept slowly by. Israel became a slave

people, serving their Egyptian masters. The children were born in slavery. They knew nothing else than the oppression of the land of their bondage.

The Egyptian furnace of Israel's bondage burned severely. Their taskmasters afflicted them with rigorous burdens. But Jehovah was with His people. As it is written, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."³ In spite of their affliction, the Israelites continued to multiply so that at the close of their servitude their number was recorded at some 600,000 men able-bodied for war, besides women and children and old men.⁴ At four persons to a family, this amount would total about 2,500,000 (two and one-half million) souls.

Moses Is Born

Near the end of the fourth century of Israel's sojourn in Egypt, Moses was born. When he was three months old, his mother, Jochebed, could no longer conceal him from Pharaoh's officers who were severely charged to cast every baby boy into the River Nile. So she prepared an ark of bulrushes and placed the child among the reeds that lined the edge of the river where Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe. When she saw the child, Pharaoh's daughter loved him and took him for her own, hiring Moses' mother to come to the palace to nurse him for her.

Thus Moses was reared and trained in the palace of the great Pharaoh of Egypt. But when he was come to about forty years of age, he refused any longer to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be associated with the people of Jehovah.¹ For he had a living faith in his mother's God.

He was forced to flee from the wrath of the king into the desert lands of Arabia. And there he herded sheep for his father-in-law, Jethro, for many, many years. Jehovah was training a man to be a shepherd over His people, Israel.

It should be kept clearly in mind that Moses was a type or pattern of the Messiah. Moses' ministry to Israel foreshadowed the ministry of the Messiah that was to come. By the spirit of prophecy

he declared, "Jehovah thy Elohim will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; . . ." ² We should watch the story of Moses very carefully. His life and ministry portrayed the life and ministry of the coming Messiah.

The Burning Bush

When He had finished training him, Jehovah appeared to Moses one morning in a burning bush. Moses noticed the fire, which was nothing extraordinary. But when the fire continued to burn and the bush was not consumed, Moses turned aside to see why the bush did not burn up.

And . . . Elohim called unto him out of the midst of the bush, . . . Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. . . . And Elohim said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. . . . The Jehovah Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: . . . ¹

And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of El Shaddai [the almighty God], but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, . . . Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. . . . And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you Elohim: . . . ²

Ten Grievous Plagues

Pharaoh was not about to let this horde of slaves go free. They were too valuable to his kingdom. But the great God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the Covenant promises, has ways of persuading men. Under Moses' hand, Jehovah meted out plagues upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt and her gods, ten bitter plagues, grievous beyond description:

(1) Blood! Blood! The River Nile and all its tributaries, and all the water in Egypt was turned to blood.¹ But Pharaoh repented not;

(2) Frogs filled the land, entering into houses, bedchambers, and kneading troughs. Pharaoh was moved and agreed to let Israel go. But he did not mean it;

(3) Lice filled the land. All the dust of the ground turned to lice. But Pharaoh hearkened not;

(4) Flies swarmed into the land and filled every house, even the palace of Pharaoh. Yet there were no flies in Goshen where Israel dwelt. Pharaoh said this time, "I'll let you go." But he did not;

(5) All the beasts of Egypt were smitten with murrain: the cattle, horses, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep.² Pharaoh sent to check on Goshen. There was no murrain there. But he hardened his heart against Jehovah and against Israel;

(6) Every man and every beast in all Egypt broke out with grievous boils. But Pharaoh nursed his boils and hardened his heart;

(7) Hail smote all Egypt. Thunder and lightning and hail poured upon the land, smiting man and beast and crops, and breaking every tree. Only in Goshen there was no hail;

(8) Locusts filled the skies and ate up every living plant that remained in Egypt. But Pharaoh's heart was hard. He would not let Israel go;

(9) Darkness covered the land: darkness that could be felt! Only in Goshen was there light. And Pharaoh was filled with anger. "...Get thee from me, take heed to thyself, see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die."³ Temper was running thin, but Pharaoh's back was bowed against Jehovah and Moses and this host of slaves; so

(10) Nine plagues were past. Only one remained: death to the firstborn of every man and every beast in all of Egypt. Moses declared this tenth and final judgment to the hard and calloused Pharaoh. Then Moses went out from his presence in a great anger!⁴

The Passover

The hour of deliverance had come! Every family of Israel

chose itself a lamb—a perfect, flawless lamb from the flock. They kept it on a tether until the appointed hour. Then on the evening of the fourteenth day of the first month (this month became the beginning of Israel's sacred year), every man slew his lamb and sprinkled its blood with a bunch of hyssop upon the lintel and the two side posts of his home in Goshen. Then he roasted the lamb with fire. And he and his family ate their last meal in Egypt. It was a night never to be forgotten. It has been commemorated by Israel as an annual feast through all the ages since. It was Jehovah's Passover.

They ate their meal in haste with all their belongings assembled for the journey. They were dressed and packed and ready to leave Egypt forever! For Jehovah had commanded:

*And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is Jehovah's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; . . .*¹

At the stroke of midnight, the sword fell. Jehovah passed throughout the land, and “. . . smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.”² There was death in **every home** and **every stable** and **every barn** throughout all Pharaoh's dominion—save only in Goshen. For when he saw the blood upon the lintel and on the two side posts of a home in Goshen, the death angel of Jehovah **passed over that home**. But where the blood had not been sprinkled, every firstborn was slain.

Approximately 125,000 Israelite families in Goshen slew their lambs. Every family offered a lamb. And a typical family consisted of father and mother, three or four sons and their wives, and two or three children to each son, making roughly eighteen or twenty souls. If a family were too small to eat a whole lamb, two families shared it together. Then every year Israel was to offer this Passover lamb, looking forward to that supreme sacrifice to which the Holy Spirit unerringly pointed. This annual event in Israel was observed

for the hundreds of years that followed until the Messiah came.

Close attention should be given to the fact that the death angel bearing the sword of judgment over Israel and Egypt that eventful night was guided by only one standard. He did not enter any home to examine the occupants. He did not check whether the dwellers there were Israelites or not, if they were black, yellow, brown, or white. He did not ask if they were good or bad, moral or immoral. Only when He saw the sprinkled blood would He pass over a home. It was only the blood that covered the sins of the people and redeemed them to God. If the blood were not there, the glittering sword pierced through the heart of every firstborn grandfather, every firstborn father, every firstborn son, and every firstborn grandson. Throughout all Goshen and Egypt the death angel meted out judgment in that fateful hour.

This then is the message that the Holy Ghost was declaring through Moses. It is the message of the Passover. Believe God's promise of preparing for you a very special Lamb, so pure and guiltless that His blood sprinkled on the lintel and side-posts of your heart will cover and eradicate all your sins. The blood of that Lamb will be sufficient to blot out all the sins of all believing men in every age of this whole wide world. Jehovah called that Lamb the Messiah.

“And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one [or more] dead.”³ Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, “. . . Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, . . . go, serve Jehovah, . . . And the Egyptians were urgent . . . for they said, We be all dead men.”⁴

And the children of Israel moved out, 2,500,000 strong. They went out with their families and with their flocks and with all their possessions. In fact, the Egyptians loaded them with everything they could carry or even desire.

The Great Red Sea

Soon after midnight, the children of Israel left Egypt. They marched and Jehovah marched with them. “And Jehovah went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and

by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; . . . ”¹ They walked southward, as Jehovah led the way, and they encamped by the great Red Sea.

In the meantime Pharaoh realized his loss. A nation of slaves was slipping out of his grasp. He intended only that they should go a journey of three days into the wilderness to worship and then return. But it was evident Moses and the host of Israel never intended to return. So he hardened his heart and mustered out all the chariots of Egypt and pursued after the children of Israel, overtaking them camped by the sea.²

The people of Israel broke out into a cry of fear as they caught sight of Pharaoh and all his great host pursuing after them.³ But Moses encouraged the people:

*. . . Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. Jehovah shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.*⁴

Moses stretched out his rod over the sea and the waters backed away, leaving a corridor of dry land a mile wide on the bottom of the sea. And Israel once more took up her march, while the pillar of the cloud of Jehovah’s presence moved back to restrain the approach of the Egyptians. All night long, Jehovah’s presence was a wall of darkness to the Egyptians and a bright, shining light to Israel to see the way. Israel filed across the sea and the wall of fire followed. And the desperate Egyptians pursued after them.⁵

When morning broke, the last of the children of Israel were climbing out of the sea on the eastern shore, and the Egyptians were just coming to realize their extreme danger. They turned to flee. But it was too late. Thunder and rain and lightning discomfited them.⁶ And Moses once more stretched out his rod over the sea. The waters returned to their strength and Jehovah overthrew the Egyptians into the depths of the sea. Pharaoh’s host was completely wiped out. Their dominance was gone forever.

A Nation Is Born

Israel was safely over. They were a free people under God.

They had been redeemed by blood; the death angel had spared them not because they were good or bad, but because of the death of the lamb and its sprinkled blood upon their homes. Now they were no longer slaves. They were a nation reborn, as it were from that watery grave. They were a resurrected people, having poured forth from the open bowels of the sea. Their enemies had perished both by the stroke of the death angel at midnight and now by Pharaoh's armies' having been completely swallowed by the sea.

Moses rose up before the people and taught them a new song of praise and worship, which they sang with all their hearts, "Jehovah shall reign for ever and ever."¹ Jehovah shall reign forever and ever! It was the song of Moses, of Israel's marvelous redemption.² And it looked forward to the similar song of the Lamb (the Messiah) which would one day engage the voices of the great host of the redeemed.³ Then Miriam took up her timbrel and all the women followed after her and sang of the triumph of Jehovah.

Israel was free! Jehovah had brought her forth from the bondage of Egypt with a mighty deliverance. Her oppressor was completely destroyed. Not a vestige of her slavery remained. Israel was a redeemed people, redeemed by Jehovah, the mighty Elohim of her fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There was no people, nation, or language in all the world like this people, Israel, whose God was Jehovah.

Foreshadowing the Messiah

This whole story of the Passover and of Israel's redemption from Egyptian bondage was designed of Jehovah to foreshadow and portray the far greater deliverance of Israel that was to be accomplished by the coming Messiah. For He, Himself, was to be that Paschal Lamb, and His blood was to be sprinkled for the redemption of His people. Through His death and resurrection, He would triumph over principalities and powers, and a kingdom of believers would be born. The Passover was a marvelous type or pattern of Messiah and His great work of redemption.¹

God knew that the blood of all the lambs and of all the bulls and of all the goats in the world **could not take away man's sin.**² The sacrificial offering of the blood of lambs, bulls, and goats

merely expressed the faith of the worshiper in the one and only perfect Lamb, the Messiah, that one day should come. The blood of the lamb that was sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the Israelite homes in Egypt, and that turned away the angry sword of the death angel, foreshadowed and pointed forward to the blood of that ever-blessed Lamb to whom John the Baptist pointed as he cried, “. . . Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”³

Moses caused each family in Israel to slay its lamb and sprinkle the blood to the saving of its household. Then Moses led the nation to the Red Sea. By faith the waters parted and the whole nation plunged into that open abyss. There, the Scriptures explain, they were baptized unto Moses⁴—they were buried as it were—beneath the mighty sea. And on the morrow the sea opened her mouth and this people climbed out onto the eastern shore, a resurrected host. A new nation was born. Israel was free. All this, of course, was a beautiful and graphic pattern of the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of the Messiah.

Corresponding to this divine pattern, when the Messiah was crucified that Friday afternoon, and His blood was poured out, **every believer was crucified** in Him.⁵ When His sacred body was laid away in that cold, cold grave, **every believer was buried** with Him there. And wonder of wonders, when He arose on that triumphant Sunday morning, He, like Moses, led forth a new nation of redeemed people. A Church like Israel of old was born. It was purchased by His blood and **resurrected to a new life** with its wonderful God.⁶

What then will **you** do with Jesus? This is the all-important question before every man of every age. It is not how you dress or eat, not where you go to church, not even if you lie and steal or murder or hate. However, your life here does reflect what you believe. But your relationship with that Lamb, the magnificent Messiah, is what really matters. What **you** do with Jesus will determine your destiny both now and throughout eternity.

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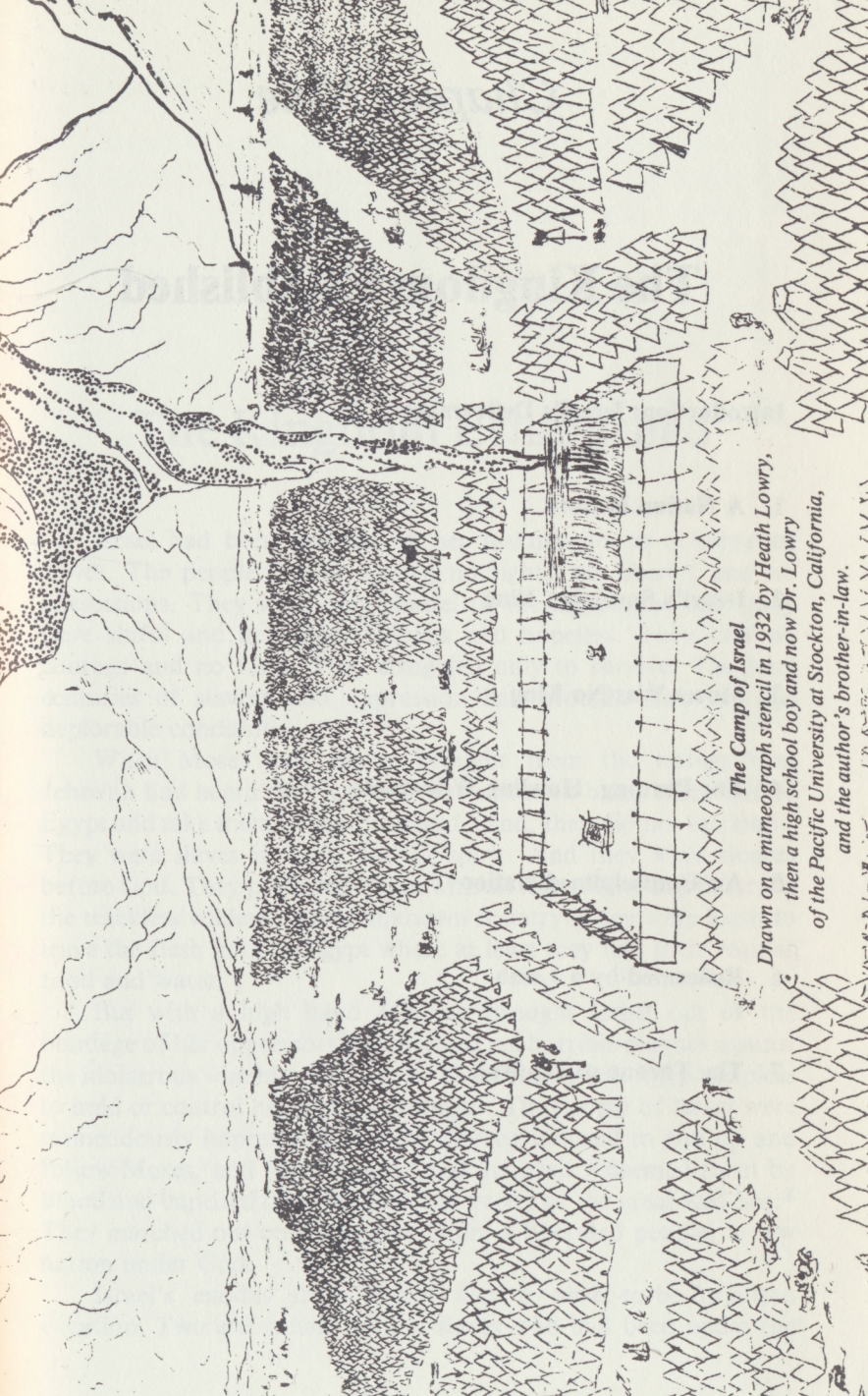
9. Foreshadowing the Messiah

- 1. I Corinthians 5:7; 10:1-11 4. I Corinthians 10:2
- Hebrews 8:5; 9:14-28; 5. Galatians 2:20
- 10:1 Romans 6:6
- 2. Hebrews 10:4 6. Colossians 3:1-4
- 3. John 1:29 Ephesians 2:1,5,6

ISRAEL'S SCHEDULE

Events and References	Time
Seventy of Israel's children moved to Egypt. Exodus 1:5; Genesis 46:27	
They sojourned in Egypt 430 years. Genesis 15:13; Exodus 12:40; Galatians 3:17	
Passover and exodus from Egypt. Exodus 12:2,18; Numbers 33:3	14th day, 1st mo., 1st yr.
Pentecost and Old Covenant Law. Exodus 19:16; Leviticus 23:15,16	9th day, 3rd mo., 1st yr.
Moved from Mount Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea. Numbers 10:11; Deuteronomy 1:19	20th day, 2nd mo., 2nd yr.
Wandered in the wilderness 40 years. Numbers 14:33; Deut. 2:14	
Miriam died. Numbers 20:1	1st mo., 40th yr.
Aaron died. Numbers 33:38	1st day, 5th mo., 40th yr.
Moses' last words and death. Deuteronomy 1:3; 34:5	1st day, 11th mo., 40th yr.
The crossing of Jordan. Joshua 4:19	10th day, 1st mo., 41st yr.

(This schedule is inserted here for the reader's convenience.)



The Camp of Israel

Drawn on a mimeograph stencil in 1932 by Heath Lowry,
then a high school boy and now Dr. Lowry
of the Pacific University at Stockton, California,
and the author's brother-in-law.

Chapter Nine

The Kingdom Established

Introduction: Israel's Deliverance

- 1. A Nation Is Born**
- 2. Israel's Sovereign King**
- 3. Moses Was No King**
- 4. The Burning, Howling Wilderness**
- 5. An Undisciplined Nation**
- 6. Redeemed by a Lamb**
- 7. The Throne of Jehovah**

The Kingdom Established

Israel had been reduced by her taskmasters to a horde of slaves. The people had no status, no rights, no liberty, and no possessions. They were only chattel to the Egyptians. And they were sinful and degraded, helpless and hopeless. They had no courage and no faith. They struggled only to survive. The long centuries of slavery and oppression had brought them to this deplorable condition.

When Moses and Aaron brought them the tidings that Jehovah had heard their cry and was about to bring them out of Egypt and take them to the Promised Land, they did not respond.¹ They were slaves in body and in spirit. And they were sinners before God. They preferred Egypt with all its burdens and fetters to the trackless wilderness and unknown country. They were loath to leave the flesh pots of Egypt where at least they had their regular food and water.

But with a high hand Jehovah brought Israel out of the bondage of her oppressors.² He directed ten horrible plagues against the idolatrous worship of the land. These finally left Egypt helpless to hold or control her slaves any longer. The people of Israel were tremendously impressed and were thereby induced to rise up and follow Moses, and leave Egypt. And Jehovah redeemed them by blood and baptized them beneath the waters of the great Red Sea.³ They marched out on the eastern shore a liberated people, a new nation under God.

Israel's exodus from Egypt was a never-to-be-forgotten occasion. Two and a half million slaves who had been under the

heel of a merciless oppressor were now free. With a mighty hand, Jehovah had broken the stubborn will of the proud Pharaoh and led this people to freedom.

A Nation Is Born

At the stroke of midnight, every first-born son in all of Egypt had fallen before the sword of Jehovah's wrath, except only in Goshen.¹ And even there safety was found only where the blood of the Passover lamb had been sprinkled. For when he passed through the land, the death angel of Jehovah regarded neither rank nor nationality. Only the sprinkled blood of the lamb saved them, Hebrew or Egyptian. For Jehovah had said:

... [I] will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am Jehovah. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: AND WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD, I WILL PASS OVER YOU, . . . And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to Jehovah throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.²

Jehovah had led them forth from Egypt to a new beginning of life and freedom on the other side of that watery grave, the great Red Sea. To the Egyptians it had been indeed a grave of death. But to Israel, it was a mighty resurrection. Two and one-half million people poured forth upon the other side of the sea. The Hebrew nation was born. Jehovah had said, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you."³ It was the birth day of a great people—God's special people—Israel.

Jehovah had covenanted with His pilgrim servant, Abraham, that He would do just this. He had promised him a great and numerous seed. Now on this day Abraham's seed spread out over the eastern bank of the sea 250 times 10,000 strong. Israel was now a nation to be reckoned with. She spread out over the desert sands like the sands themselves in number.

Nothing has been able to erase from the memory of Israel the

wonder of her miraculous birth from the slavery of Egypt. Three and one-half millenniums of struggle, poverty, exile, and some prosperity have not done it. Because of her unbelief and ever-recurring backslidings through the ages, Jehovah has permitted her to face hate, persecution, pogroms, and mass destruction from her enemies. But none of these have been able to exterminate this people. Nor has she been able to forget the great day of her birth. Throughout all her wanderings over the face of the earth these many centuries, the Hebrew people have remembered Jehovah's Passover and her marvelous deliverance from the land of bondage.

Israel's Sovereign King

No nation before or since has had so miraculous a birth. And no kingdom of all the kingdoms of the world has had a ruler like Israel's sovereign Jehovah.¹ The covenant-keeping Jehovah Elohim of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had smitten the Egyptians and redeemed this people to Himself. He had bought them with blood, and saved them by His mighty hand.² They were His redeemed people; and He was their blood-covenanted LORD and MASTER.

That beautiful Sunday morning when the Hebrew nation was born, and delivered from the shackles of her Egyptian masters, and when she looked back and saw the armies of Pharaoh completely swallowed beneath the billows of the great Red Sea, it dawned upon her that she was really free. Moses led the people in a song of praise. They sang with all their hearts, two and a half million of them, "Jehovah shall reign for ever and ever."³ "Jehovah shall reign for ever and ever!" Miriam and the women picked up the chorus, singing with their timbrels and dancing in their newly found joy. The glory cloud of God's marvelous presence spread out over the host of the people and sheltered them from the merciless rays of the Arabian sun. Jehovah was indeed their God and their sovereign King forever, and they were a free people, set forth to serve Him.

Then they marched three days into the Wilderness of Shur.⁴ Jehovah went before them and overshadowed them with His Shekinah presence. But the people were not accustomed to trusting

in Jehovah. "They soon forgot his works; . . ." ⁵ They had an entirely new life of faith to learn. They came to their first sight of water in the wilderness at Marah. But the waters were bitter, until Moses cast a tree into the waters, making them sweet, and then the people were able to drink.

It was at Marah that Moses proclaimed the name of Jehovah-Rapha:

. . . If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of Jehovah thy Elohim, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am Jehovah Rapha [or "the LORD that healeth thee"]. ⁶

Then they moved on to Elim where there were twelve wells of pure water and seventy gorgeous palms. They rested there, for they were now halfway to Sinai, which they could clearly see in the distance, the mountain where Jehovah had met with Moses at the burning bush.

Moses Was No King

Moses had every opportunity to set himself up as king among this people, but he did not. ¹ He led the nation out of Egyptian bondage through the stark, howling wilderness to the Promised Land. He continued as their absolute and practically unopposed leader for forty years. And he had many opportunities to establish himself as their monarch and then his sons after him. But he gave no evidence of any such aspiration at any time. Moses was a mighty prince in Israel, yet he remained God's prophet and minister. He was only a voice between Jehovah and the people, **and a beautiful type of the coming Messiah.**

Israel was a pure theocracy: the great God of Heaven was their King. No man in Israel owed his allegiance to any earthly being. Instead he was a redeemed son of God. Jehovah was his Savior, Lord, and Heavenly Father. He worshiped and served the supreme Creator Himself. His Shepherd-King personally cared for every last man, woman, and child throughout this vast congregation, and

marched before the hosts of Israel.

Moses had two fine sons, but he made no provision for them to succeed him either as prophets or even as priests. The priesthood was given to the family of Aaron, Moses' brother. Moses' sons were numbered with the Levites who carried on the manual labor of their worship under the supervision of the priests.

There was an occasion when Miriam, the older sister of Moses and Aaron, induced Aaron to join her in challenging Moses' position as God's chosen prophet. She, with Aaron, simply demanded a larger share in the government. This was a natural, human desire for more honor and power. But Jehovah had chosen Moses and He was much displeased with them. He smote Miriam white as snow with leprosy. "And Moses cried unto Jehovah, saying, Heal her now, O Elohim, I beseech thee."² Jehovah did heal her, but neither she nor Aaron ever forgot the lesson. Jehovah was the supreme Sovereign of Israel and Moses was His chosen prophet.

At Moses' death, Joshua assumed the leadership of the people. He was no king either. Like Moses he judged their problems, fought their battles, and encouraged them in the faith. He too was but a minister of their King, the great and matchless Jehovah Elohim.

The Burning, Howling Wilderness

They moved on into the trackless wilderness called Sin. They were not in want and the cloud of God's presence went before them continually. But they were very much unaccustomed to a life of trust and faith. We must not forget that the people were so recently delivered from the many, many years of slavery and oppression. They murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "...ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."¹

So Jehovah made provision for Israel to have fresh meat in abundance each evening and "bread to the full" each morning. Each evening quails flew into the camp in great droves, and the people caught all they could desire, dressed them, and cooked or dried them. They had meat in abundance.

Each morning manna covered the earth. The people gathered

it, just enough for the family for the day. It would not keep for the morrow, but bred worms. Jehovah was teaching His people to look to Him for their "daily bread." They had plenty for today, but tomorrow they must go out and gather a fresh supply. Jehovah has always taught His people to trust Him one day at a time. These people needed no more. Their supply was eternal because their God was eternal; but the supply was one day at a time.

Then Jehovah reconfirmed the Sabbath of creation.² Every sixth day twice as much manna was gathered as on other days. For on the seventh day no manna fell. On the sixth day preparation was made for the seventh, because it was the Sabbath of Jehovah, for "...he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."³

Israel continued to gather manna all through the years of her pilgrimage. She was thus continually reminded that Jehovah was the source of her daily bread.

At Rephidim Israel once more raised her voice against Moses. For again, there was no water to drink, neither for the people nor for their flocks. And Moses cried unto Jehovah, "What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me."⁴ And Jehovah directed him to smite the rock in Horeb with his staff before all the elders of Israel. When he did, a gusher broke forth and flowed out into the desert, and the people had an abundance of water.

An Undisciplined Nation

Two million five hundred thousand slaves were now free! Jehovah had broken the iron yoke of Egypt and had led these former slaves to this pre-appointed place. During these first seven weeks of their freedom, they had traveled on foot a distance of some two hundred miles over the burning and hostile sands of the Arabian Desert. Now they had reached Mount Sinai where Moses had spent many years of his life tending the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law.

They pitched their tents and organized their city for an extended stay. Jehovah supplied all their needs, including an abundance of manna each morning and quails each evening, besides the stream of sparkling water flowing forth from the

smitten rock in Horeb.¹ And that rock is still there after these many centuries and it still bears evidence of the flowing stream that coursed down its side.²

But they were a stiff-necked and rebellious lot. For generations they had known nothing but the anguish, hatred, and bitterness of their slave master's lash. They were undisciplined and wicked before God. Their bodies were free from the bondage of Egypt, but their hearts and spirits were still slaves to sin, passion, and unbelief. Their constant rebellion would try to the limit the patience of both Moses and their God.

With their eyes they beheld the great deliverance of Jehovah. They saw His mighty power and witnessed His love for them and His redeeming grace. But their hearts were still in Egypt where they had enjoyed the comforts of the hovels that they had called home and where they had eaten to the full of the garlic, leeks, and onions of that fertile land. Satan still had them bound. The fetters of sin held them fast.

With their hearts and minds they cried, "Yes, we will serve Jehovah."³ But with their hands they formed a golden calf, and stripping themselves naked to their shame before their enemies,⁴ they danced before it, crying one to another, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."⁵

What a tragic situation! What colossal ignorance, stupidity, and unbelief! How could this people and how could Aaron have faltered in the way so quickly? Yet, this incident proved to be but the beginning of a common reoccurrence of Israel's stupid unbelief through the centuries that followed.

Redeemed by a Lamb

But Jehovah had redeemed them by blood. A guiltless, spotless lamb had shed its blood for every family among them. That blood had been sprinkled on the lintels and door posts of their homes in Goshen and it had provided a covering for those sheltered within.¹ The death angel had seen the blood and passed over those homes.² It was through faith that the blood was sprinkled. And it was through faith that this people, Israel, was saved from the sword of the death angel that Passover night in Egypt.³

It was the blood that sanctified them before God, not the Law

that issued from Sinai. It was the blood that covered their sin and their guilt so that by the Spirit the prophet Balaam could proclaim, "He [Jehovah] hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: Jehovah his Elohim is with him, and the shout of a king is among them."⁴

Jehovah dwelt in the midst of the camp of this people, Israel. Because of the sprinkled blood of the paschal lamb, the great Jehovah Elohim set up His throne in their midst. He tabernacled upon the earth, in the middle of the camp of Israel.⁵

Whence did they find lambs with blood so powerful and effective? Was this a special breed of sheep whose blood could cleanse and cover the sins of this stiff-necked and rebellious people and bring Jehovah so near? Nay. Rather, the shedding of the blood of the paschal lamb was but the expression of their faith in Jehovah's **sure Covenant promises**. Jehovah had promised a very special Lamb of which all others were but symbols and types. That special Lamb would one day come, even the ever-blessed Messiah, the Son of the living God.

The blood of sheep and goats could not take away sin.⁶ No amount of animal sacrifices could cleanse the guilt of men. But God had promised an exceedingly wonderful Lamb whose shed blood would be sufficient to wash away the sins of every man in all the world throughout all the ages! And that special Lamb would be none other than God's only begotten Son⁷—the long-promised Messiah. Simon Peter voiced this knowledge when he answered Jesus, "Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God."⁸

The Throne of Jehovah

Then the roving bands of Amalek smote the rear of the camp of Israel with the sword. Moses sent forth Joshua with a contingent of young Israelites armed with the weapons they had gathered from the Egyptians along the shore of the Red Sea.

Moses and Aaron and Hur climbed a small hill to watch the battle. And the battle was a remarkable one. It soon became evident that the struggle was not just between the Israelites and the Amalekites: the unseen hosts of Jehovah were also in the fight. For when Moses raised his hand heavenward, Israel prevailed.

... [A]nd when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.¹

This was a striking victory! It was won, not by the might of Israel's soldiers alone, but by the invisible hosts of Jehovah. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-Nissi, meaning "Jehovah is my banner." " 'Because a hand has been raised against the throne of Jehovah,' he said, 'Jehovah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.' " ² The unseen hosts of Jehovah would fight Israel's battles. ³ Under Jehovah, Israel was a dauntless people.

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| 1. Exodus 12:29 | 3. Exodus 12:2 |
| 2. Exodus 12:12-14 | |

2. Israel's Sovereign King

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| 1. Isaiah 44:6 | 4. Exodus 15:22 |
| 2. Cf. Psalm 78:72 | 5. Psalm 106:13 |
| 3. Exodus 15:18 | 6. Exodus 15:26 |

3. Moses Was No King

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4. The Burning, Howling Wilderness

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| 1. Exodus 16:3 | 3. Genesis 2:1-3 |
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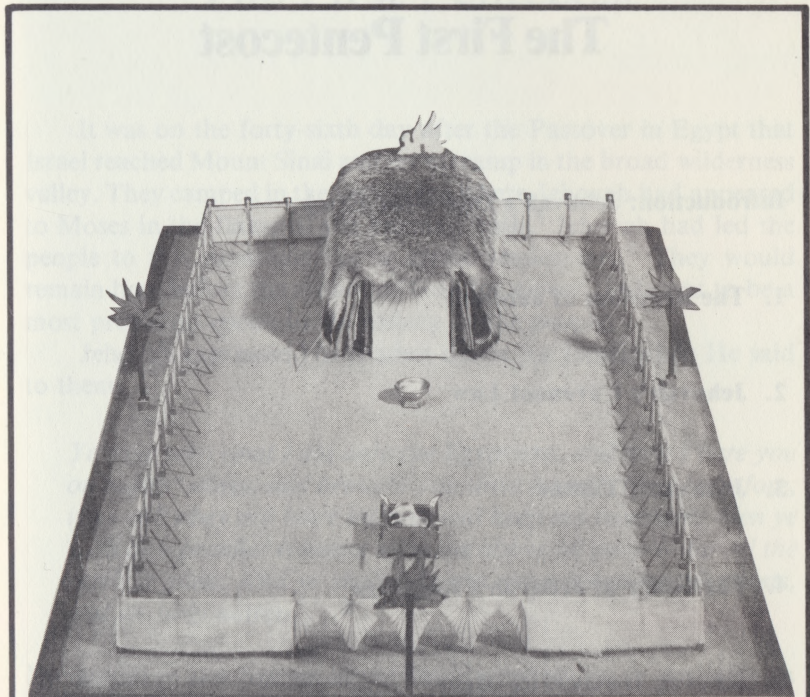
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| 4. Numbers 23:21 | 8. Matthew 16:16 |

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| 3. Cf. II Kings 6:16,17 | |



*Tabernacle of the Congregation of Israel
Model built to scale by the author in 1932,
still in use in its original form. Exodus 25:8*

Chapter Ten

Sinai or The First Pentecost

Introduction: Jehovah's Desire for Israel

- 1. The Kingdom of Jehovah**
- 2. Jehovah's Covenant Law**
- 3. Jehovah's Throne**
- 4. The Glory of Jehovah's Kingdom**
- 5. Jehovah Dwelt With Men**
- 6. The Feasts of Passover and Pentecost**
- 7. Only Temporary**

The First Pentecost

It was on the forty-sixth day after the Passover in Egypt that Israel reached Mount Sinai and set up camp in the broad wilderness valley. They camped in the very place where Jehovah had appeared to Moses in the flame of the burning bush.¹ Jehovah had led the people to this mountain for a divine rendezvous.² They would remain here before the mount of God for a year. This was to be a most profound epoch in the history of the people.

Jehovah expressed His fondest desire for Israel when He said to them:

*Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. . . .*³

No condition nor human estate could possibly be so desirable as this one. Jehovah claimed this people as His portion and the lot of His inheritance.⁴

Jehovah wanted every member of the nation to be a priest before Him. And by priests, He meant men with a personal and continual communion with their God: men who knew God individually, as Moses did. Every man should be a priest of his home and family. He would maintain an intimate relationship with Jehovah, his King, as did Father Abraham of old, "a friend of God." Moses was Israel's mediator with God and Aaron was their High Priest. But every man was responsible to maintain a personal

and living faith in Jehovah. God purposed that Israel should be “a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” (This relationship, of course, was prophetic of that which Jehovah would accomplish through the ministry of the Messiah, the priesthood of every believer.)⁵

The Kingdom of Jehovah

Israel was a singular people, very different from the heathen nations around her. She did not boast of a proud and haughty warrior's being her king as did the heathen. She did not depend upon the horses and chariots¹ and swords of her army to defend her from her enemies. Her army was small and her weapons few. Jehovah Elohim, the divine Creator of the heavens and the earth, was Israel's sovereign King,² and Moses was His servant.

Jehovah fed this mighty host with an abundance of bread and water, and flesh without measure.³ The cloud of His presence shaded them from the burning desert sun, and His heavenly hosts smote the Amalekites and gave Israel complete victory.⁴ No enemies and no lack and no sickness could touch them. Scorpions fled the camp because of the presence of Jehovah. No enemy could stand before them.

The resources of their sovereign King, Jehovah, were limitless. He had slain the Egyptians, destroyed their army, and opened up the Red Sea for Israel to pass over on dry ground. “. . . [W]ith an high arm brought he them out of [Egypt].”⁵ Nothing was too hard and no problem could ever arise that was too great for Israel's divine King. He had led them through the wilderness to their encampment at Sinai. He watched over them and cherished them. He was their God and their Shepherd and their King.⁶ They had only to trust Him and to worship Him. And He would fight their battles and bless their homes. There was no nation like Israel whose King was Jehovah.⁷

He had not forgotten His solemn Covenant with Abraham, that renowned patriarch of faith.⁸ It had been confirmed to son, Isaac, and reconfirmed to grandson, Jacob. And that same Covenant had now been confirmed to Abraham's posterity, this Hebrew nation of 2,500,000 souls, camped in the wilderness of Sinai.

Jehovah's Covenant Law

On Sunday morning, seven weeks plus one day (the fiftieth day) from the Passover in Egypt,¹ Moses went up to the top of the mount of God that burned with the fire of the Divine Presence. He went up as God's special prophet, a type or pattern of the Messiah that was to come. There he received the holy Covenant Law, the Torah, and delivered it to Israel. It was a momentous occasion, always to be remembered by the nation. Jehovah set aside this day of Pentecost,² like the day of Passover, to be remembered by Israel throughout the ages. It commemorated the giving of His holy Old Covenant Law to Israel.

Moses took with him

... Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: and they saw the Elohim of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness. . . . [T]hey saw Elohim, and did eat and drink. . . . And the sight of the glory of Jehovah was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.³

They bowed there upon Sinai before the glorious throne of the Almighty.

Moses spent many days on the mount in the marvelous presence of God. It is recorded that he spent forty days before His throne on two different occasions.⁴ On the latter of these, when he came down from the mount, “. . . the children of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the vail upon his face. . . .”⁵ while he spoke with the people.

Moses received two tables of stone inscribed with the Ten Commandments by the very finger of Jehovah.⁶ They were the basis of that divine testimony or covenant with this nation. After the tenor of these Commandments⁷ Jehovah entered into a Covenant with Israel.

And Moses wrote all the words of Jehovah, . . . And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that Jehovah hath said will we do,

*and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which Jehovah hath made with you concerning all these words.*⁸

Jehovah's Throne

During her sojourn at Sinai, Israel's craftsmen were busy preparing the material for the Tent or Tabernacle of the Congregation, which Moses was commanded to build exactly like the pattern that God showed him in the mount.¹ It was to be His royal throne and dwelling place on earth. It had no floor--only the desert sand. It was a pilgrim tent in which Jehovah chose to dwell in the midst of His pilgrim people. The Scriptures declare it to be a pattern of Jehovah's heavenly throne.

They were many months assembling and forming each of its parts.

In the Outer Court

(1) The great altar was made of shittim wood and overlaid with brass.² It foreshadowed that ignominious cross on which the Prince of Glory, "the Lamb of God," should die.

(2) The laver was cast from the brass mirrors contributed by the women. It foreshadowed the cleansing power of the Word of God. And the coming Messiah is declared to be that Word of God.³

In the Holy Place

(3) The table of shewbread was also made of shittim wood but overlaid with pure gold. It symbolized the Bread of Life that was none other than the Messiah, Himself, who was to come.⁴

(4) The candlestick was made of pure gold of beaten work. It too typified the divine Messiah who is the Light of the World.⁵

(5) The altar of incense was made of shittim wood and overlaid with pure gold. It symbolized the worship, prayers, and tears of the saints before the throne of God.⁶

In the Holy of Holies

(6) Like the table and the altar, the ark of the covenant was made of shittim wood and overlaid with pure gold.⁷ It, together

with the mercy seat, was the throne of Jehovah in the middle of Israel's encampment. Moses placed the two tables of stone inscribed with the holy Covenant Law in this chest.⁸

(7) The mercy seat was made of pure gold. It was overshadowed by two cherubim, also of finest gold.⁹ It was there upon the mercy seat that the high priest sprinkled the blood of atonement. And it was there, in the holy of holies, that Jehovah abode in the midst of His people. This was **Jehovah's earthly throne**.

The children of Israel were a pilgrim people as their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had been before them. And Jehovah, their divine Master and King, occupied this pilgrim tent in the holy of holies. This was the throne and dwelling place of the great Jehovah Elohim in the heart of the camp of Israel.

*And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubims which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.*¹⁰

It is hard for us mortals to grasp and to believe the full import of this marvelous biblical account. But the plain teaching of the Scriptures is that the ineffable Jehovah, the Creator of the boundless universe, actually took up His earthly residence in the Tabernacle of the Congregation. Jehovah literally dwelt with men. His glorious presence filled the Tabernacle in the midst of the camp of His chosen people. He lived with them and He traveled with them, and the Shekinah of His presence was continuously visible through the many years as a cloud by day and as a fire by night, hovering over the host of His people. What a glorious type of the coming Spirit-filled church of our Lord Jesus Christ!

The Glory of Jehovah's Kingdom

The glory cloud of Jehovah's presence first appeared in Egypt as a cloud by day and as a pillar of fire by night.¹ This divine manifestation had accompanied Israel all the way from Goshen to Sinai. Jehovah went before His people to lead them in the way and to shelter and protect them. In fact, His glorious presence journeyed with them all the way to Canaan land.

On that wonderful day of Pentecost, Moses went up into the mount of God and received the holy Law and Commandments. They were given with a display of great glory and majesty, with thunderings and lightnings and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud.² Jehovah descended in plain view of all the people "... in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."³ The wonder of that first Pentecost was spectacular! It emphasized the splendor of Jehovah and the importance of the giving of His holy Law.

This radiance of God rubbed off on Moses so that the people could not look upon him without his having a veil draped over his face.⁴ Moses' face shone like the sun. It radiated the glory of Jehovah who had come down to dwell among His own redeemed people. He gave them His holy Law, the Ten Commandments, and sealed His Covenant with Israel.

When the Tabernacle was finished, Moses anointed every part of it with oil.⁵

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle. And [even] Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.⁶

The cloud of the Shekinah covered the Tabernacle by day and a pillar of fire covered it by night, "... in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys."⁷ The same presence of Jehovah remained with Israel throughout the fifteen centuries until the Messiah came. There was no nation so blessed as Israel, whose sovereign King was the Creator Himself, Jehovah Elohim Adonai!

Jehovah Dwelt With Men

Israel was not like the heathen whose gods were made of wood and stone. Israel was the redeemed people of the true and living Elohim. They were a holy nation because of the sheltering, sacrificial blood, sprinkled on their behalf. Their confidence and faith were well placed in the blood of the paschal lamb. And Jehovah had received and claimed this people as His very own.

Moses had erected a Tabernacle as a dwelling place for Jehovah. This structure was expressly patterned after Jehovah's tabernacle or throne in the heavenlies.¹ And Jehovah moved in and occupied this earthly throne in the heart of the camp of Israel.

This is, indeed, a most remarkable picture. The majestic and fathomless Jehovah Elohim set up His Tabernacle in the very center of the camp. And there His presence remained through the centuries. He dwelt with and He walked this earth with His chosen people. He suffered with them and was afflicted with them.² For He cherished them as His own people.

“Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: what house will ye build me? saith Jehovah: . . .”³ Jehovah tabernacled gloriously among His earthly people. And He had great plans for their future. Moses built the Tabernacle and Solomon built the temple. But these were only types and shadows of the real. The Messiah, David's greater Son, would build the **true and eternal tabernacle** or temple of Jehovah. This He would build, not with wood and earthly stone, but with living stones,⁴ that is, redeemed men and women. He would build His temple or Church for His eternal dwelling place. “He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.”⁵

If we stand amazed before that Old Covenant Tabernacle, filled with the glory of His majesty and overshadowed by the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, with what greater wonder should we stand before the Church of Jesus Christ, which is none other than the Tabernacle and Temple of His divine dwelling today!⁶

But, then, men's eyes are dull that they do not see spiritual things.⁷ Disciples of Jesus may be filled with the Holy Spirit today,⁸ as the Tabernacle prefigured that they surely would. But few men will recognize these spiritual things. They are hidden from the great masses of men because of sin.⁹ Only through Heaven-sent revival do we see any large number of people's seeking God. And only a comparative few of these will press on to a full and glorious walk with their Creator. The invitation is to every man; God is no respecter of persons. All who will may be saved and filled with the lovely Holy Spirit of God.¹⁰

The Feasts of Passover and Pentecost

That first Pentecost was a momentous occasion! Though it was only a type of something much greater to come, it was always to be remembered in Israel. Moses went to the top of Mount Sinai and enjoyed a most remarkable audience with Jehovah, the Elohim of His people. He gave Moses Ten Commandments written with the finger of God on two tables of stone. Mount Sinai was radiant with the glory of Jehovah who “. . . descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.”¹ Pentecost along with Passover was to be remembered by a feast day each year perpetually throughout the ages until the Messiah should come. In fact the Jews continue to observe Passover and Pentecost each year to this very day. They ignore the fact that the Messiah has indeed come and fulfilled the Covenant promises.

In Egypt Jehovah had commanded Israel, “This month shall be . . . the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.”² Israel’s sacred calendar has always begun with this month, Abib (or Nisan). It marked the date of the beginning of the Hebrew nation. On the fourteenth day of this first month each year, Israel has celebrated the Passover.³ It has been remembered as a holy convocation throughout their generations since.

Then exactly fifty days later (seven weeks and one day) they would celebrate another holy convocation, Pentecost. These two great events in the history of the people of Israel must never be forgotten. Their children and their children’s children must continually be instructed in the full and true meaning of Passover and Pentecost. These events looked forward to the advent of Israel’s most cherished hope: the promise of their magnificent Messiah! The annual feasts of Passover and Pentecost were divinely given patterns of the Messiah’s marvelous ministry to His people.

In recapitulation, then, the Feast of Passover celebrated three great events as one,⁴ namely:

- (1) The slaying of the paschal lamb⁵ which act prefigured the crucifixion of the coming all-blessed Messiah;⁶
- (2) The baptism of the nation beneath the great Red Sea⁷ in anticipation of the burial of Messiah’s blessed body in Joseph’s family tomb;⁸ and

- (3) The resurrection or rebirth of the nation⁹ from the sea as a soul-stirring pattern of the resurrection of the Messiah¹⁰ and of a vast host of believers.¹¹

Likewise, the Feast of Pentecost celebrated three glorious events as one:¹²

- (1) The giving of Jehovah's holy Old Covenant Law¹³ into the hands of Moses which act beautifully prefigured the giving of Jehovah's glorious New Covenant Law into the hands of the resurrected and ascended Messiah;¹⁴
- (2) Moses' building of the Tabernacle¹⁵ as Jehovah's throne and dwelling place in anticipation of Messiah's building of His Church¹⁶ as the temple and eternal habitation of God; and
- (3) The occupation of that Tabernacle by the great Jehovah Elohim¹⁷ as a stirring pattern of Messiah's filling or baptizing believers with the Holy Ghost and fire.¹⁸

Only Temporary

Passover was a type of Calvary and its ever-blessed Lamb. Pentecost was a type of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit by the risen and ascended Messiah. Both Passover and Pentecost were obviously only temporary expedients until the Messiah should come,¹ redeem His people from their sins, and fill them with the Holy Spirit. All these types and shadows pointed forward to that climactic event of the ages, **the coming of the Messiah!**

God knew that the blood of all the lambs and of all the bulls and of all the goats in the world could not take away men's sin.² He also knew that all the laws and all the commandments in the world could not change men's carnal hearts and make them perfect before their God. The Ten Commandments and all the Old Covenant laws and services would never change the carnal nature of men. Only the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God Himself could sanctify the heart and will of man so that he would truly serve and worship Him. And this outpouring of the Spirit awaited the coming of the Messiah.³

The Scriptures declare, "...if that first covenant [given at Sinai] had been faultless, . . ."⁴ But it was not faultless. **It was a Law of works**, made up of types and shadows of something better.

It dealt only with men's actions, works, and deeds. **It did not change the heart** and nature of sinful men. The worshipers went on sinning and offering sacrifices for their sins, year after year.⁵ "...[T]he law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."⁶ But, Paul lamented, "...the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin...deceived me, and by it [the commandment] slew me."⁷ The Old Covenant Law of Commandments could not change the hearts of men. Only the New Covenant Holy Spirit could actually change the hearts and transform men.

Therefore, Jeremiah proclaimed some six hundred years before the Messiah came, "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that **I will make a new covenant** with the house of Israel,..."⁸ Jehovah Himself found fault with the first Covenant and therefore promised His people a new and better Covenant when the Mesiah came.⁹

The first Pentecost with the glory cloud and the billows of fire and thunder, and the tables of stone written with the finger of God, was marvelous! All these manifestations elicited promises of obedience. But they did not make the worshiper "...perfect, **but the bringing in of a better hope did;....**"¹⁰

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The Grapes of Eshcol

*“And they came unto the brook of Eshcol,
and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes,
and they bare it between two upon a staff; . . . ” Numbers 13:23*

Chapter Eleven

The Appalling Tragedy of Kadesh-Barnea

Introduction: Jehovah's Great Favors

- 1. Canaan Ho!**
- 2. Kadesh-Barnea**
- 3. An Evil Report**
- 4. A Faithless Nation**
- 5. Moses' Prayer**
- 6. Forty Years in the Wilderness**
- 7. Holy Ghost Warning**

The Appalling Tragedy of Kadesh-Barnea

There was never a nation like Israel whose Master and King was Jehovah, the Maker and Creator of all things. He broke the iron yoke from off her neck in Egypt and set the people free. He rebuked the burning, howling wilderness and made it to be at peace with this pilgrim people while they passed over. He bare them as on eagles' wings and brought them to Himself.¹ His great favors toward Israel were numberless indeed:

a. He smote the gods of Egypt and brought the princes to their knees. He slew the first-born son in every home throughout the land from the dungeon to the throne.² And Israel's chains of slavery just melted away and she marched forth a free people.³

b. He drowned Pharaoh and his hosts in the depths of the sea.⁴ The army of Egypt was swallowed up in a single hour. Their bodies washed ashore and Israel armed herself with the weapons that they bore.⁵

c. By the Spirit and power of Jehovah, the people of Israel had been able to walk across the bed of the Red Sea on dry ground,⁶ and the waters had then returned to their former strength. The nation of Israel had been given birth as it were, from the depths of the mighty sea, and now, looking back, she lifted up her voice in praise to Jehovah.

d. Jehovah gave them water and bread and meat in abundance day by day as they traveled across the wilderness sands toward the Promised Land.⁷ They suffered no lack. The resources of Jehovah were limitless.⁸

e. At Sinai Jehovah gave them His glorious Law,⁹ accompanied by a splendid display of raging fire, smoke, and thunder. The experience at Sinai could never be forgotten.

f. After eleven months at Sinai and the finishing of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, Jehovah literally moved into it.¹⁰ The holy of holies (**Sanctum Sanctorum**) within the Tabernacle sanctuary became the throne room of Jehovah Elohim. There the Shekinah of Almighty God hovered over the mercy seat between the golden cherubim. The glory cloud of His divine presence could be seen as a cloud by day and as a pillar of burning fire by night resting upon the Tabernacle.¹¹ Any Israelite had but to stand in his tent door to behold the manifestation of Jehovah in the very center of the vast encampment.

Canaan Ho!

*And it came to pass on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, that the cloud was taken up from off the tabernacle of the testimony. And the children of Israel took their journeys out of the wilderness of Sinai; . . .*¹

Jehovah had said, "Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount: . . ." ²

The priests, the sons of Levi, took up their trumpets and began to blow. And Judah with Issachar and Zebulun, under the banner of a tawny lion, some 700,000 strong, including men, women, and children, moved out on the march. They were Canaan-bound.

The priests blew again and a large contingent of Levites set forward bearing the dismantled parts of the Tabernacle.

On the third trumpet signal, Reuben with Simeon and Gad, under the banner of God's crowning creation, man, some 600,000 strong, moved into the march.

Then the final contingent of Levites, bearing the divine sanctuary, started on the way.

Twice more the trumpet sounded for Ephraim with Manasseh and Benjamin, some 400,000 under the banner of the ox; and Dan with Asher and Naphtali, some 600,000, under the banner of the great eagle, were last.

The cloud of Jehovah's glorious presence moved ahead to lead the way, and this vast and victorious host of Israel marched after.³ They were an holy people, the people of God. They were invincible,

with Jehovah and the legions of heaven leading forward on the way. No enemy, people, nor barrier could possibly withstand this mighty marching nation in whom Jehovah found delight.⁴

Kadesh-Barnea

After many days of marching "...through all that great and terrible wilderness, . . . we came to Kadesh-Barnea."¹ They had traveled another two hundred miles across the wilderness to the southern border of the Promised Land. Moses said to the leaders of the tribes, "We are here!" "...Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which Jehovah our Elohim doth give unto us. . . . [G]o up and possess it, as Jehovah Elohim of thy fathers hath said unto thee; fear not, neither be discouraged."²

The cloud of Jehovah's presence rested there. So the hosts of Israel organized their camp and pitched their tents for a final rendezvous before moving into Canaan. The Tabernacle was set up in the center of the camp and Jehovah's glorious presence returned to the mercy seat in the holy of holies and the cloud settled down above the sanctuary in the sight of all the people.

Then Moses picked out twelve mighty men of Israel and commissioned them to go and search out the land of Canaan and to bring back word as to the best course to pursue, and what they should find as to cities and their defenses, and the benefits of the land.

These twelve warriors went up into Canaan and examined it thoroughly as far as Rehob and Hebron, about eighty miles north of the camp of Israel; for forty days they searched through the land.

And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff; and they brought of the pomegranates, and of the figs. . . . [A]nd [they] brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it.³

An Evil Report

Nevertheless [their report continued] the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. . . . We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we. And they brought up an evil report of the land. . . saying, . . . all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.¹

Ten of these spies were adamant in their evil report. They as much as said, Jehovah is not able to give us the land. The cloud of divine presence that hovers over the Tabernacle is commonplace to us. As for the miracles of our deliverance from Egypt and the great Red Sea, Jehovah's care and provision for us through our wilderness journeys, and His marvelous manifestations at Mount Sinai—they are but fanciful memories. We see no hosts of heaven. We are no different from the heathen nations about us.

“ . . . The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there.”²

A Faithless Nation

But two of the men that Moses sent to spy out the land, Joshua and Caleb, brought back a good report, saying, “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.”¹

If Jehovah delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against Jehovah, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and Jehovah is with us: fear them not.²

Notwithstanding [Moses wrote later] ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah your Elohim: And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because Jehovah

hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us. ³

And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath Jehovah brought us into this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? were it not better for us to return unto Egypt? And they said to another, Let us make a captain,⁴ and let us return into Egypt. ⁵

... [And] all the congregation bade stone them [Moses, Joshua, and Caleb] with stones. . . . ⁶

Moses' Prayer

What an appalling demonstration of unbelief! Moses pled with the people:

Dread not, neither be afraid of them. Jehovah your Elohim which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes; And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that Jehovah thy Elohim bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah your Elohim, ¹

. . . And the glory of Jehovah appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. And Jehovah said unto Moses, How long will this people provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them? I will smite them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and will make of thee a greater nation and mightier than they. ²

But Moses pled with Jehovah for Israel. The wonderful Spirit of the promised Messiah was upon him.³ By that Spirit Moses besought divine mercy for this erring, pilgrim people:

Then the Egyptians shall hear it, (for thou broughtest up this people in thy might from among them;). . . . Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard the fame of thee will speak, saying, Because Jehovah was not able to bring this people into the land which he sware unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Jehovah be great. . . . Jehovah is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, . . . Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.⁴

Forty Years in the Wilderness

Jehovah hearkened to Moses' petition. Moses was only a man but he had stepped into the gap between the righteous judgment of God and this rebellious and unbelieving nation. Jehovah responded:

I have pardoned according to thy word. But as truly as I live, . . . they shall not see the land which I sware unto their fathers, neither shall any of them that provoked me see it. . . . Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me, . . . [Y]e shall not come into the land, . . . save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised. But as for you, your carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness.¹

Yes, Jehovah forgave their iniquitous unbelief.² But that generation never saw the Promised Land. Jehovah turned them back into the wilderness where they spent the next forty years. He fed and clothed and protected them. His presence never departed

from them. But their travels were aimless. Their marching was without goal. They wandered through the wide, trackless wilderness for thirty-eight long years until that generation wasted away and their carcasses fell by the way.³

Holy Ghost Warning

From our vantage point, looking back through the ages, Israel's unbelief and tragic loss at Kadesh-Barnea appear absolutely foolish. How could a people enjoy such direct favor at the hand of Jehovah Himself and then be so quickly turned aside from following Him? Their blundering disobedience is appalling. There was no Amorite nor Hittite nor Canaanite that could stand before the host of Jehovah. There was no giant nor walled city nor armed force that could withstand the army of Israel under the leadership of the mighty Jehovah. Israel with Jehovah was absolutely invincible.

Yet Moses wrote, "...they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!"¹ It was imperative that Israel should obey Jehovah who was their rock and defense. For without Him one Philistine would chase a thousand Jews and two would put ten thousand Jews to flight. Without Jehovah's defense Israel's position was untenable—far worse than that of the heathen.

The Holy Spirit is very specific in admonishing the believers of this Christian era to "Take heed, . . . lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. . . . For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end. . . ." ²

Jehovah gave Israel of old many multiplied encouragements to her faith. Every step of her existence from Egypt to Kadesh-Barnea was overshadowed by divine revelation and blessing. Jehovah's presence was constantly manifest to this people. Yet in the day of temptation she hardened her heart in unbelief and provoked Jehovah to wrath, so that He swore, "... They shall not enter into my rest." ³

Now we in this New Covenant age, under the personal care of the Messiah and the fullness of the Holy Spirit, have far more

reason to believe God than did Israel. The glory cloud of Jehovah's presence has come to dwell **in the heart of every believer** and to overshadow us with His ever-present Shekinah. Jehovah eventually led Israel into Canaan where they settled down in possession of the land as Jehovah had promised Abraham. But that rest was only a type of a better and more perfect rest into which the Messiah (the true Joshua) would lead us, His New Covenant people.

We are admonished to "... labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."⁴ The Spirit-filled believer is in a perfect position to put his trust implicitly in Jehovah and rest in His all-sufficient care. We have entered into His rest, and we have ceased from our own works as God did from His.⁵ In Jesus Christ, the blessed Messiah who baptizes His believing disciples with the Holy Ghost and fire, **our rest is full and complete!**

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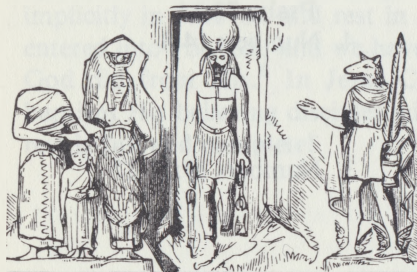
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THE AMMONITISH MOLOCH.



MOLOCH.



The Foolish Idols of Men

The Canaanites were wholly given over to the practices of demon worship and spiritism in every conceivable form. They were filled with evil spirits and bowed down to the devil instead of God. It was in the name of religion that they practiced their corruptions before their gods. Their sinfulness was a stench in the nostrils of a holy God, "...and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants."

Leviticus 18:25

Chapter Twelve

Their Cup of Iniquity Was Running Over

Introduction: Extermination of the Canaanites

- 1. Man Created a Triune Being**
- 2. The Catastrophic Fall of Man**
- 3. Satan's Kingdom**
- 4. Canaanites Devoted to Spiritism**
- 5. "Thou Shalt Utterly Destroy Them"**
- 6. God's Chosen People**
- 7. Until Messiah Comes**

Their Cup of Iniquity Was Running Over

Jehovah promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendents. But first Abraham's children would sojourn in a strange country for four hundred years. Then Jehovah would bring them out with a high hand and give them this land. He would not do it immediately, "... for the iniquity of the Amorites [who dwelt in the land] [was] not yet full."¹ God was long suffering toward them. He withheld judgment against the idolatrous people of Canaan as long as He could.

During those succeeding four hundred years, Israel developed into a nation under the slave master's lash in Egypt. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of Canaan land increased in their abominations and filled their cup of iniquity to overflowing. Their wicked practices multiplied and developed with the years. They were a sinful people before the Lord. Their corruptions became proverbial. Some of the later prophets of Israel compared the wickedness of Kings Ahab and Manasseh with that of the Amorites "... whom Jehovah cast out before the children of Israel."²

The land of Canaan was inhabited by "... nations greater and mightier than [Israel]..." and its cities were strong and fenced up to heaven. Its people were tall and strong.

*...[B]ut for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah thy Elohim doth drive them out from before thee. . . . Jehovah thy Elohim is he which goeth over before thee; as a consuming fire he shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face: so shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as Jehovah hath said unto thee.*³

The extermination of the inhabitants of the Promised Land at Jehovah's direct command requires some careful examination. We must search the divine record for God's reasons for such drastic measures. Let us carefully seek to understand these two basic areas involved, namely: (1) The working of the forces of Satan in this present world and (2) God's marvelous provision of redemption for His fallen creature, man. Only then will we really grasp the meaning of the historical account of the Hebrew nation through the two millenniums that followed Abraham to the coming of the Messiah.

Man Created a Triune Being

Paul wrote to the Christians of Thessalonica, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole **spirit** and **soul** and **body** be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."¹ To the Hebrews he wrote, "...the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. . . ." ²The Scriptures describe man as a triune being with a body to dwell in, a soul to think and reason, and a spirit to communicate with his Maker.

God created man in His own image³ and for His own glory.⁴ God is a spiritual Being and He searches for men who will worship Him in spirit and in truth.⁵ Man's body was formed from the dust of the earth to be a temple in which his spirit and God's Spirit might dwell together in mutual communion.

God gave man's earthly body a brain to think and plan, and muscles to work and perform tasks. He gave him five wonderful senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and feeling) to communicate with the world about him. And He told man to

exercise dominion over all the earth.⁶ Moreover, Jehovah Elohim “. . . breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”⁷ Jehovah is the source of life. There is no life apart from God.

The Creator formed the beasts of the field to live and to reproduce their kind and to die. Their existence is transitory. They were brought into being to serve man. They have no other purpose. But Jehovah Elohim breathed His life into **man** and man became a living soul. Evidently Adam and Eve were filled with God’s Holy Spirit and found sweet communion with the Most High. The Holy Spirit dwelt in their bodies and held precious fellowship with them.⁸

Man’s spirit was designed to communicate with his God through the Holy Spirit. Such communion is the sweetest and most satisfying area of life.⁹ It was the glorious privilege of our first parents in their pristine estate to walk and talk with their Creator.

Their bodies were divinely fashioned temples¹⁰ in which the Holy Spirit of God dwelt and communed with them. God is not a man; He is spirit. God’s Spirit and their spirits enjoyed precious fellowship. Their lives in the garden of Eden were full and gratifying. They walked with God.

The Catastrophic Fall of Man

Then sin invaded the lives of our first parents and the Holy Spirit of God withdrew from them. God had said, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof **thou shalt surely die.**”¹ But Satan subtly suggested, God is a liar. “. . . Ye shall not surely die. . . .”² And they believed Satan and questioned the word of God. In their unbelief they disobeyed God and ate of the forbidden fruit.

Their earthly bodies did not immediately die, but when the Spirit of God withdrew from their lives, they became spiritually dead. When the Holy Spirit who is the breath of God³ separated Himself from him, Adam became a dead soul (dead in trespasses and sins).⁴ He lived physically but he was dead spiritually.⁵ When he sinned he most certainly died, as God had said he would.

To the man who asked permission to remain with his father

until he had buried him and then to come and follow the Master, Jesus said, “. . . Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.”⁶ Both spiritual death and physical death follow in the wake of sin. In the hour that our first parents disbelieved and disobeyed God’s word, they certainly and truly died.⁷ The Holy Spirit of God, who is the only source of life, left them empty and forsaken. As God had declared, when they sinned they died. Their fall from God’s grace was a catastrophe indeed.

God provided that the soul of man should communicate with the world about him through his five natural senses. And so man has continued on through these many centuries as a natural creature of earth. His spirit that was designed to dwell with and converse with his Maker was left alone and desolate. His body which had been created for God’s dwelling was deserted of God. His fellowship with the Holy Spirit was lost. He became only a physical creature of earth, limited to his natural senses for communication with this big world about him.

God expelled him from the garden in his fallen condition. He had not eaten of the tree of life. The Scriptures specifically tell us that Adam and Eve were effectively barred from it lest they should have eaten thereof and lived forever in this sinful and fallen condition. Rather, they were thrust out into the world to fend for themselves.

Adam now consisted specifically of a physical body or temple in which his soul and spirit dwelt alone. His soul had access to the outside world through his five physical senses. But his spirit was alone and without God. He was without spiritual fellowship with his Maker.

But God loved His creature man. Though He had expelled him from the garden, He immediately promised him a Savior, the Messiah, who would save His people from their sins and restore to them the Holy Spirit⁸ as in the beginning. But until the Messiah came, God asked of man one simple thing: **faith**. He asked man to believe His word and trust His promises.

Jehovah directed man to offer the blood of innocent sacrifices⁹ as the expression of his faith in the coming Messiah. For the fulfillment of the Covenant must await the passing of many generations. Only through faith in the promised Savior and

through the expression of that faith by the offering of atoning blood could man maintain even a limited communion with God. The full restoration and refilling with the Holy Spirit must await the literal coming of the Messiah Himself.¹⁰

Satan's Kingdom

The ostrich buries his head in the sand and hopes his troubles will go away. Modern twentieth century man buries his head in his grand scientific achievements and declares there is no God and no spirit world. That which we perceive with our physical senses is all there is. Everything else is mythology.

Yet, though our men can visit the moon and our cameras can probe the secret recesses of the far distant planets, we cannot solve our domestic problems. The threat of economic calamity or another world war hangs over our heads like the sword of Damocles. Fear and perplexity dominate the whole world scene.

From the Scriptures the reason is quite evident. There is a spirit world about us far greater and mightier than men. The kingdom of Satan is very real. And it is in direct conflict with the kingdom of heaven. God tolerates it during this age for the specific purpose of testing and trying men,¹ that out of it all may come a host of redeemed men who through exercise of faith in God shall become "...conformed to the image of his Son..."²

In olden times it was written, "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."³ This is historic. It was Satan's role to tempt God's people.

Jesus began His earthly ministry with a period of temptation from the Devil,⁴ This was literal and real.

John the Revelator wrote:

*And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*⁵

Saint Peter declared, "...God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;..."⁶

Jude added, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."⁷

Satan and his demons are spirits. They love to dwell in the bodies (temples) of men, supplanting God in their communion with their earthy hosts. The Scriptures recount many instances of demons' dwelling in men. Jesus cast the Devil out of the lunatic in Matthew 17:15. Mary Magdalene entertained seven demons in her body.⁸ In the country of the Gadarenes there was a man with an unclean spirit. In fact, the spirit confessed that his name was "...Legion: for we are many."⁹

The Scriptures have much to say about the idols, gods, and demons that men have loved and worshiped through the ages. They worshiped Molech, Ashtaroth, Baal, Diana, Jupiter, et cetera.¹⁰ They had their spiritists, mediums, and witch doctors, practicing astrology and hypnosis and sorcery.

These demons that dwelt in men's bodies and that men served were unclean, deceitful, and wicked. They led their hosts into adultery, sodomy, and unspeakable corruptions!¹¹ These men were filled with demon spirits. They bowed down to images of their own evil-inspired imaginations.

Canaanites Devoted to Spiritism

The Canaanites were wholly given over to the practices of demon worship and spiritism in every conceivable form.¹ Their wicked minds were ingenious in devising the paths of iniquity. They used divination and witchcraft and communication with demons. They worshiped and bowed down before dumb idols which their hands had formed, even sacrificing their children to the fire before Molech.² They observed times (astrology) and consulted with familiar spirits and set up idolatrous images, all of which **Jehovah intensely hated**.³

The people of the land employed every abomination⁴ that their depraved minds could think of. They were filled with evil spirits and bowed down to the devil instead of God. It was in the name of religion that they practiced their corruptions before their gods. They were monsters of iniquity, human animals indulging in

uninhibited adultery. They made sodomy the respected social custom, men with men and women with women, the latter even lying down before the beasts of the field.⁵ It was for these spiritual offenses that Jehovah drove them out of Canaan.

Like Sodom and Gomorrah⁶ of old which Jehovah had turned into ashes as an example to those that afterward should live ungodly,⁷ the cities of Canaan were completely given over to the evils of spiritism and demon worship.⁸ Their cup of iniquity had long since been filled and was running over. Their sinfulness was a stench in the nostrils of a holy God, "...and **the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.**"⁹

"Thou Shalt Utterly Destroy Them"

Therefore Jehovah commanded Israel:

When Jehovah thy Elohim shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

And when Jehovah thy Elohim shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of Jehovah be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

For thou art an holy people unto Jehovah thy Elohim:¹

Moses warned the people of Israel against defilement with the corruptions of the land, for

... the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; . . . [t]hat the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you.²

Jehovah abhorred the wickedness of these Canaanite nations. Israel simply became God's executioner against a people wholly given over to abominable practices. Moses commanded the armies of Israel to destroy the cities of the land. ". . . [T]hou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth: But thou shalt utterly destroy them; . . . That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods;"³

God's Chosen People

Jehovah did not signal out Israel because they were especially attractive or good. He chose them because of His grace and faithfulness, as Moses declared:

... Jehovah thy Elohim hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.

Jehovah did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people:

But because Jehovah loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath Jehovah brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.¹

"Only Jehovah had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day."²

Jehovah selected this people to be a special recipient of His grace and to be a channel through whom the blessings of the Covenant promises might flow to the nations. The Creator had made His sure and irrevocable Covenant to Abraham. Israel was a

chosen instrument through whom the blessings of that Covenant might issue forth.

He set Israel apart to be a "...peculiar treasure unto [Himself] above all people... a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."³ He made them a pattern of the great blessings in store for the nations through the Messiah that would surely come. And He gave them holy laws and commandments so that they might live righteously before Him. These laws and commandments have provided a pattern for good and godly government throughout the ages since.

In Egypt Jehovah instructed Moses to provide a sacrificial lamb for every household. The blood of those lambs covered their sins and pointed their faith toward the promised Messiah who as a perfect Paschal Lamb would one day atone for the sins of all them that believed. Under the law Israel continued to offer bloody sacrifices upon the altar, for Jehovah said, "... the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for the soul."⁴ The prophet Balaam bore testimony to the effectiveness of these sacrifices. In the Spirit he cried, "[God] hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: Jehovah his Elohim is with him, and the shout of a king is among them."⁵

Jehovah tabernacled in the center of the host of Israel. He dwelt within the sacred sanctuary of the holy of holies. His presence sanctified the people. He taught them, "... Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy."⁶ "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am Jehovah your Elohim."⁷

He taught Israel to flee the corruptions of the land. They should have absolutely no part in the abominable practices and worship of the Canaanites. Rather they should keep themselves holy unto their God. Then would God bless and prosper them. No enemy could stand up against them. If they would remain true to their God, they would enjoy rest from all their enemies and their God would bless them with wonderful health and prosperity.⁸

Until Messiah Comes

When Adam and Eve sinned against God through unbelief of His word and disobedience of His command,¹ the Holy Spirit of

God withdrew from His dwelling in their bodies and they became spiritually dead. But He who had created them loved them and immediately promised a Savior who would redeem them from their sin and restore to them the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. The advent of that Savior, the Messiah, would not be for many years. In the meantime Jehovah asked them to believe His word and obey His commands. By so doing they would be restored in measure to His divine grace and in the process of time the Messiah would come and fully restore their place of fellowship with God, as it is written:

Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.²

Adam looked forward to the Messiah, as indeed has every man of faith through the ages since. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."³ Jehovah asked our first parents to sacrifice an innocent lamb whose shed blood would express their faith in the promised Messiah. For the Creator gave His fallen creature only one source of salvation and restitution, and that was the ever blessed Messiah of whom all the prophets throughout the centuries have spoken.⁴

In the fullness of time the Messiah **came** and brought life to all them that receive Him.⁵ He declared, "... The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead [spiritually dead like Adam and Eve after the fall] shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live."⁶ They shall be born again of the Spirit of God.⁷ Their communion with their Maker shall be restored, the Holy Spirit will again take up His dwelling in their mortal bodies, and they shall enjoy sweet communion with God as in the beginning.⁸

What shall we say then to Christian believers of this twentieth century? We must remind them that, "For though we walk in the

flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)...”⁹ “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”¹⁰

The prophet Isaiah chided with God’s people, “So why are you trying to find out the future by consulting witches and mediums? Don’t listen to their whisperings and mutterings. Can the living find out the future from the dead? Why not ask your God?”¹¹

The ouija board is an innocent looking little game, but it opens the door and invites demons to move into one’s body and life. Likewise, extra sensory perception (ESP) is a subtle delusion. God has given men access to only five physical senses. There are no others. However, extra **spiritual** perception is quite possible. Because of Calvary, men of God may commune with their Maker through the Holy Spirit.¹² Wicked men may commune with demons. Every man must choose for himself which it shall be. Without doubt satanic spirits do dwell in the bodies of some men and women and communicate with them.¹³

Occult and spiritualist practices have been common around the world. But sincere Christian believers have no part nor lot with them. God-fearing men should shun idolatry and every vestige of spiritism, which is really demon worship.¹⁴ Flee from the occult as from a plague. Crucify “...the flesh with the affections and lusts”¹⁵ and serve God with all your might.¹⁶ Let your spirit entertain and commune with the Holy Spirit of God. This is every man’s privilege through Jesus Christ. Herein is God’s perfect sabbath rest for His people.¹⁷

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The Fleece of Gideon

And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou has said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.

And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

Chapter Thirteen

The Promised Land

Introduction: Wilderness Wanderings

- 1. Once More, Canaan Ho!**
- 2. The Fall of Two Mighty Kingdoms**
- 3. Moses' Death**
- 4. The Crossing of Jordan**
- 5. Captain of Jehovah's Hosts**
- 6. Conquest of the Land**
- 7. Possession and Rest**
- 8. The Spirit-filled Life**

The Promised Land

Faith and Works walk hand in hand. Unbelief and Disobedience are also wed. The former bring righteousness and peace to the human heart; the latter bring sorrow and grief. Unbelief is the underlying basis of all evil.¹

For forty days Israel searched out the Promised Land and found that indeed it “flowed with milk and honey.” It was a good land, very much to be desired. But fear and unbelief paralyzed her strength. And she “...rebelled against the commandment of Jehovah:....”² She as much as said with the heathen, “...Jehovah was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them,....”³

Israel’s pernicious unbelief arose as a bitter stench in the nostrils of the Most High. Except for the pleading of Moses, Jehovah would have destroyed the nation outright. But Moses bore the spirit of the promised Messiah. He interceded for the people and Jehovah hearkened to his cry. The Lord spared them because that one man prayed and besought God’s mercy.

They were camped at Kadesh-Barnea on the very border between the wide, barren wilderness over which they had come, and the beautiful Canaan land to which Jehovah had brought them. Their wicked unbelief stalled them there. Jehovah did not slay them, but neither would He permit them to take one further step toward the Promised Land, until that whole generation of faithless adults that came up out of Egypt had died.

For thirty-eight years Israel wandered aimlessly in “...that great and terrible wilderness,....”⁴ They compassed the mountain of Seir for many days.⁵ They traveled in circles, crossing and

recrossing their wilderness paths. Jehovah fed them and clothed them. His marvelous presence remained with them. But their stupid unbelief barred them from the Promised Land. Israel was in the wilderness for forty long years until every adult died and their carcasses wasted in the wilderness. ⁶

Once More, Canaan Ho!

“Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn you northward.” Israel’s sojourn in the wilderness had now come to an end. All the “. . . generation of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, . . .”¹ Thirty-eight years have moseyed by and a new generation has risen up in Israel—thirty-eight years since Kadesh-Barnea, thirty-nine years from Egypt, and forty to the crossing of Jordan. And Moses once more turned the face of Israel toward Canaan. The glory cloud of Jehovah’s presence went before them and led them in the way. He still provided them with bread and meat and water, and after these many years, “. . . your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.”² They were the same holy nation, the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, redeemed by blood, and Jehovah was still their sovereign King. Only an unbelieving and rebellious generation has perished in the wilderness: that is the awful price of unbelief!

“So it came to pass, when all the men of war were consumed and dead from among the people, That Jehovah spake unto me, saying, Thou art to pass over through Ar, the coast of Moab, this day. . . .”³ So the final march was begun.

The people turned aside from and did not disturb Edom or Mount Seir, the home of Esau’s children, because they were Israel’s cousins. Their fathers, Jacob and Esau, were twin brothers. They also passed by Moab which Jehovah had reserved for the children of Lot who was Abraham’s nephew. And after many weary miles they came to the River Arnon on the border of the land of the Amorites.

The Fall of Two Mighty Kingdoms

There were the two mighty nations of the Amorites with their kings directly in the path of Israel: Sihon king of Heshbon and Og

king of Bashan, and both on the east bank of Jordan.¹ Their cups of iniquity were running over.² They were wholly given over to idolatry, spiritism, and sexual abominations.³ Therefore, Jehovah said to Moses:

*Rise ye up, take your journey, and pass over the river Arnon: behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it, . . . This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee.*⁴

King Sihon came out against Israel with all his might, but his armies and his cities crumbled before Israel, as Moses wrote, “. . . Jehovah our God delivered all unto us: . . . ”⁵

King Og of the strong city of Bashan ruled the Amorites all the way from the River Jarmuk to Mount Hermon. He was of the remnant of giants, having an iron bedstead six feet wide and nearly fourteen feet in length.⁶ But he was only a man. He and his kingdom fell before Israel. “. . . [W]e took all his cities at that time, . . . threescore cities, . . . fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; beside unwallled towns a great many.”⁷

Moses divided all the country east of the Jordan to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. But these tribes agreed that their men of war would continue on with the rest of the tribes until the land west of Jordan was likewise possessed by Israel.

Moses' Death

This was now Israel's fortieth year since the miraculous Passover in Egypt.¹ In the first month of this fortieth year, Moses' and Aaron's sister Miriam died at Kadesh in the desert of Zin² at the likely age of 130. Then four months later Aaron died at Mount Hor, and Eleazar his son became high priest in his stead.³

The remark of some of the fathers here is worthy of attention: "Neither Moses the representative of the law, nor Miriam the representative of the prophets, nor Aaron the representative of the priesthood and its sacrificial rites, could bring the Israelites into possession of the promised land. This was reserved for Joshua, who was in name and conduct the lively type of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." He alone can bring those who believe in his name into that rest which remains for the people of God. ⁴

Israel camped by Mount Nebo in the plains of Moab by Jordan. "And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And Jehovah shewed him all the land. . . ." ⁵ north, west, and south on both sides of Jordan.

And Jehovah said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of Jehovah died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of Jehovah. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated. ⁶

The Crossing of Jordan

Jehovah God had promised all of Canaan to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, and to their children after them. ¹ Now after approximately five hundred years, the promises were being fulfilled. Two and a half tribes were settled in the land of the Amorites on the east side of Jordan. Moses the servant and prophet of Jehovah had died, and Joshua was raised up in his stead. Canaan, teeming with walled cities, mighty kings, and armies with iron chariots and horses, lay before Israel on the other side of the flooding Jordan, for at this harvest season the river always overflowed its banks. ²

Israel's glorious King, Jehovah, bid the nation advance and take the land. So on the appointed morning they broke camp and started their march toward the flooding Jordan. The priests bearing the ark of the covenant of Jehovah led the way. When they reached the river's edge, Joshua commanded them to keep marching. So they waded right into the river. And when the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, the waters fled before them. Jehovah pushed back the flood tide and the Jordan rose up a great heap on the right and drained off on their left to the sea, "...and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan."³

What a triumphant beginning! The kings of the Amorites and the kings of the Canaanites, which were on the west side of Jordan, heard about this. No wonder that their hearts "...melted, neither was there spirit in them any more,..."⁴! Who could withstand Israel when Jehovah marched before them?

Captain of Jehovah's Hosts

Israel set up her camp on the west bank of Jordan and called it Gilgal, meaning a "rolling away" of the reproach of Egypt.¹ At last they were in Canaan land. This was now the tenth day of the first month² of the forty-first year since the great Passover in Egypt.³ They immediately prepared for and celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth day. On the next day they ate of the old corn of the land, unleavened cakes and parched corn.⁴ Then on the sixteenth day the manna ceased and Israel celebrated the Feast of First Fruits of Harvest. They ate of the first fruits of Canaan land!

Then one morning Joshua rose up early and walked out on the plain of Jericho to have a look at the formidable city with its massive walls and fortifications. This city was now their immediate challenge. They must some way breach its walls and destroy this fortress. Jericho stood as a silent but teeming stronghold directly in Israel's path. It must be brought down.

Then Joshua

... lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: [Joshua

*challenged him], Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? [And the man answered], Nay; but as captain of the host of Jehovah am I now come. . . . Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.*⁵

We had thought that Joshua was captain of Jehovah's hosts. But here is Another, greater than Joshua. Here was the divine Warrior and Captain of the numberless hosts in the heavenlies. Here stands the key to the overthrow of that awesome city, Jericho. And here stood the answer to the taking of all the rest of the Promised Land: not Joshua's brilliant tactics of war, nor the might of Israel's arms, but the unseen and unlimited forces of Jehovah that would fight for this holy, redeemed people.

Conquest of the Land

"Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, . . ." ¹ This was the solemn word of Jehovah to His servant Joshua. "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: . . ." ² Joshua was a beautiful type of the promised Messiah, the Captain of our salvation. ³

Jericho was no problem. For six consecutive days the whole army of Israel marched once around the city accompanied by the priests bearing the ark of Jehovah. On the seventh day they marched around the city seven times. Then at the sound of the trumpets, all the army gave a great shout and the unseen hosts of Jehovah pushed over the walls. And Joshua's warriors moved in, destroyed the city, and finished off the foe. ⁴

No wonder the heart of the people of Canaan melted and their spirits sank within them because of the children of Israel. They were no match for the invisible hosts of Jehovah. Ai was taken and destroyed. The five kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon united to fight. But Israel smote them and destroyed them all. As the people fled before Israel, ". . . Jehovah cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword." ⁵ Then Joshua cried in the sight of all Israel:

*Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. . . . [T]here was no day like that before it or after it, that Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of a man: for Jehovah fought for Israel.*⁶

Likewise, as one man said, "The sun does not rise and set because of the laws of nature, but because God wills it."⁷

Joshua smote all the kings and armies and cities of the land.⁸ As it is written, "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Jehovah said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war."⁹

Possession and Rest

The Scriptures emphasize that "... Jehovah gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; . . . There failed not ought of any good thing which Jehovah had spoken unto the house of Israel; **all came to pass.**"¹ Jehovah gave them the whole land and divided it among the twelve tribes. No man was able to stand before them. One Israelite could "... chase a thousand: for Jehovah your God, he it is that fighteth for you, . . ."²

Before he died, Joshua rehearsed in the ears of all Israel the wonderful works of Jehovah. He had delivered Israel from Egypt and He had given them His holy Covenant at Sinai. He had preserved them throughout all their wilderness wanderings. And now, He had given them Canaan land as an everlasting possession.³

*. . . I am going the way of all the earth: and ye know in all your hearts and in all your souls, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which Jehovah your Elohim spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.*⁴

“And Israel served Jehovah [and prospered] all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of Jehovah, that he had done for Israel.”⁵ They possessed the land of Canaan as Jehovah had promised Abraham. And Jehovah gave them rest in the land from all their enemies.⁶

The Spirit-filled Life

The Promised Land was a type of the New Covenant Spirit-filled life. It was a divinely given pattern of life in the Spirit. Joshua led Israel victoriously into Canaan.¹ And Joshua prefigured the Messiah who would lead His people victoriously into the promise of the Holy Spirit. The Promised Land, then, is a spiritual land belonging to the heirs of the Covenant.²

At Kadesh-Barnea Israel could not enter in because of her unbelief.³ The country was full of giants and walled cities. Unbelief and disobedience turned the nation back into the wilderness. Therefore, Moses, the representative of the Old Covenant Law, could not lead Israel into that Promised Land. The Old Covenant could not bring Israel into spiritual victory and rest.⁴

The spiritual Canaan of the New Covenant is still a land of spiritual conflict. It is filled with giants and cities whose walls tower to the skies. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”⁵

Jehovah Sabaoth dwelt in the Tabernacle of the Congregation of Israel. His unseen hosts went before Joshua and overcame every fortress and every stronghold of the enemy, and were limited only by Israel’s faithlessness.⁶ Jehovah Sabaoth now dwells by His Holy Spirit in the blood-cleansed temple of each believer.⁷ Again, limited only by our little faith, the unseen hosts of our Joshua go before us and overcome every fortress and stronghold of the enemy. By faith we enter in and find rest from our own fruitless struggle.⁸ We rest in the finished work of Jesus, the Messiah.⁹

Our great Messiah, Joshua’s antitype, has fulfilled all the symbols and patterns of the Scriptures. “. . . When he ascended

up on high, he led captivity captive. . . .”¹⁰ “And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them. . . .”¹¹ Christian believers should follow closely to their wonderful, triumphant Christ. He has defeated all our foes and in Him we have rest.¹²

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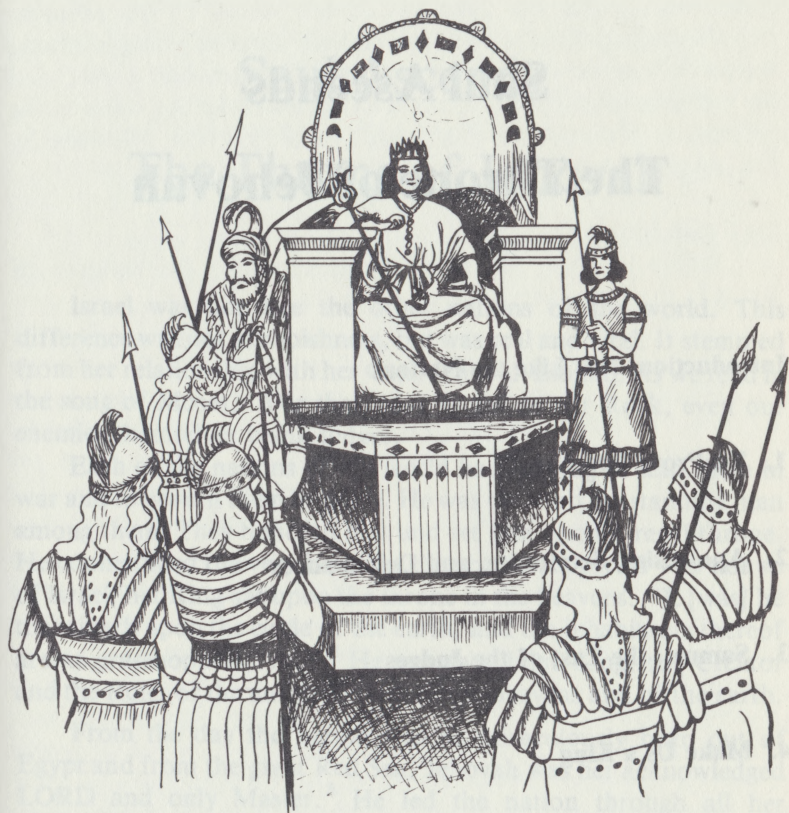
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The Throne of Jehovah

Of Saul Jehovah said to Samuel, "... [T]hou shalt anoint him to be captain over my people Israel, . . . " I Samuel 9:16

"Then Solomon sat on the throne of Jehovah as king instead of David his father, and prospered: and all Israel obeyed him." I Chronicles 29:23; 28:5

Chapter Fourteen

Saul Ascends The Throne of Jehovah

Introduction: Not Like the Nations

- 1. To Prove Israel**
- 2. Apostasies, Servitudes, and Deliverances**
- 3. Samuel, the Last of the Judges**
- 4. Make Us a King**
- 5. Saul Ascends the Throne**
- 6. A Mere Man on Jehovah's Throne**

Saul Ascends

The Throne of Jehovah

Israel was not like the other nations of the world. This difference was not snobbishness, but was real and vital. It stemmed from her relationship with her God, Jehovah Elohim. As we read in the song of Moses, "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges."¹

Each of the nations of the world had its king to lead them in war and to govern them in peace. He was the most outstanding man among them. They honored him and set him upon a regal throne. He commanded the very best that they could supply. It was not so of Israel; her King sat upon the throne in the heavens. "It [was] he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; . . ."² He was the divine King, the Creator and the Ruler of the universe, both of the heavens and of the earth.

From the day the nation was so miraculously born out of Egypt and from the great Red Sea, Jehovah was her acknowledged LORD and only Master.³ He led the nation through all her pilgrimage by a pillar of cloud by day and by a flame of fire by night.⁴ He fed her manna in the morning and the finest of quail in the evening. He opened up sparkling springs in the desert where there was no water that the people and their flocks might drink. He struck their enemies with paralyzing fear and **permitted none to stand before them**. As He had promised Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, He gave them the Promised Land and they possessed it and were at rest from war.⁵

Jehovah gave Israel His holy Law at Mount Sinai, thus setting them apart from all people on the earth. They were a holy nation, redeemed by blood. Jehovah claimed them for His own, a peculiar

treasure, a people separated to their God. There was no nation like Israel whose God was Jehovah. In the words of the prophet, “. . . Jehovah his God is with him, and the shout of a king is among them.”⁶ They were His people redeemed by innocent blood, and He was ever jealous over them. Jehovah dwelt among them in the very center of the host, in a tabernacle or earthly tent, sanctified by His glory.⁷

To Prove Israel

Before he died, Moses carefully instructed the children of Israel in the commandments of Jehovah.

*When Jehovah thy Elohim shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when Jehovah thy Elohim shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them [their cup of iniquity was full and running over]; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: . . . [Y]e shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. For thou art an holy people unto Jehovah thy Elohim: Jehovah thy Elohim hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. . . . [B]ecause Jehovah loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, . . .*¹

*But if ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you; then it shall come to pass, that those which ye let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell.*²

Nevertheless, Israel did not obey the voice of Jehovah.³

. . . Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites. . . . Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Bethshean. . . . [T]hey put

*the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out. . . . Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites. . . . Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants. . . . Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain:*⁴

Therefore, Jehovah left these small nations scattered over Canaan to “. . . prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of Jehovah to walk therein as their fathers did keep it, or not.”⁵ These were left in the land to try and to prove each succeeding generation of Israelites that followed. Jehovah said, “I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.”⁶

Apostasies, Servitudes, and Deliverances

The books of Joshua and Judges cover a period of about four and one-half centuries.¹ It is interesting to note that the people served God during the life of Joshua and the lives of the elders that outlived Joshua.² But succeeding generations drifted from the faith of their fathers and were ensnared by the idolatry of the Canaanite peoples that had been allowed to remain among them. Then Jehovah would deliver the Israelites into the hands of the Canaanites to subjugate and oppress them. In their affliction the Israelities would finally repent and cry to Jehovah, and He would raise up a deliverer who would lead them in returning to Him and throwing off the yoke of the enemy.

It appears that about every third generation would apostatize. Jehovah would sell them into the hands of the Canaanites or the Philistines for a number of years until they would repent and cry out for mercy. Then Jehovah would hear them and bring them deliverance.

The book of Judges describes seven such apostasies of the people of Israel. But Jehovah never forsook them. When they repented and sought His face, He always raised up a liberator like Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Samson, or Samuel. The lesson

is simple and clear: every generation needs a revival. Every generation must come to a personal involvement with God. Our fathers' faith is not sufficient for us. We must seek the Lord and pray down a revival of experimental faith within our own generation. Second-hand religion will never suffice!

Samuel, the Last of the Judges

Before his birth, Samuel was dedicated by his mother to the service of Jehovah. When he was twelve he was placed in the temple and "...did minister unto Jehovah before Eli. . . ." ¹ It was there that he received his first prophetic call from Jehovah. "And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of Jehovah." ²

When he was about forty years of age, Samuel called all Israel to a holy convocation at Mizpeh.

And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto Jehovah with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto Jehovah, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. ³

The Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together at Mizpeh, so they went up against them to battle.

. . . And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto Jehovah our Elohim for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines. And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto Jehovah: and Samuel cried unto Jehovah for Israel; and Jehovah heard him. ⁴

Jehovah confounded the Philistines with thunder and lightning and hail. And they were smitten before Israel and were humbled to the dust. "...[A]nd the hand of Jehovah was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." ⁵ During the next twenty years Samuel judged Israel in peace.

Make Us a King

Samuel was now sixty years old and his two sons were wayward and they perverted judgment. They walked not in the way of their father. So the men of Israel became dissatisfied. They gathered around Samuel, saying, “. . . now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.”¹

What an evil thing to do. Jehovah was their King! And they were not like the nations! How could they do so wickedly? So Samuel prayed unto Jehovah. “And Jehovah said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but **they have rejected me**, that I should not reign over them.”²

Samuel contended desperately with Israel. “Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; . . . ”³

What a strange development after all these centuries, that Israel should desire a mere man to be her king. Naught but ignorance and stupid unbelief could have undermined the nation's understanding of her most-favored relationship with Jehovah. Of all the peoples of the world, Israel alone had Jehovah, the God of the universe, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, for her King! And now that she should ask such an One as Jehovah Himself to step aside and let a mere man reign over her! What utter stupidity!

And Samuel rehearsed all the words of the people in the ears of Jehovah.⁴ What a beautiful relationship of a man with his God. Truly Samuel knew “. . . the ecstasy of the loneliness of one man's walk with God.”⁵ Samuel was now considered an old man, having served Jehovah from childhood. He was faithful to Jehovah and to Israel. In this extreme crisis, he manifested his greatness as a judge of Israel and as a prophet of Jehovah.

Saul Ascends the Throne

“And Jehovah said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. . . . ”¹ So Samuel called the people together at Mizpeh (where he had offered the sucking lamb some twenty years

before and where Jehovah had smitten the Philistines so conclusively that they had never again raised their heads). There at Mizpeh, Samuel protested their demands, "And ye have this day **rejected your God**, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. . . ." ²

Jehovah Himself picked out the man Saul, the son of Kish of the tribe of Benjamin. ³When he stood among the people, he was taller than any of them from his shoulders and upward. "Then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because Jehovah hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?" ⁴

Samuel still protested the great wickedness of Israel in thus asking for a king, ⁵" . . . When Jehovah your **God was your king.**" ⁶ Saul was lifted up and he actually supplanted Jehovah on the **throne of Israel**, which was in truth the kingdom of Jehovah. And, without question, Saul did reign upon the **throne of Jehovah**, as did David and Solomon after him, as the Scriptures declare, ". . . he hath chosen Solomon my son to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah over Israel." ⁷ And again, "Then Solomon sat on the throne of Jehovah as king instead of David his father, . . ." ⁸

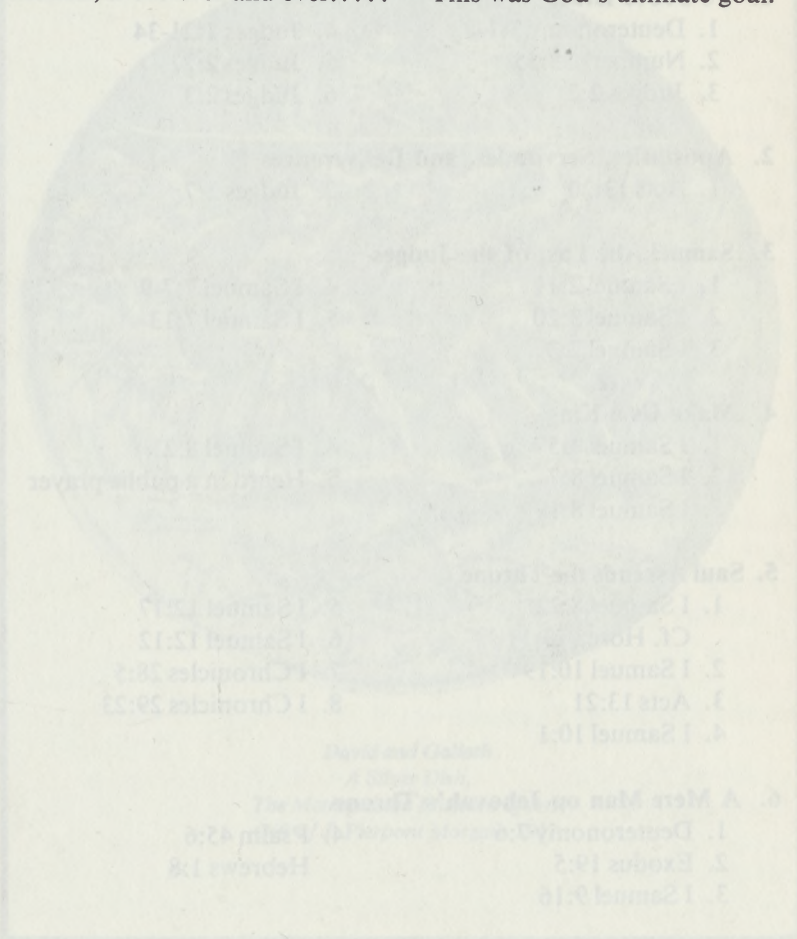
A Mere Man on Jehovah's Throne

Herein is a major development in the revelation of Jehovah's wonderful plan. Israel is a divine kingdom, a holy nation, redeemed with blood. Jehovah has set her aside from all the nations to be His singular treasure upon the earth. ¹ Israel belongs to Jehovah in a very special sense; He is her sovereign King. For five long centuries—ever since He smote Egypt and brought Israel to Himself from that land of bondage—Jehovah has reigned over her. He led her through the wilderness and fed her and cared for her. He carried her into the Promised Land and gave it to her, driving out the seven nations that possessed it before her. He guarded her and delivered her from her enemies.

Now a mere man, Saul of the tribe of Benjamin, is made to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of Jehovah God, reigning over this singular nation, this "peculiar treasure" ² of Jehovah. Samuel

poured a bottle of oil over Saul's head and he became the anointed king and captain over Israel.³ And he reigned for forty years.

Saul's throne became a type or prophecy of Jehovah's astounding purpose to raise up a man, David's Son, the Messiah, to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of God. Jehovah had in mind a far greater man than Saul or even David or Solomon to one day occupy His throne. Of the glory and eminence of that most extraordinary man, David wrote in the Psalms, "Thy throne, O Elohim, is for ever and ever: . . ." ⁴ This was God's ultimate goal.



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1. To Prove Israel

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David and Goliath

A Silver Dish,

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917

Chapter Fifteen

David's Son . . .

His Everlasting Kingdom

Introduction: David

- 1. The Kingdom Established**
- 2. The Promises**
- 3. David's Son, Solomon**
- 4. David's Greater Son, the Messiah**
- 5. A Man of Adam's Race**
- 6. His Everlasting Kingdom**
- 7. King of Kings and Lord of Lords**

David's Son . . .

His Everlasting Kingdom

At the turn of the millennium, one thousand years before Messiah came, Jehovah chose a teen-age lad to be king over Israel. David was watching over his father's sheep in the hill country round about Bethlehem. While thus engaged, he spent much of his time worshiping Jehovah Elohim, the God of his fathers. And he practiced his faith, defending his flock from every predator. When there came a lion (and later a bear), and took a lamb out of the flock, David went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth.¹ And when the beast rose up against him, David caught him by the beard, and smote him and slew him. No mere eighteen-year-old boy could slay a lion or a bear single-handedly. But an eighteen-year-old boy with Jehovah was more than a match for the lion and the bear.

It was with the same confidence in Jehovah that David set out to fight the nine-foot giant Goliath, the Philistine of Gath. He declared to King Saul that this uncircumcised Philistine would be as the lion and as the bear, "... seeing he hath defied the armies of the living Elohim." Though still only a young man, possibly twenty-two years old, David was ready to do exploits for God.² "And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, . . . and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine."³

When he saw David, the Philistine "... disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance." The Philistine growled, "... Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with [a shepherd's staff]? . . . Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field."

Chapter Fifteen

And David cried to the Philistine:

*... Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of Jehovah Sabaoth, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defiled. . . . And David [ran toward the Philistine and he] put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.*⁴

Then David ran and drew the Philistine's sword and cut off his head.

David continued to practice this kind of faith and courage all the years of his long life. And Jehovah described him in the fondest terms, "... a man after mine own heart. . . ." ⁵ For God delights in such manifestations of faith by His people.

The Kingdom Established

Overcoming the Philistine armies was no big deal to King David. With Jehovah and the unseen hosts of heaven fighting on his side, David's army smote the Philistines in two strategic skirmishes in the valley of Rephaim. Actually it was Jehovah who went out before David, to smite the host of the Philistines. And David's men followed and smote them "... from Geba until thou come to Gazer." ¹

Under David's leadership the kingdom was soon established and wonderfully strengthened. All his enemies were subdued before him. "... Jehovah had given him rest round about from all his enemies; . . . " ²

The Promises

Then when his kingdom had been made secure against his adversaries and he was enjoying peace in the land, David turned his thoughts toward building a temple in Jerusalem for the LORD Jehovah. He himself lived in a house of cedar, while the ark of God still rested in a tent of goat skins. But God sent a message to the king by the mouth of his prophet, Nathan:

. . . Also Jehovah telleth thee that he will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.¹

This remarkable promise had a dual application. It foresaw the reign of David's son, Solomon, who succeeded to the throne immediately upon his father's death. Solomon would build the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem. And Solomon's kingdom would be well established in Israel. But the promise went far beyond Solomon and his good and bad descendents that followed him. This prophecy to King David foresaw the coming of a much greater Son than Solomon. God was telling David of his ". . . house for a great while to come."² This promise could find its ultimate fulfillment only in the Messiah—in that divine Son, Immanuel.

David's Son, Solomon

When he had finished his course at threescore and ten, David set his house in order, and turned the kingdom over to his son, Solomon. David went the way of all the earth and they buried him in a sepulcher in his beloved Zion.

"Then Solomon sat on the **throne of Jehovah** as king instead of David his father, and prospered; and all Israel obeyed him."¹ And Solomon proceeded to carry out the vision of his father in the building of a beautiful temple in Jerusalem for the LORD Jehovah. He began it in the fourth year of his reign and finished it in the eleventh, just 487 years after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt.²

At the dedication of the temple, the glory cloud of God's presence filled the house of Jehovah, so that the priests could not remain to minister. Israel worshiped before her God, and Solomon declared the faithfulness of Jehovah, "Blessed be Jehovah, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."³

But, alas, following the death of Solomon, the kingdom of Israel deteriorated rapidly and tragically. Of the forty kings who reigned over Israel and Judah, only a few stood out as God-fearing leaders of the people. The majority were indifferent, weak, or openly wicked like Ahab who did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. Finally, the mercies of God ran out. “. . . Jehovah removed Israel out of his sight. . .”⁴ about 722 years before Christ. Judah continued on for another century, but was finally destroyed and carried into captivity 587 years before Christ.⁵

Saul’s family became extinct. David’s temporal kingdom ran out and was taken over by the heathen. But the seed of David lived on to the coming of Messiah, in fulfillment of God’s sure promises.

David’s Greater Son, the Messiah

Two hundred fifty years after the promise was given to David, Isaiah was contemplating in the Spirit on the same wonderful subject. He saw the coming Christ-child, not just a common son in David’s royal line but a divine Son (a God-man, that is, both God and man), conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary. Listen to his marvelous prophecy, “. . . Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (or Immanu-Elohim), “. . . which being interpreted is, **God with us**”¹ (or **Elohim with us**).

Isaiah continued:

*. . . unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God [Elohim], The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of Jehovah Sabaoth will perform this.*²

What a remarkable Son to sit upon David’s throne! “. . . [F]rom henceforth, even for ever”! Of course. His kingdom shall

be an everlasting kingdom. For the zeal (the intense purpose and desire) of Jehovah Sabaoth (the LORD of hosts) will perform this.

David could hardly have imagined the glory and the majesty that God intended when He spoke to him of his coming Son, the Messiah. David knew that he, himself, sat upon the exalted throne of Jehovah, reigning over God's people. But only by the Holy Spirit's anointing could he have grasped in any large degree the tremendous significance of it all. But because of that Holy Spirit's anointing that did rest upon King David, the Psalms that he wrote are profusely sprinkled with inspired utterances describing the glorious majesty of Messiah and His kingdom, such as the grand proclamation of Jehovah, "...Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." ³

And again on another occasion, "... Thy throne, O Elohim, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." ⁴

And again, "Jehovah said unto my Adonai, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." ⁵

A Man of Adam's Race

Saul sat upon the throne of Jehovah! Israel had rejected Jehovah who was her rightful King. Instead, they had chosen a mere human, Saul the son of Kish, to be their king. He reigned over Israel for forty years. Then David ascended the throne for another forty years, and then Solomon, David's son, followed. ¹

But these men were only types: they foreshadowed the **promise that a man**, a human being like us, even David's greater Son, the blessed Messiah, should one day sit upon that majestic, everlasting, and all-glorious throne of Jehovah. And that man, the Messiah, was to be one of us, a child of Adam's fallen race, "... touched with the feeling of our infirmities;" ²

Now herein is a marvelous thing! The great Creator, Jehovah Elohim, who reigned in complete and unfathomable power and splendor over the whole vast universe, chose a little nation, Israel, and called them His people, His kingdom! He redeemed them from the vile slavery of Egypt and led them by the hand (as it were) to

Canaan and established them there. He was their King.³ Israel was the kingdom of Jehovah, “. . . a peculiar treasure unto [Jehovah] above all people: . . . a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.”⁴

King David exclaimed with deep feeling:

*Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears. And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like Israel, whom God went to redeem for a people to himself, and to make him a name, and to do for you great things and terrible, for thy land, before thy people, which thou redeemedst to thee from Egypt, from the nations and their gods? For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel to be a people unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God.*⁵

Jehovah had ruled over Israel for five centuries until that fateful day when they had cried to Samuel, “. . . make us a king [a mere man] to judge us like all the nations.”⁶ Jehovah, their divine, though invisible King, had been much displeased; but He had stepped aside and the prophet Samuel had installed Saul, of the tribe of Benjamin, to sit upon the divine throne of Jehovah over Israel. Saul had reigned many years and then fallen in battle on Mount Gilboa, and Jehovah had raised up David to rule in his stead.

His Everlasting Kingdom

The divine purpose of God is simply marvelous. God loves men whom He created. He designs to redeem a people from the slavery and bondage of sin. He intends to make of them an heavenly kingdom of men and women who love and worship Him—kings and priests unto our God.¹ Therefore, Jehovah promised David a Son, the Messiah, who would save His people from their sins, and one day sit upon his (David's) throne—the throne of Jehovah. He has ordained that those who obey and follow Him should become His brethren, heirs of God and joint heirs with Himself, and that they should reign with Him. And so it

is written, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in his throne." ²

Now it is evident that this Jesus, David's Son and the Messiah of Israel, was no ordinary man. The great Jehovah Elohim chose to take upon Himself the form of man and to be born of a virgin daughter of David's royal line. That Son of David was also the Son of God! We will not try to explain it. Rather, we will but bow before the Most High God in wondrous awe at His eternal love and condescension that have given to us such a Messiah. This man, the Savior, Jesus Christ, went to Calvary's despised old cross to redeem from the slavery of sin all men who would receive Him. His body was taken down from the cross and laid tenderly in a rock-hewn tomb. But the grave could not hold Him! He arose in triumph and ascended up "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: . . ." ³ And there He shall reign until all enemies are made His footstool.

David was a prophet of the true and only God. He knew that Jehovah 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 seeing this before [one thousand years before it happened] spake of the resurrection of Christ. . . ." ⁴ By the Spirit, David foresaw that Jehovah would raise this Jesus, his greater Son, from the grave of death and set Him upon his throne, which is also the throne of Jehovah, eternal in the heavens.

King of Kings and Lord of Lords

Daniel, the prophet, also spoke of this Messiah some five hundred years before He came. He saw Him as a stone, cut from the mountain without hands, smiting and replacing all the carnal kingdoms of this earth. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: . . ." ¹ Daniel continued:

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was

given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.²

In the fullness of time that greater Son of David did come. When He was born of the virgin Mary in the stable of Bethlehem, the angel Gabriel declared:

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and Jehovah Elohim shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.³

John, the beloved disciple, saw Him in His exaltation, riding triumphantly upon a white horse. On His head were many diadems and across His vesture was written a name: "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."⁴ For He is and ever shall be that "...blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;..."⁵

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1. The Kingdom Established

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The Triumphal Entry
by Bernard Plockhorst

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. . . and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominions shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.” Zechariah 9:9,10.

Chapter Sixteen

197

What the Prophets Saw

Introduction: The Spirit of the Messiah

1. 4000 B.C. Adam
2. 2500 B.C. Noah
3. 2000 B.C. Abraham
4. 1500 B.C. Moses
5. 1000 B.C. David
6. 800 B.C. Joel
7. 700 B.C. Amos, Micah, Isaiah
8. 600 B.C. Jeremiah, Daniel
9. 500 B.C. Haggai, Zechariah
10. 400 B.C. Malachi
11. The Vision of the Prophets

What the Prophets Saw

The big fisherman, Simon Peter, became a disciple and an apostle of the man, Jesus Christ. It was he who wrote by the Holy Spirit of the **salvation** which was wrought by his Master, and of the vision of the prophets who so clearly foresaw the sufferings of the Messiah¹ and the glory that should follow. They inquired and searched diligently into what the Spirit that was in them meant regarding this Messiah. They foresaw His majesty. They foresaw Calvary. And they foresaw His exaltation.

As we read the pages of the Old Testament Scriptures, our hearts should burn within us. For these men of God (the prophets) were wonderfully moved by the "Spirit of the Messiah which was in them."

Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Messiah which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Messiah, and the glory that should follow.

Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.²

(The following pages contain a brief resume of what some of the prophets foresaw concerning that magnificent promised Messiah.)

4000 B.C. Adam

In the ancient antiquity of the first parents of our human race, we read of the “promised seed” and of His suffering for sin. “And Jehovah Elohim said unto the serpent, . . . I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”¹

The “seed of the woman” undoubtedly referred to the Messiah. Certainly, He crushed Satan’s head at Calvary. Martin Luther said, “Yes, the devil wounded Jesus’ heel on the cross of Calvary, but he got a broken head for his pains.”² His power was broken. The Psalmist in the Spirit declared of the Messiah, “. . . When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, . . .”³ When He arose from the grave, death, and hell, He spoiled Satan’s principalities and powers, and “. . . openly displayed to the whole world [His] triumph at the cross. . . .”⁴ He abolished the impregnable stronghold of death and replaced it with life and immortality!⁵

Further, it is both symbolic and prophetic that Jehovah Elohim made coats of skins and clothed Adam and Eve. Evidently sheep were slain to cover their nakedness.⁶ This was the first recorded instance of the sacrifice of sheep. Later, Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock as a sacrificial offering before Jehovah, and Jehovah accepted it.⁷

These beginnings of prophecies are in small nugget form, yet they set the invariable pattern that follows as a “scarlet cord” throughout the sacred Scriptures, as blood sacrifices were offered for the sins of the people.

The Messiah is coming! He will redeem His people from their sins.

2500 B.C. Noah

“And Noah builded an altar unto Jehovah; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.”¹ This was an act of faith. Noah believed the word of God. Through faith in God’s word he had prepared an ark to the saving of his house. He had preserved his family of eight souls from a watery grave,² thereby condemning the faithless world which perished in the flood.³

“And Jehovah smelled a sweet savour;⁴ . . . And Elohim spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and **with your seed** after you; . . .”⁵ The sacrificial altar looked forward, by faith in God’s promises, to the Messiah (Noah’s seed) who would one day pay the price of man’s redemption on Calvary. The Covenant promise to Noah and to his family was sure. And they believed it and became heirs of the righteousness of God which is by faith.⁶

2000 B.C. Abraham

To Abraham the promises became clear and emphatic. Through his descendents a Child, the Messiah, should be born. As it is written, “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Messiah.”¹ The Covenant promise to Adam, to Noah, and to Abraham of a “seed” pointed directly to the coming Messiah.

And in this Messiah “. . . shall all the kindreds of the earth [families of the earth, nations] be blessed.”² This was the essence of the promise to Abraham. The patriarch foresaw the coming of the Messiah who would die on Calvary’s cross to redeem men, not of Israel only, but of every nation (the heathen) from their sins, and to fill them with the Holy Spirit.³

Moreover the promise had a natural or material application, too. Abraham’s family should be blessed both in number and in substance. As the channel of God’s grace to the nations, Abraham’s family would multiply and become a great people. Elohim would give to them the land of Canaan and they would possess it. But the primary object and intent of the promises was that all-blessed Messiah. He is the focal point and the basic theme of all the promises throughout the Scriptures.⁴

When Jacob, Abraham’s grandson, lay dying down in the land of Egypt, his twelve sons all pressed around his bed, the old patriarch reached out his hand and laid it upon Judah’s head and prophesied:

*A lion's whelp is Judah. . . . He couched, lying down like a strong lion, And like a lioness; who shall arouse him? From Judah the sceptre shall not depart, Nor a teacher from his offspring, until that SHILOH shall come, . . .*⁵

This prophecy of the coming Messiah as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Apostle (**Shiloh**—"sent forth from God"), and the Shepherd of Israel, is as a shining star in the prophetic firmament.

1500 B.C. Moses

For some three long centuries, Israel had been bound in slavery to the Pharaoh of Egypt. Every Israelite was chained to that furnace of affliction from which there was no escape. But Moses did the impossible. He accomplished two marvelous things for the children of Israel:

First, he brought ten horrible plagues upon the land of Egypt, concluding with the death of the firstborn in every Egyptian home. By this means he broke asunder the chains of Israel's slavery, and through the death of the Passover lamb, delivered the nation from Egypt. He baptized them in the great Red Sea and led them as a redeemed nation to the gates of the Promised Land, and

Second, he received of Jehovah the beautiful Old Covenant Law, which was represented by two tables of stone on which were written the Ten Commandments. These he placed in the holy of holies of the Tabernacle of Jehovah, which he built after the pattern showed him in the mount.

Then Moses instituted the two annual feasts of Passover and Pentecost to commemorate these two great events: Israel's deliverance from Egypt and the giving of the Old Covenant Law at Sinai. These two things were intended of Jehovah to be patterns of what the Messiah would accomplish when He should come. So for fifteen hundred years Israel celebrated the feasts of Passover and Pentecost in anticipation of the coming Messiah who would accomplish these two things for His people, namely:

He would **deliver His people from the slavery of sin**, being slain as God's Passover Lamb on Calvary's cross, in fulfillment of the feast of Passover, and

He would receive from the Father the promised New Covenant which He would deposit in the holy of holies of His Church. He would **fill His redeemed people with the Holy Spirit** in fulfillment of the feast of Pentecost.

Thus the ministry of Moses displayed the suffering (Calvary) and the glory (God's throne and the Upper Room)¹ of the promised Messiah. He declared to Israel:

*... A prophet shall Jehovah your Elohim raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And... every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.*²

Moses' life and works provided Israel with graphic patterns of the ministry of the coming Messiah. "Now all these things happened unto them [Israel] for ensamples [types or patterns]: and they are written for our admonition,..."³

1000 B.C. David

David was a beautiful character. He was the "sweet singer of Israel." Of him Jehovah gave testimony and said, "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath Elohim according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus:..."¹ David's Psalms are replete with references to and descriptions of the coming Messiah. And the New Testament writers confirmed that these inspired utterances pointed unerringly to that glorious One: "... Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."² Paul declared that Jehovah was here referring to Messiah's resurrection.

"... What is mere man that you are so concerned about him? And who is this Son of Man-you honor so highly?"³ David was struck with the vision of that divine "Son of Man," the coming Messiah.

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O **Elohim**, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."⁴ In the Spirit, David addresses the Messiah as Elohim, the first of the three primary names of Deity.

“Thou, **Jehovah**, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: . . .”⁵ Here he addresses the Messiah as Jehovah, the ineffable, self-existent “I AM” of all the ages.

“Jehovah said unto my **Adonai**, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”⁶ David, in the Spirit, called his offspring by that beautiful name, “my Adonai!” He foresaw the man, his Son, lifted up and sitting at Jehovah’s right hand, far above all principalities and powers.

Thus David in the Psalms applies all three primary names of Deity to the Messiah. He freely uses the divine names, Elohim, Jehovah, and Adonai, in referring to that greater Son who should one day sit upon His exalted throne, established forever.⁷

800 B.C. Joel

Joel foresaw the glorious ministry of the Messiah many centuries before He came. By the Spirit he clearly identified His dual mission, “. . . whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered: . . .”¹ and “. . . I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; . . .”²

On the day of Pentecost, seven weeks after the resurrection of the Messiah, Peter referred to these prophecies of Joel, pointing out their wonderful fulfillment, “. . . this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; . . .”³ Then he quoted Joel’s prophecy of this marvelous outpouring of God’s Holy Spirit upon His disciples, together with “. . . whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be saved.”⁴ The Messiah was coming and He would save His people from their sins and fill them with the Holy Spirit.

700 B.C. Amos

By the Holy Spirit that rested upon him, Amos, the herdman of Tekoa, saw the Messiah’s coming and His ministry. The Messiah would rebuild David’s tent or tabernacle that had been torn down. He would restore the ruins of David’s kingdom (which was none other than Jehovah’s kingdom), as it is written:

Afterwards I will return, and will rebuild David’s fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will set it up again; That the rest of

mankind may seek after the LORD—Even all the nations which are called by my name, . . . ¹

James quoted the above Scripture at the council in Jerusalem some twelve years after the resurrection of the Messiah. He declared the language of the prophets to be confirmation of what God was doing in saving the Gentiles and filling them with the Holy Spirit.

Micah

It was a great day when wise men rode into Jerusalem from the east, inquiring, “. . . Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”¹ King Herod heard tidings of this question and was deeply troubled. He was of no mind to countenance the intrusion of another contender to his throne. So he demanded of the chief priests and the scribes where the Messiah should be born.

With little hesitation these religious men turned to the prophet Micah and read to the king, “And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.”²

Though they knew the words of the prophets, the chief priests and the scribes were oblivious of the Messiah’s having indeed been born in King David’s home town of Bethlehem. Only the poor of men had attended His birth, though all the prophets from of old had foretold this day.

Isaiah

The prophet Isaiah is sometimes referred to as the Gospel Evangelist of the Old Testament. It was he who prophesied in the presence of the wicked King Ahaz, “Therefore Adonai himself shall give you a sign. . . .” “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, Elohim with us.”¹ The word **Emmanu-el** uses the contraction **el** for Elohim. The name of this Child shall be “**Elohim with us**”!

Again Isaiah declared:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government [of the kingdom of heaven] shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty Elohim. . . . Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom,²

Some years later, in the height of his evangelical fervor, the prophet voiced the descriptive words which were later quoted by all four Gospel writers in reference to the ministry of John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of **Jehovah**, make straight in the desert a highway for our **Elohim**."³ He continued on with the joyful tidings of the coming Messiah:

. . . say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your Elohim! Behold, Adonai Jehovah will come with strong hand, He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom,⁴

As we read the tremendous chapters of this prophet of old, we cannot but feel the vibrating life of the Holy Spirit that rested upon him. Isaiah's words were the expressions of Jehovah's Spirit in anticipation of that magnificent Messiah who was coming, "The Spirit of Adonai Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath anointed me to preach good tidings. . . ." ⁵ These were the words belonging to the coming Messiah of Israel.

But Isaiah lamented:

Who hath believed our report [prophecy]? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed

him not.

*Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*⁶

600 B.C. Jeremiah

Jeremiah was a tearful prophet, weeping over the iniquities of Israel. Yet his joy was boundless in describing the coming Messiah, “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, . . . [A]nd this is his name whereby he shall be called, **JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**”¹ The Messiah of Israel shall be called Jehovah, our righteousness. For, in truth, we have no righteousness of our own. We have no source of righteousness in our selves. But Jehovah promised a Messiah who would save His people from their sins and **give them His righteousness.**

“And this one who shall call to her [Jerusalem] is Jehovah our Justification; . . .”² “For . . . David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; . . .”³

Jehovah had promised David, “. . . thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.”⁴ Therefore Jeremiah foresaw that David’s own Son should be born; a righteous Branch of the house of David should spring forth. And this greater Son of David shall be called “Jehovah our righteousness.”

Then Jeremiah talked about the faithfulness of Jehovah. He will certainly fulfill His Covenant promises of a glorious Messiah—the Offspring of David and of Jacob and of Abraham.

*. . . If ye can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne; . . .*⁵

Daniel

Daniel was a young man when Nebuchadnezzar carried him and all Judah away captive to Babylon. But already he had a staunch faith in God. "...Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: . . ."¹ He lived an exemplary life of faith in spite of sorrow, exile, war, and death all around him. He served his God, Jehovah, with his whole heart. And later, after many trials and testings, he heard the voice of the angel Gabriel saying to him, "...O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, . . ."²

It was this Daniel, a prophet in Israel, who foresaw the rise and fall of the great kingdoms of earth's history. And it was he who prophesied so clearly, "...in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: . . ."³

[He] saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man [the Messiah] came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.⁴

Daniel became very specific in his prophecy. He stated exactly when the Messiah would come. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, . . ."⁵ The Jews had sabbatical years⁶ by which their years were divided into weeks of years. So here, seventy weeks of years would represent 490 years. "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: . . ."⁷ This period would represent 483 years, leaving seven years for special emphasis.

Though it invites much study, this prophecy is clarion clear. The time of the appearing of Israel's promised Messiah was pinpointed. Chronologers assure us that it was just 483 years from

the date of the decree⁸ of Artaxerxes Longimanus, King of Persia, instructing Ezra to go up and restore Jerusalem, to the manifestation of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Daniel's prophecy provides the strongest kind of confirmation of the Christian faith. It is hard to understand the blindness and the rebellion of the Jewish leaders in their rejection of the Messiah, their having had perfect knowledge of these facts.

*The twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign, according to **The Encyclopedia Britannica**, was 445 B.C. Nisan. The first day would be, on our calendar, March 14, 445 B.C.*

*Our interest at this point is to determine what this prophecy in Daniel reveals as to the time of Messiah's appearance. Note that the prophecy says: "From the going forth of the commandment. . . unto Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks and threescore and two weeks." This would be a total of sixty-nine weeks or sevens of years, making 483 years of 360 days each, a grand total of 173,880 days. From March 14, 445 B.C., this number of days reaches to April 6, A.D. 32. Thus that date is fixed as the end of the era of the sixty-nine weeks. It should mark the day of Messiah's manifestations as Prince of Israel. Sir Robert Anderson, for many years head of England's Scotland Yard, corresponding to our FBI, and a devout Christian, gives us his conclusion in his book, **The Coming Prince**, that April 6, A.D. 32, was the tenth of Nisan, the momentous day on which Christ rode into Jerusalem on the "foal of an ass" and offered Himself to the populace as the prince and king of Israel. Zech. 9:9; Luke 19:28-44; Matt. 24:1-11.*

The importance of that "day" is seen in that while Christ had previously forbidden His disciples to make Him known as Messiah, He now rebuked the Pharisees' objections and commended the disciples' shout. Luke 19:39,40. And when He lamented over the city, because He knew of His coming rejection, He sadly referred to "this thy day" and the "time of thy visitation," evidently as the day God had fixed in Daniel's prophecy, the day on which the Messiah would manifest

Himself as "prince" to Israel. "The things which belong unto thy" (Israel's) "peace" (Luke 19:42) were distinctly foretold in Daniel 9:24, but they rejected the King and crucified Him. Consequently, their "house" (temple) "was left unto them desolate." Matt. 23:37,38. (Prophetic Light, by Frank M. Boyd, pp. 45,46.)⁹

500 B.C. Haggai

... Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and 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. ... The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former,....¹

Yet a little while, and the Messiah who is the Desire of all nations would come. When He would come He would build His temple with living stones² (redeemed men) and He would fill His New Covenant temple with the Holy Spirit.

The apostle Paul refers to Haggai's prophecy as signifying the removal of the Old Covenant temple made of wood and stone, which overflowed with the Shekinah in the days of Moses and of Solomon. In its place the Messiah would build His permanent New Covenant temple, which is the Church of the living God.³ And He would fill it with the Holy Spirit. The glory of this new temple would far exceed the glory of the old.⁴

Zechariah

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. ... [A]nd his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.¹

The prophet shouted it and we become excited about it. Israel's King was coming! The magnificent Messiah was on the way!

"...Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH;...he

shall build the temple of Jehovah: . . . ”² This man was the coming Messiah. He would be “. . . a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,”³ sitting “. . . upon his throne. . . ”⁴ in the temple of Jehovah.

As High Priest He would offer upon the altar a very special Lamb, even Himself, for the redemption of His people. For

*In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. . . . And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.*⁵

400 B.C. Malachi

The last of the Old Testament prophets saw the fulfillment of all the promises drawing near. By the Spirit of the Messiah that rested upon him, Malachi declared the word of the Lord:

*Behold, I [Jehovah] will send my messenger [John the Baptist], and he shall prepare the way before me: and Adonai, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith Jehovah of Hosts.*¹

Our God made His promises sure and His Covenant certain that in the fullness of time He would send that wonderful Son of Man and Son of God, the Messiah of Israel.

Malachi called Him Adonai. Though He would be David's Son, an earthly man of the royal seed of the king of Israel, He would also be divine. He would be none other than Israel's splendid and sovereign Lord and Master.

Furthermore, He would be Israel's Messenger of the New Covenant to whom all the prophets pointed with such delight. The Messiah would satisfy all the hopes and expectations of the Scriptures. He would save all His people from their sins and fill them with the Holy Spirit.

Moses gave them the Old Covenant with its Ten Commandments and ordinances. These were only temporary, but they pointed forward to the coming of the Messiah, the Messenger of the New Covenant. Malachi and all the prophets were exuberant in their expressions of anticipation of the coming of this marvelous Prince who would institute Jehovah's New and better Covenant with His people.²

The Vision of the Prophets

With these specific prophecies before us (besides a myriad of others throughout the Scriptures), what manner of Messiah should Israel have expected to come? Tragically enough, the leadership of the nation expected a great man, but only a man. They looked for a temporal prince like King David, and nothing more. They put only carnal interpretation upon the words of the prophets. To them the Covenant promises of Jehovah were for this earth, temporal and carnal. Therefore when He came their eyes were strangely blind. His humility, though backed by mighty signs and miracles, baffled them. His preaching of a spiritual kingdom disappointed them. They refused to accept either Him or His message. As the prophets had foreseen, they hated Him without a cause.¹ And their hatred grew to such intensity that they crucified the very Lord of Glory.²

By the Holy Spirit the prophets had foreseen the coming of the Messiah, not as a mere man and not as another God. They had foreseen the coming Messiah as a **further revelation** of the one and only, true and living God. In Him would be manifest all the attributes of the ineffable Godhead, Jehovah, Elohim, Adonai.³ The Messiah would be the consummate manifestation and revelation of Deity. He would come as a God-man.⁴ He would be wholly divine and wholly human. He would be the Son of God, the Creator,⁵ and He would be the Son of Man, King David's earthly seed.⁶ He would bridge the abysmal gap between the mighty Creator and the created, between the infinite God and finite man.

The supreme and sovereign God of all the universe would take upon Himself the form of man and be made in the likeness of men.⁷ He would come as a meek and lowly Shepherd to His people.⁸ He would Himself become man's Savior and Redeemer. By Himself He would provide for every need of His creature.

To this Messiah all men might freely come: not just kings and princes and holy priests of the faith. This lowly but majestic Messiah would receive all. The sinful publican could come and find a merciful and forgiving Savior.⁹ A Mary Magdalene, adulterous and full of demons, could cast herself at His feet.¹⁰ And at His word she would arise a cleansed and forgiven woman, a daughter of Israel who in her profound devotion would follow Him to the end.

Through the many ages the prophets preached and taught by the Spirit of the Messiah which was in them. They foresaw His humility and His sufferings and the glory that should follow.¹¹ They gave a true presentation of the Messiah that would surely come.¹²

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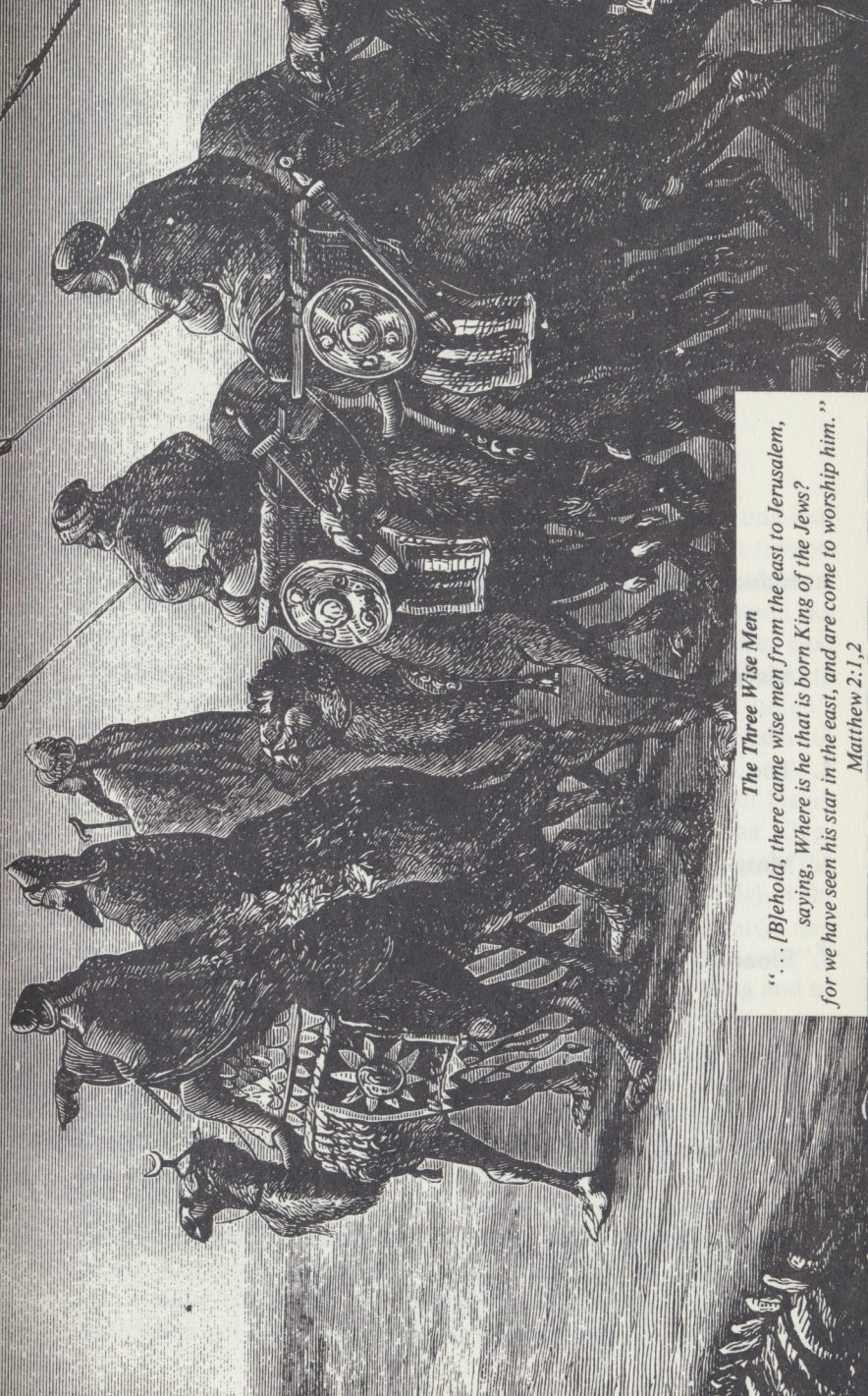
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Section IV

THE MESSIAH



The Three Wise Men
“... [B]ehold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”
Matthew 2:1,2

Chapter Seventeen

The Messiah Is Born

or

The Virgin-Born Son

Introduction: A Gem of Prophecy

- 1. Mary and Joseph**
- 2. The Angel and Mary**
- 3. Mary Is Pregnant**
- 4. Stone Her With Stones**
- 5. The Angel and Joseph**
- 6. A Human Child**
- 7. A Divine Son**

The Messiah Is Born

Ahaz, the wicked King of Judah, reigned seven and one-half centuries before the Messiah was born. He was always in trouble with his enemies. Rezin, King of Syria, and Pekah, King of Israel (the northern ten tribes), had united against him. They could not overcome King Ahaz and his fortified capital, Jerusalem. ¹ But God permitted them to take most of the cities and land of Judah and to reduce the nation to a near defenseless position, so that Judah's "... heart was moved... as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind." ²

In this, Ahaz' dire extremity, the Lord sent the preacher Isaiah with his two-year-old son, Shearjashub, to plead with the King. Isaiah counseled Ahaz to put his trust in Jehovah, and surely the God of his fathers would defend him. "Ask thee a sign of Jehovah, thy God;..." Isaiah counseled. But Ahaz was hard and unrepentant, "... I will not ask, neither will I tempt Jehovah." ³

Then, by the Holy Spirit, Isaiah proclaimed to the King and to all the believing remnant of Israel's race, that most beautiful gem of prophecy, "Therefore Adonai himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." ⁴ This announcement was uttered by the prophet in one of the darkest hours in the history of Judah. It shines out in the night of this people's lowest extremity as a hope, a positive assurance to them who believed the promises of Jehovah to the fathers. God's Covenant promises of a divine Messiah to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David, would yet be fulfilled!

Isaiah continued to prophesy the judgments and the faithfulness of God to His people. He set forth his own little son,

Shearjashub, meaning “a remnant shall return,” to declare God’s judgment upon the two kings from the north, “. . . the two tails of these smoking firebrands. . . [T]he land. . . shall be forsaken of both her kings.”⁵ God would deal with the enemy and with wicked and unrepentant Ahaz, too. And He did. But a remnant of His people would be delivered.

That was the occasion of the prophecy. And centuries sauntered on. Seven hundred fifty years, filled to the brim with the absorbing problems of life, marched slowly by. Then suddenly, in the fullness of time, God sent the archangel, Gabriel, to herald the tidings of the coming of Messiah. Our interest is immediately focused upon that beautiful gem of prophecy that fell from the lips of the prophet Isaiah so long ago—a virgin—a Son—Immanuel.

Mary and Joseph

She was only nineteen and Joseph a few years older. They sat there under the gnarled old olive tree at the edge of town and talked. They were planning and dreaming together of the future. Their wedding in the midsummer had been announced to their friends. And Joseph was building a house to be all theirs with his own shop and wood-working business. Nazareth was a quiet little town, an ideal place in which to live and work and build a home.

They had both grown up here and they had been close friends ever since that awkward episode nearly seven years before when Mary had fallen on the steps of the synagogue down the street. Joseph had helped her to her feet and wiped away the tears. And now these good years were climaxing in plans for their coming marriage and a home and life together.

The Angel and Mary

It was to this Mary that the lustrous angel came.

*“Don’t be frightened, Mary,” the angel said, “for God has decided to wonderfully bless you! Very soon now, you will become pregnant and have a baby boy, and you are to name him, ‘Jesus’ . . .” Mary asked the angel, “But how can I have a baby? I am a virgin.”*¹

To this, the angel Gabriel declared that the Holy Spirit of God would bring about a miracle of colossal importance, a miracle that through all the ages since has challenged the credulity of thinking man. By an act of the Creator the seed of the Godhead would be united in the womb of the virgin with the seed of Adam's human race. Of Mary would be born a remarkable Child: equally God and man. In this Child would be perfectly blended the infinite God and finite man.

Mary responded simply, "...I am the Lord's servant, and I am willing to do whatever He says. May everything come true as you have told me. . . ." ²

But Joseph was not so sure. Mary recounted to him the words of the angel in exact detail. He listened carefully and noted the simplicity of faith, her excitement and ecstasy. But her fanciful dream (as he saw it) was absurd. Nothing like this had ever happened nor ever could happen. And so he put it out of his mind.

Mary had plans to go visit her cousin, Elizabeth, in the hill country of Judea some forty miles to the south. Her Uncle Zedekiah was taking a journey to the Holy City at this time, so Joseph had encouraged her to make the trip with him. By the time she returned, he would have the house and shop completed. They would formalize their marriage and he would take his bride to their new home. Nothing could be more wonderful. On the morning that they left, Joseph walked with them for a mile beyond the village, and then returned to his work on the house.

Time has a way of racing by when one is happy and busy. And so it was with Joseph. He hewed the beams and framed the roof with great care. He loved it. It was to be their home. Mary was his very own and everything he did was for her. He had planned it for her, and now he was building it for her. He counted the days as he worked, thirty—sixty—seventy—eighty—eighty-five—eighty-nine—ninety. He had had just the three months to complete it before she was to return. So it was with deep satisfaction that he finished the last item, a kitchen chair, on the afternoon of the last day. Then he swept out all the debris, cleaned and put everything in order, even placing a woven rug beside the bed and a scarf on the center of the table.

He left the house toward evening and walked down past the

outskirts of the village. They were due home today. And Joseph was eager to see Mary after this long absence. He wanted to bring her to their new home so that they could see together what he had built for her.

He walked a mile, and then another. For he was sure they would be coming yet this evening. Then he saw a little dust rising in the distance. He quickened his steps and kept watching. It was them all right, and soon he was putting his arms around her and embracing her, saying, "Mary, my own dear Mary."

She did not dismount, but rode into the village with Joseph at her side. "My lovely Mary," he whispered as they moved along. But no one said very much. Both Mary and Uncle Zed appeared to be preoccupied. "They're both very tired," Joseph reasoned. "Tomorrow I'll take Mary to see our new home. It will be the Sabbath, but after lunch she'll want to go with me."

Mary Is Pregnant

But at Sabbath school that morning Joseph knew that all was not well. In fact, something was definitely wrong. Mary seemed aloof and her parents were stiff and upset. It was as though something dreadful were about to happen, instead of the fulfilling of all those beautiful plans he had been forming. What in all the world could be wrong?

At the close of the morning service, Joseph accompanied the family home. He could not wait longer. He must know what this concern was all about. And he had not long to wait. When they entered the home, Mary's mother promptly gave him the startling answer: "Can't you see," she exclaimed, pointing to Mary, "the child is pregnant!"

Joseph went home dazed, as if he had been hit over the head with a cudgel. So Mary had been trying to tell him something before she left on this trip three months ago. Her fancies had been very real after all. She had played the harlot! "Oh, Mary," he wept, "how could you?"

Stone Her With Stones

Joseph was an honest man and he loved and served God with all his heart. But now his world had been shattered. He knew all too

well what the Law of God demanded. But his heart struggled against it. The Law of God's Holy Covenant placed the **death penalty** on Mary's crime. He knew it. But the following day he had to read it for himself. The priest took down the scroll of Deuteronomy and unrolled it for him until they came to chapter twenty-two, verses twenty-three and twenty-four. There he read the words slowly, and then again:

If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; . . . so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

The Law would make a public example of her that others might fear and not repeat her crime.

Joseph was a righteous man of stern principle. He still loved Mary very dearly, but he knew that he must sever their engagement. Finding her to be pregnant just before their marriage filled him with grief and consternation, for he knew that the child was not his own. After several days of struggling with the matter, he determined in his heart that he would give her a written divorce and put her quietly out of his life. He would consider that she had been overtaken in a fault; and so, put her away privately.¹ He would not publicly disgrace her.

The Angel and Joseph

The matter rested heavily upon him. But—and what an assuring conclusion to the situation!¹

As he lay awake considering this, he fell into a dream, and saw an angel standing beside him. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "don't hesitate to take Mary as your wife! For the child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a Son, and you shall name him Jesus (meaning 'Savior'), for he will save his people from their sins. This will fulfill God's message through his prophets--'Listen! The virgin shall conceive a child! She shall give birth to a Son, and he shall be called "Emmanuel"' (meaning "God is with us").' " When

*Joseph awoke, he did as the angel commanded, and brought Mary home to be his wife, but she remained a virgin until her Son was born; and Joseph named him "Jesus."*¹

A Human Child

We have here the greatest story ever told. A most remarkable human Child! Begotten of God, and not of man! This Child carried a dual nature, equally that of God and that of man. He was a God-man. He was very God, and He was very man. He was not half God and half man, but He was wholly God and wholly man.

The record tells us that He grew up a natural Child, together with His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas,¹ in the home of Joseph and Mary, and that He was obedient to them as every child should be. Joseph taught Him cabinet-making, and He labored in the shop, helping in the support of the family. He became known in the community as a faithful and godly young man. In fact, the Scriptures emphasize that He lived and labored like all other men. His neighbors and the friends He played with as a Child and with whom He grew to manhood knew Him as a man like others of the town. He worked, He walked, He talked, He ate and slept like everybody else. He certainly made no effort to be known as divine. Rather, He lived His humanity; He was a man like all other men. God had taken upon Himself the form of man. He disregarded His divinity "...and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:..."² "...in the likeness of sinful flesh,..."³

That Jesus was human—a man like us—comes as a surprise to no one. He was a member of the Hebrew nation, a descendant of Abraham. He was born in the Roman province of Palestine, that little land that connects the three great continents of the old world: Europe, Asia, and Africa.

"... He did not come as an angel but as a human being, yes, a Jew."⁴ His lowly birth in the stable of Bethlehem associated Him with common people, with all the people, everywhere. Shepherds gave Him their homage and Magi from afar bowed down before Him also. He grew to manhood in the earth-hewn carpentry shop of Nazareth. And at Jordan, He, like His neighbors, surrendered His life and will to God and was baptized of John. "...[I]n all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren,..."⁵

A Divine Son

But, mystery of the ages! This man was no ordinary man. As the prophet Isaiah further proclaimed, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the **government** shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called **Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty Elohim, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.**"¹

This man was also God! He was human; He was also divine. Ignorant and sin-blinded men may compare Him with Caesar and with Charlemagne, with Washington, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. But He defies comparison. He was the incomparable God-man, the Messiah of eternity! Of Him the Hebrew letter declares, God hath appointed Him Heir of all things. By Him God made the worlds. He is the brightness of the glory of heaven. He is the express image of God's Person. He upholds all things by the word of His power. He is seated today at the right hand of the Majesty on high.² Of Him it is written, "...Thy throne, O Elohim, is for ever and ever:..."³ Thou, Jehovah, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands:..."⁴ It is He "...who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:... [W]ho laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever."⁵

And yet, with all His divinity and power, glory and majesty, we see Him born the tiny, dependent human Babe, laid in the manger cradle of Bethlehem. The aged Simeon took Him up in his arms and cried, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,... A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel."⁶

He was the Possessor of all the attributes of God. Yet, at the same time, He assumed all the limitations of mere man. As David said to God, "...What is mere man that you are so concerned about him? And who is this Son of Man you honor so highly?"⁷

In the Person of this Jesus, the omnipotent God took upon Himself the nature of man. He was made flesh and blood like us, being born of the seed of Abraham in human form, that He might fulfill all the Covenant promises of Jehovah God and redeem us to Himself.

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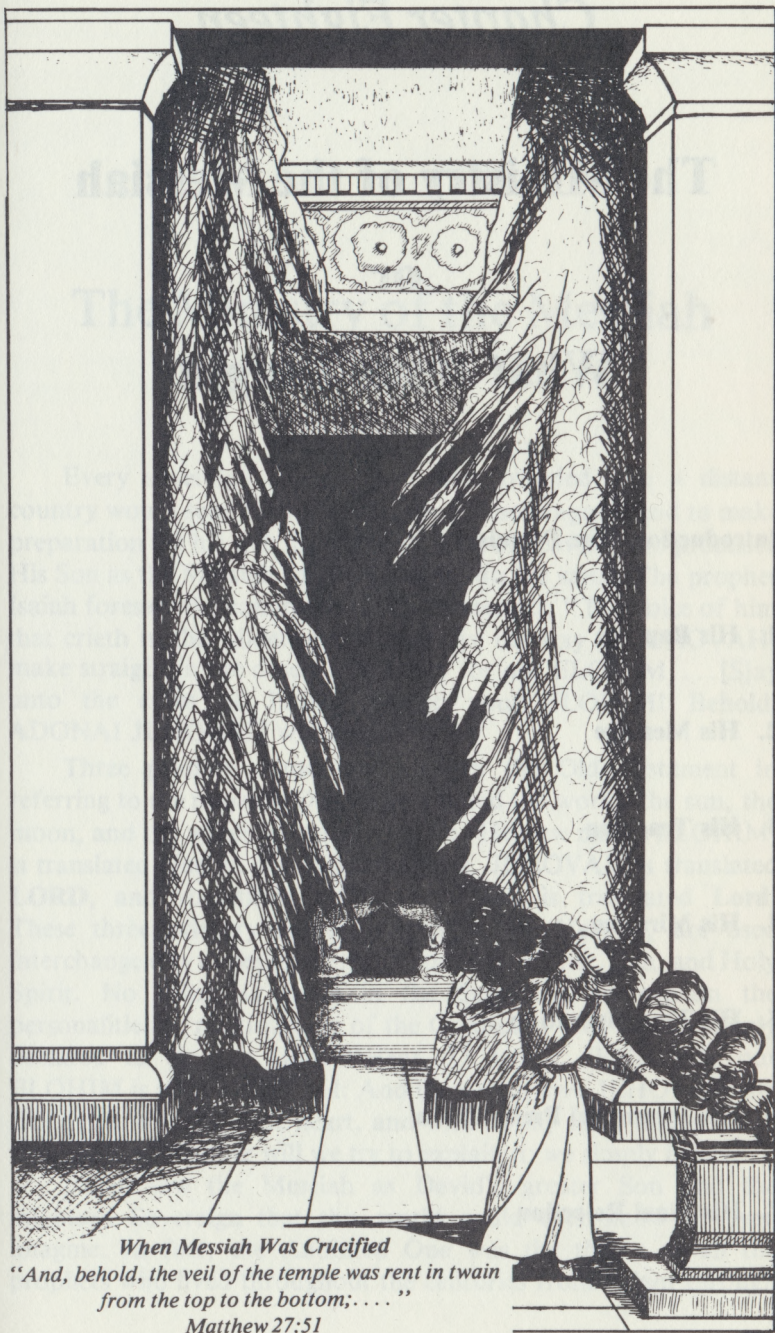
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When Messiah Was Crucified

*"And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain
from the top to the bottom; . . ."*

Matthew 27:51

Chapter Eighteen

The Ministry of the Messiah

or

What Jesus Taught

Introduction: The Promised Messiah

- 1. His Baptism**
- 2. His Message**
- 3. His Teaching**
- 4. His Miracles**
- 5. His Transfiguration**
- 6. His Triumphal Presentation**
- 7. His Final Rejection**

The Ministry of the Messiah

Every sovereign in ages past who traveled into a distant country would send his representative or messenger ahead to make preparation for his visit. So the great God of heaven, who promised His Son as the Messiah of Israel, would do the same. The prophet Isaiah foresaw the coming of God's messenger, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of JEHOVAH, make straight in the desert a highway for our ELOHIM. . . . [S]ay unto the cities of Judah, Behold your ELOHIM! Behold, ADONAI JEHOVAH will come. . . ." ¹

Three primary names are used in the Old Testament in referring to the majestic Deity who created the world, the sun, the moon, and the whole vast universe. The Hebrew name, ELOHIM, is translated **God** in our English Bibles. JEHOVAH is translated **LORD**, and sometimes **GOD**. ADONAI is translated **Lord**. These three primary names, found in the Hebrew, are used interchangeably to designate the triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. No effort is made in the Scriptures to explain the personalities or relationships of the Godhead. Our God is simply declared to be one God. "Hear, O Israel: JEHOVAH our ELOHIM is one JEHOVAH: And thou shalt love JEHOVAH thy ELOHIM with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might."² Neither will we try to explain it; we simply believe it.

Isaiah saw the Messiah as David's greater Son and the mightiest Sovereign that this world could ever know or even imagine. In fact, the Anointed One was the theme of all the prophets who lived throughout the centuries from Adam through

Abraham, Moses, David, and Malachi—until, in the fullness of time, He finally came. The coming of the Messiah is the burden of all the Old Testament Scriptures.

The prophet Malachi added, “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and ADONAI, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: . . .”³

Jeremiah proclaimed:

*Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. . . . [A]nd this is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*⁴

His Baptism

Jesus went down from His home in Nazareth to Jordan to hear John the Baptist preach. John was announcing, “. . . I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of Jehovah, as said the prophet Esaias.”¹ For John was that messenger of the Lord, the herald of the Messiah. He was preaching, “. . . he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: . . .”² Then John saw Jesus standing there on the shore, and he leveled his finger at Him and cried, “. . . Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”³

The hour of His ministry had come. Jesus, standing on the bank of Jordan, looked down the brief corridor of time and saw His rejection by the nation and His crucifixion on Calvary. This was the Father’s perfect plan to redeem His people from their sins, and His perfect will for the Messiah. Jesus raised His hands in prayer and complete surrender, saying, “. . . Lo, I come. . . to do thy will, O God.”⁴ He then and there embraced the cross of Calvary and His ignominious death and burial in the tomb. (“Behind all the words and deeds of Jesus we should recognize, instead of a good and kindly man, the form of a Servant and the outline of a Cross.”)⁵ Then He waded into Jordan to be baptized of John. His submission was complete, and John took Him in his arms and buried Him there beneath those dark waters of Jordan,

from which he raised Him up, thus typifying His sure resurrection and triumph over death and the grave. John's baptism was a symbol of what Jesus had come to accomplish on Calvary.⁶

His Message

This was He! The Messiah! David's greater Son. Heir to the throne of David, which was the throne of Jehovah, over Israel.¹ This was He of whom all the prophets had spoken, the King of Israel! "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel ["good news"] of the kingdom, . . ." **THIS WAS THE GREAT KING!** The Messiah was here! Let men open their hearts and enthrone Him. For ". . . his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."³

Wise men came from the East inquiring, ". . . Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."⁴ This was no chance occasion. The Spirit of Jehovah had inspired these men to journey across the continent to see this marvelous Messiah Child, who was born of the virgin Mary, by the Holy Spirit. The angel Gabriel had spoken to Mary regarding her Son:

*He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*⁵

Men's eyes were holden that they did not know Him. Even His disciples were blinded by the teachings of the rabbis, who saw only a carnal Messiah and an earthly kingdom with its worldly splendor for Israel. The disciples believed that **this was He**; but the teaching of the synagogues confused their minds; they, too, were asking when the kingdom would be set up in regal glory in Jerusalem and all the nations would bow before the Son of David. But Jesus declared, ". . . The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: . . ."—regardless of all that carnal men have thought and taught. ". . . [B]ehold, the kingdom of God is within you."⁶ There shall the kingdom be established! There will the King be enthroned!

The human heart must receive Him, bow down before Him, and acknowledge Him Lord of all.

Jesus stated plainly, “. . . My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence [this world].”⁷

His Teaching

Jesus taught a doctrine that makes men uncomfortable and that causes them to squirm and to back away. Even great theologians have sought to shunt His teachings to another age, insisting that they are not practical in this one. So if these teachings of Jesus are too difficult for you, think nothing of it. They were too demanding for the twelve disciples also. But after Pentecost, after the Spirit came upon them and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, they began to understand more fully. For it is only by God’s Spirit that men’s hearts and minds can grasp and really accept the teachings of the Lord Jesus.

For instance, Jesus taught utter and complete forgiveness, mercy, and compassion toward our fellow man. He insisted that if you bring your gift to the altar—wherever it is—and there remember that you did wrong to some man, you are to leave your gift there on the altar and go apologize to him that you have wronged, restore to him that which you have stolen, and make the matter right—then return to the altar and God will receive your gift.¹

Again, after affirming the power and efficacy of prayer and faith in God, He continued, “If while you pray you remember that some one did you wrong, forgive him. If he lied about you, stole your coat or struck you with his fist, write it off your record and remember it against him no more! Then your Heavenly Father will also write off your trespasses.”²

But Peter was of a practical turn of mind. He came to the Lord saying, “Master, there is a limit to all good things and surely there must be a limit to a man’s endurance of offenses. If my brother sins against me, lies about me, steals from me, and does all manner of evil against me, how far shall I go in forgiving him? Surely if I forgive him and write off his offenses seven times that should be enough. That’s going a long way!”

But Jesus said, "No, Peter, not just seven times, but thou shalt forgive him **seventy times seven times!**"³ In fact, there is no limit. Jesus taught limitless compassion toward the erring.

As the gracious King enthroned in the human heart, Jesus claimed the full measure of man's devotion. "...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy **heart**, and with all thy **soul**, and with all thy **mind**....Thou shalt love thy neighbor as **thyself**."⁴ This teaching was not new. Moses wrote it in the Law.⁵ But now, the Lord, Jehovah, the Messiah and King of Israel was here in Person, claiming His rightful place upon the throne of the human heart.

The two young disciples, James and John, could not believe but that this marvelous man, Jesus, would shortly set up His earthly throne in Jerusalem as the rabbis continued to teach. So they brought their fond mother as their spokesman with a special request of the Master. Privately she asked, "...Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom." Jesus answered, "...Ye know not what ye ask."⁶

Then word of this conversation leaked out and the other ten disciples heard of it, and they were moved with indignation against James and John. So Jesus called all twelve before Him and explained the matter very clearly and positively. "...Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them [they were tyrants], and they that are great [minor officials] exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you...."⁷

Kenneth N. Taylor's **Living Gospels** states it this way:

*... Anyone wanting to be a leader among you must be your servant! And if you want to be right at the top, you must serve like a slave! Your attitude must be like My own, for I, the Son of Mankind [really the sovereign Jehovah of the vast universe], did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give my life as a ransom for many.*⁸

"... Your care for others is the measure of your greatness."⁹

On the eve of His betrayal, Jesus met alone with His disciples for the last time. His final instructions to them could not have

been more pointed. After the observance of the Passover supper and the institution of the communion which they should observe until He would come again, Jesus arose from the table, laid aside His garments and girded Himself with a towel, took water in a basin and proceeded to wash the disciples' feet and to dry them with the towel. Thus assuming the role of a **common slave**, He washed each of His disciples' feet, all twelve of them, one after another.¹⁰ When He had finished, He asked these men simply, "... Know ye what I have done to you?" (They did not. For they, like us, were dull of understanding.) But Jesus continued, "If I then, your Lord and Master [Jehovah Elohim Adonai!] have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."¹¹ What an example! Then He concluded with these immortal words, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples,"¹² Jesus declared that **love for the brethren** shall be the badge of true discipleship. Nothing else marks men as Christians as does Christian love.

The doctrine of mercy toward the erring is dramatized and epitomized by the Messiah as He suffered on the merciless cross of Calvary. He was rewarded the maximum of hatred and ignominy for His mercy and kindness. The world of sinful men poured upon Him a double measure of its venom: they beat Him with many stripes; they mocked Him with satanic glee; and they nailed Him to a cross of incomparable pain. But there in the agony of death, His compassionate heart (the heart of our eternal God) cried out, "... Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."¹³ (All our little complaints are here silenced. Peter's petty offer of forgiveness seven times becomes absurd. Nothing short of complete devotion to such a Savior could possibly be reasonable; anything less is a tragic shame!)

One of the thieves who was crucified with Jesus railed on Him, saying, "... If thou be the Messiah, save thyself and us." But the other was moved to repentance by what he saw and heard. "... Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." And the suffering Savior responded, "... Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."¹⁴

His Miracles

The chief priests, elders, and scribes demanded of Him, "By what authority doest thou these things? Show us thy credentials." And not only the church leaders, but even the prophet John the Baptist, whom Herod had cast into prison, wondered. Some of John's disciples came to Jesus inquiring, "Art thou the Messiah that should come, or do we look for another?" And Jesus answered them, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:

The blind receive their sight, and

[T]he lame walk,

[T]he lepers are cleansed, and

[T]he deaf hear,

[T]he dead are raised up, and

The poor have the gospel preached to them."¹

What an impressive array of credentials! Did ever man present anything comparable?

Peter said, "...Jesus of Nazareth [was] a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him...."² And again, "...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."³

Jesus took the twelve disciples away from the cities into a desert area outside Bethsaida for a little rest and privacy. But the multitudes followed Him, and He received and taught them and healed the sick among them. As the day was wearing away, His disciples advised the Master to send the people away that they might buy themselves food. But Jesus said, "...Give ye them to eat."⁴ They answered, "We have only these five loaves and two little fish, and there are some five thousand men here besides women and children. And this is a desert place!" Jesus said, "Cause them to sit down in groups of fifty." Then He took the five loaves and the two little fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed them and broke them and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

The disciples took the broken bread and fish and broke them further, giving them to waiters who broke them further and gave

them to the people. Everyone ate and was filled. Then the disciples gathered up twelve baskets full of bread and fish that were left over.⁵

Then Jesus got into a small ship with some of His disciples to cross over the Sea of Galilee to Capernaum. He was weary. So while the men rowed, He fell fast asleep in the rear of the boat. But a violent wind swept down upon the lake and raised huge waves so that the little ship was in danger of foundering. One of the frightened men shook Jesus, crying, "Master, we perish!" But "... he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm." The winds and the waves settled down, and the men looked at one another, saying, "... What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"⁶

His Transfiguration

The disciples were constantly amazed at the things Jesus said and did. They believed that this gentle and unassuming man was truly the Messiah. But He was still a man like themselves and their eyes could not see beyond the veil of flesh. His mighty miracles and His command of the winds and the sea awed them. But their eyes were holden; they still did not really know Him.

One day He stated that some of them should be privileged to "see" the kingdom of God come with power.¹ This they all wanted very much to witness. He declared they would behold the Son of Man's coming in His kingdom.² This was great news!

Then a week went by and He took three of His disciples with Him to the mountains to pray. This was not an unusual occurrence, for Jesus was ever constant in prayer and worship of the Heavenly Father. They climbed to a place of solitude and there they knelt to pray. They continued thus for some time in prayer. The weather was warm, and as Jesus was long in worship, the three disciples dozed off to sleep.

And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.³

The radiance of His deity showed through the veil of flesh. Moses, whom God had taken home to heaven some fifteen hundred years before, together with Elijah, who went to heaven in a chariot of fire about nine hundred years before, appeared with Jesus. They talked together on the greatest theme that mortal man has ever heard: that altar called Calvary and its divinely given Paschal Lamb—Jehovah God in the Person of this man Jesus, dying for sinful men.

The disciples awoke amid the glory of this transfiguration. Though they had been walking with Jesus many months now, their minds were slow to grasp the fact that this man who healed the sick and raised the dead and fed the multitudes and stilled the raging sea—was really that divine Messiah, the Son of Man and the Son of God, foretold in all the Scriptures.

Peter later recounted, "...[We] were eyewitnesses 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."⁴ Then he added a most significant, further comment on this marvelous revelation of the God-man. The transfiguration of Jesus before their very eyes had been stupendous, but Peter declared that we have an even more sure revelation of Jesus Christ than this on the mount: the revelation of the Scriptures themselves. Through the centuries holy men of God have spoken as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and they have described the power and the splendor of the coming Messiah. We must study these Scriptures and build our faith upon them. For "...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."⁵

His Triumphal Presentation

The final Passover drew near. That hour for which Jesus had come into this world was at hand. Jesus, with His disciples, climbed up the Jericho road toward Jerusalem. When they reached Bethphage and the Mount of Olives, they chose a young donkey and spread their cloaks upon him and sat Jesus thereon, and He rode on into the Holy City. A multitude gathered and accompanied Him down the slope of Olivet, across the Brook Kidron and up the other side through the beautiful Eastern Gate. The people spread

their garments on the ground for the donkey to walk upon and they sang, “. . . Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of Jehovah; Hosanna in the highest.”¹

The prophet Zechariah had written five hundred years before of this momentous day:

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. . . . [A]nd his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.*²

It is important to note that our God is not proud and haughty as are the princes of this world. Christ, the mightiest Sovereign and Monarch that ever trod this earthly sod, chose a lowly donkey on which to make His triumphal entry into the Holy City. He was meek and lowly.³ He could afford to be. For He is the blessed and only begotten Son of that omnipotent and omniscient God of all the vast universe. Nothing evades His knowledge and authority. And we little mortals who serve Him **can afford to trust Him** and to seek to be like Him.

His Final Rejection

After they took Jesus into custody and condemned Him to die, the Jewish priests brought Him before Pilate, accusing Him of treason against Caesar. The Roman Governor asked Him, “. . . Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it.”¹

*. . . Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, . . . [But my] kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*²

Pilate thrice stated his judgment of Jesus, “. . . I find in him no fault at all.”³ But at the bitter insistence of the priests and the multitude, he turned Jesus over to the soldiers to scourge Him and

to crucify Him. After they had whipped and beaten Him, they formed a crown of thorns and forced it down upon His bleeding head. They dressed Him in a robe of purple and placed a scepter in His hand. Then they bowed before Him and cried, “. . . Hail, King of the Jews! . . .”⁴ This they did until they wearied of the sport.

Then when they had nailed Him to that awful cross between two vile and murderous thieves, Pilate inscribed his accusation in Hebrew and Greek and Latin and affixed it to His cross above His head: JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. The chief priests asked that the accusation be changed so that it would read, “He said, I am King of the Jews.” But “Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.”⁵ The inscription was true⁶ and it remained unchanged.

The chief priests who stood by mocked Him, saying among themselves with the scribes, “Let the Messiah the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe.”⁷ But it was for this purpose that Jesus had come into the world, and now it had been accomplished. With His spotless life He had paid the full measure of God’s judgment for the sins of His erring people. He had been offered as that flawless Paschal Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world,⁸ that all who would receive Him (believe in Him) should have everlasting life.⁹ Then He cried from the anguish of the cross, “. . . It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up [his spirit].”¹⁰

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The Three Crosses

Christ crucified between two thieves

An etching by Rembrandt (1606-1669)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art,

Gift of Felix M. Warburg and his family, 1941

Chapter Nineteen

The Messiah Is Crucified

or

The Final Passover

Introduction: Temple Worship Continued

- 1. Calvary, the Great Altar**
- 2. Only Types and Symbols**
- 3. All Fulfilled in Messiah**
- 4. What Calvary Accomplished**
- 5. The Veil Was Rent in Twain**
- 6. The Significance of Calvary**
- 7. It Is Finished**

The Messiah Is Crucified

Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians during that paradoxical period between the crucifixion of the Messiah and the destruction of the temple by the Romans. During those approximately thirty-five years the Jewish priesthood continued to offer lambs, sheep, and oxen on the brazen altar of their temple, even though the true Lamb of God, promised from the foundation of the world, had now been sacrificed on the great altar of Calvary. Many Judaizing teachers went among Christians of that day teaching that Christ was not the final answer, that He was not enough. They insisted that Christians must **also** keep the Law of Moses to be saved.¹

While it stood and its ministry continued as through the centuries before, the temple was indeed a formidable challenge to the followers of Jesus Christ. Was faith in the death of Jesus sufficient before God? or must the followers of Christ also embrace the Law of Moses and the temple worship and its priesthood (that was responsible for the crucifixion of this Jesus)?

Paul's position and conclusion to the matter are very simple and positive. "We have an altar [the cross with its crucified and bleeding Savior], whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle [temple]." ²

Temple worship (as provided by the Law of Moses) and Christian faith do not mix. The former was temporary and was intended to pass away when the Messiah came. The latter is permanent.³

Calvary, the Great Altar

Just north of the city gate of old Jerusalem the Roman road divided. One road continued on north to Bethel and Samaria and the other turned westward to Joppa and Caesarea. In the “Y” formed by these ancient roads stood the little hill called Calvary or Golgotha (meaning, “the place of a skull”). On this very prominent height Rome had chosen to execute her criminals as a public example for all who passed. It was here, outside the gates of the city, that Jesus, the Lamb of God, was nailed to the tree. He was crucified as a wanton criminal between two wicked and murderous thieves. A Roman cross became the altar on which the Lamb of God was sacrificed.

About two thousand years before Christ, Abraham had built an altar at Bethel and called upon the name of Jehovah.¹ His altar was an expression of faith in God’s promise of a coming Savior. It looked forward through the centuries to this altar called Calvary on which the Prince of Glory died.

About fifteen hundred years before Christ, Moses instituted the Passover feast.² Every Israelite family offered the firstling of its flock to God. Subsequently Moses erected the Tabernacle with its large brazen altar on which were offered sacrifices of the finest of the flocks and herds of Israel—every day! And not just for weeks or months, but for years and years and years, yea, centuries, until the Messiah came who Himself was sacrificed as the true Paschal Lamb of God.

Then about one thousand years before Christ, Solomon built the beautiful temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. The brazen altar³ dominated the court, and on this altar the priests “...sacrificed sheep and oxen, which could not be told nor numbered for multitude.”⁴ Yet those multiplied sacrifices could not atone for sin. They only expressed the worshiper’s faith in the coming Messiah who Himself would give His life’s blood for the sins of His people.

Only Symbols and Types

These multiplied thousands of sheep and oxen, bulls and goats, that were offered in sacrifice to God during those two long millenniums from Abraham to Christ, **did not** and **could not** take

away sin.¹ That was utterly impossible. No dumb beast had any righteousness that it could impart to men. Those sacrifices were only expressions of faith, symbols or types, pointing to the spotless Lamb that God had promised would certainly come.

That perfect Lamb, promised before the foundations of the world were laid,² was not a bleating sheep from somebody's flock. It was not some dumb animal chosen from among the thousands of earthly creatures. No. Positively not.

That Lamb was an extremely special kind of lamb. It was none other than the divine Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a daughter of King David's royal family. The Messiah that God had planned and who now came in fulfillment of all the Scriptures, was the divine Son of the Most High! He was that heavenly Lamb.³ Jehovah God Himself had come to redeem His people from their sins.

Some seven hundred years before the Messiah finally came, Isaiah, the gospel prophet of the Old Testament, described the coming Savior:

*... he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: . . . All we like sheep have gone astray; . . . And Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . [H]e is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, . . . for the transgression of my people was he stricken.*⁴

All Fulfilled in Messiah

But when in the fullness of time He came, that blessed Messiah, Immanuel, they knew Him not. John the Baptist pointed Him out, crying, "... Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."¹ But the priesthood, the scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, the ministers of the church of Israel, were strangely blind; they knew Him not. They were looking for a proud and haughty monarch, not a meek and lowly Lamb. In their disdain of His claims and their hatred of His spirit and ministry, they condemned Him to death. They sent Him out to Calvary where the Romans crucified Him together with the two wicked thieves, thus fulfilling the word written in their Law, "... They hated me without a cause."²

This was a fateful day in Israel. Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth, was betrayed by His intimate friend, condemned to death by the leadership of the church, and nailed to a cross by the Romans. His enemies purposed to destroy Him. But in doing so they fulfilled the volumes of their Scriptures that pointed unerringly to this tragic event.

He hanged upon the tree from about 9:00 a.m. to midafternoon. It was then that He cried, "... It is finished:" ³ And He bowed His head and died. God's holy Lamb had been offered, completely fulfilling all the types and shadows and all the promises contained throughout the Scriptures.

What Calvary Accomplished

It is weak and inept to say that something happened when Jesus died upon that wretched cross. Something did happen: something tremendous, something cataclysmic! The angel of God stepped down from heaven and rent asunder the veil in the inner sanctuary of the temple. That was terrific, but it was only symbolic of that which actually took place in that hour.

This man Jesus Christ who hanged upon that cross between two thieves was no ordinary man. He was not only a just man; He was the spotless, sinless God-man, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin. Of Him it is written, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, . . . And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." ¹ He who bowed His head in death upon that cruel old cross was none other than the mighty God, Jehovah, the second Person of the heavenly Trinity. When He cried, "It is finished," the grand work of redemption which had been foretold in words, types, symbols, and covenants throughout the Scriptures, was finished. The work was consummated.

When Jesus bowed His head in death:

(1) The Old Covenant was concluded. That beautiful Covenant written upon tables of stone amid the burning fire and the rolling thunder of God's presence on Mount Sinai, had terminated. Its purpose was fulfilled: "... the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, But after that faith [in Christ] is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster[;]" ²

(2) The great altar with its multiplied animal sacrifices was finished. No more slaying of lambs or bullocks or turtledoves. The spotless Lamb of God, in satisfaction of all these types and symbols, had now given the supreme sacrifice on Calvary's cross. "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away[;]"³

(3) The temple was through. Its beautiful types and shadows of heavenly things in Christ were entirely fulfilled. The inner veil was rent asunder, signifying the end of the temple ministry, and the opening for every blood-washed sinner of a way into the holiest of all;⁴

(4) The earthly priesthood was terminated. The work of the priests was finished. Now they might each find an acre of rocky hillside to farm and eke out a living for themselves. For their priesthood had come to an end. Jehovah had set up a new priesthood after the order of Melchizedec;⁵ and

(5) Best of all, man's perfect and complete redemption was accomplished. The penalty for sin was fully paid and man's eternal salvation was guaranteed.⁶ A new and greater altar called Calvary had been erected. And God's guiltless Lamb had been sacrificed.

The Veil Was Rent in Twain

When Jesus cried in death, "It is finished," the angel of God stepped down from the portals of heaven and with one grand sweep, rent the massive veil of the temple from the top to the bottom.¹ Two priests laboring at the altar heard the awful sound. They hastened over and pushed back the outer curtain of the holy place. And there before their horror-stricken eyes, the veil hung in shreds and through it they beheld for the first time in all their lives the ark of the covenant overlaid with gold and the overshadowing cherubim. Instinctively they pressed the curtain back into place to hide the dreadful sight from their view. One of them ran to tell the high priest while the other stood by to guard.

God so often does the greatest things in the most inauspicious manner. The angel might have tossed the brazen altar into the Mediterranean Sea. That would have been impressive. He might have strewn the temple building over the sands of the Arabian Desert from Syria to the Red Sea. But our omnipotent God chose

only to rend the inner veil as sufficient declaration that the Old Covenant had come to its conclusion at the hour of Jesus' death. A new day and a New Covenant were born at that eventful time.

The rending of the veil stirred consternation among the priests. Such a thing had never happened before, and indeed it would not have been considered possible. There was no explanation for it. It was evidently a coincidence that it happened just at this critical time when they had succeeded in destroying the imposter, Jesus. So the high priest ordered absolute silence about the incident. Come Sunday morning he had a dozen of the finest tailors in Jerusalem sitting around a large table in the temple court weaving that veil back together. Within a few days they were able to replace it on its hooks as good as new. And the temple services returned to normal. The incident was not referred to again. In fact, the priests continued to carry on the sacrifices at the altar and the other temple rituals for another thirty-five years, until Jehovah sent the Romans under Titus to destroy the city and the temple, and to scatter the Jewish people to the far corners of the earth.

The ancient Tabernacle of Moses and the temple of later times were patterns or figures of the real and eternal sanctuary in heaven.⁴ Jehovah Elohim, the ineffable God of all creation, sits upon the mercy seat between the golden cherubim in the holy of holies of this glorious heavenly temple. The great altar that stands in the outer court before this all-magnificent temple is called Calvary where the Lamb of God was slain.³

But now, there is no veil hanging between the holy place and the holy of holies. It is completely gone. All who enter the holy place and eat of the shewbread (which is the Word of God) in the light of the golden candlestick (which is the Light of the world) and offer their incense of worship and prayer and tears, do so before the unveiled mercy-throne of God.

That blessed Lamb that died on Calvary was the long-awaited Messiah. He took His own sinless blood and, as our High Priest made "... for ever after the order of Melchizedek,"⁴ entered into the holy of holies and sprinkled it there upon the mercy seat.⁵ Thus He has put away sin and obtained eternal redemption for us.

When His flesh was rent on Calvary, a door of mercy was thrown wide open to every believing sinner from our first parent

Adam, to the end of the age.

*[We have] therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; . . .*⁶

Whosoever will is encouraged to come boldly with faith and confidence into the holy of holies. The sanctuary is larger now because the veil has been taken away. In fact, it is as big as heaven itself. And the eternal Father is sitting there upon His splendid throne. And at His right hand is the Son, the Lamb as it had been slain. All may come with full assurance before this throne of grace.⁷ For through Christ both Jew and Gentile “. . . have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”⁸

The Significance of Calvary

We should not miss the tremendous significance of the crucifixion of the divine Son of God, Jesus, the promised Messiah. The death of one or two thieves was of no consequence. The death of a thousand Christians would likewise be of little matter. But the crucifixion of that singular man Jesus to whom are ascribed all of the attributes of the Godhead is quite another matter.¹ When **He** bowed His thorn-crowned head in death—as the prophets had said he would²—the Old Covenant was satisfied; the temple and all its services were finished; and the great train of prophecy that had accumulated through the centuries found its fulfillment. “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he [the risen Jesus] expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”³

Paul, the renowned apostle, labored in the gospel during most of those thirty-five years that the temple services continued after the supreme sacrifice of the Messiah. Paul struggled continually with those teachers who insisted that the offering of the Lamb, Christ Jesus, was not sufficient. They taught that Christians must keep the Law of Moses.⁴ But Paul declared, “We have an altar [Calvary’s cross with its bleeding Savior], whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle [temple].”⁵ All Christian faith is centered around the altar of Calvary and its ever-blessed

sacrifice. As partakers of **this spotless Lamb**, we need no other sacrifice.⁶ⁱ

When His precious blood is sprinkled by the hand of faith upon the lintel and door posts of any man's heart, no death angel will ever come near.⁷ That man has passed from death into life.⁸ No examination will be made of his character, nationality, or social worth. He will stand alone on the merits of that blessed Lamb, Jesus the Christ! What then a man does with Jesus becomes the all-important issue in his life. He should cling to the Christ as a drowning man does to a floating plank. He should never let go!

It Is Finished

Paul's prayer for the Ephesian believers was that they might "... see clearly and really understand **who the Messiah is**" For if they recognized His true identity and knew that He actually was the divine Son of God, then they would more readily grasp "... all that he has done for [them]."¹ Jesus said to the two Emmaus disciples, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; . . ."² If they could have comprehended who He was, then they would more quickly have understood His vicarious death.

If He were but another man like Adam or Moses or Abraham, then we would have nothing to become excited about. Just another prophet has been martyred. But He who was offered as a Lamb on that special altar of Calvary was **not** just another man. He was none other than the Creator, God incarnate. Of Him it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, . . . [B]y him were all things created, . . ."³

This Lamb belonged to the ineffable Trinity of the Godhead. The offering of this divine Lamb provides a perfect redemption for all them that believe.⁴ Abraham believed God's promise of a Messiah. And God accounted this faith to him for righteousness.⁵ Moreover God counts this kind of faith as righteousness for every man who believes God as Abraham did.⁶

When Jesus bowed His head upon the cross and cried, "It is finished," the believer's redemption from sin was fully settled. The precious blood of Christ washed us, cleansed us, and redeemed us.⁷ The Psalmist sang, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath

he removed our transgressions from us.”⁸

The infinite God designed this redemption of man before the world began. Through the ages the Holy Spirit foretold this marvelous salvation.⁹ And now the Messiah has come: the promises have been fulfilled, as it is written, “. . . now once in the end of the world [age] hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”¹⁰ Jesus’ simple words from that cruel and wretched cross are heaven’s emphatic proclamation, “It is finished!”

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7. It Is Finished

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Entombment

*A sculpture in Limestone,
from the Chapel of the Chateau de Biron, Perigord.
The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916*

Chapter Twenty

The Messiah Is Buried

or

The Darkest Day in History

Introduction: His Burial

- 1. The Garden Tomb**
- 2. The Sabbath**
- 3. Finality of the Tomb**
- 4. Utter Darkness**
- 5. Absolute Termination**
- 6. The Dawning of Easter**
- 7. The New Birth**

The Messiah Is Buried

Because it was late Friday afternoon, and the Sabbath was rapidly approaching, the burial ceremonies for Jesus were cut short. Joseph of Arimathaea obtained permission of the Governor to remove the body from the cross. This he did with the aid of Nicodemus who had brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes and some linen cloth. Together they tenderly prepared the body for burial and laid it in Joseph's new sepulcher which was located in a garden near the place of execution.¹

The Garden Tomb

The Roman and Eastern Catholic churches have consecrated locations for Jesus' crucifixion and for His burial, well within the walls of old Jerusalem. But many Protestant believers prefer the location of the little hill and garden tomb a couple hundred yards outside the northern wall. Here, directly behind the modern bus depot on Jericho Road rises the little hill, still bearing on its southern side the inescapable markings resembling those of a skull. The hill has through the centuries been called Golgotha by the Hebrews and Calvary by the Romans. Both words mean "the place of a skull." On its southwestern edge is to be found a garden with a tomb carved into the rock base of the hill. This garden area and the tomb belong to the Garden Tomb Association, formed in London in 1893, for their care and preservation.

It was to this garden tomb then belonging to the family of Joseph of Arimathaea, that the body of Jesus was carried. It had been a frightful day. Both Joseph and Nicodemus had believed that this Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah (though secretly for fear of

the Jews). But what a day! Only late last night, Jesus had been taken into custody. This morning He had been condemned to die. The Romans had taken Him out to this wretched place called Golgotha. Here they had crucified Him as a wanton criminal between two thieves. It had all happened so quickly. And now He was dead! There was nothing to do but to lay His body away in the grave. It was all over. Their hopes were blasted. The disciples of Jesus were all disillusioned and scattered. Only a few women tenaciously lingered to see what was to be done with the body of their Master.

The Sabbath

The next day, Saturday, the last day of the week, was the Sabbath. Israel celebrated it every seventh day. It commemorated the completion of God's creation of the heavens and the earth. As it is written:

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.¹

God had incorporated the Sabbath into the Old Covenant Law when He wrote the fourth commandment upon the tables of stone:

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of Jehovah thy Elohim: in it thou shalt not do any work, . . . For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.²

It was on this Sabbath morning that the chief priests and Pharisees came to Pilate, seeking security for the tomb. “. . . [W]e remember,” they told Pilate, “that that deceiver said, . . . After three days I will rise again.”³ (How paradoxical that they should have remembered and the disciples should have forgotten!) They wanted a guard of soldiers posted before the tomb so that none might steal the body and carry it away. Pilate granted their desire,

and they went away and sealed the great stone that closed the tomb and placed a detachment of temple guards before it, giving strict orders that absolutely no one should be allowed to disturb that tomb. In the words of Matthew, "...they...made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."⁴

Finality of the Tomb

There is nothing in the experience of man that is so final, so positively terminal, as death and the grave. When this man Jesus bowed His head in death upon that cruel cross of Calvary, His life was fully given, His blood was wholly poured out. His death as the Paschal Lamb, for which He had come into the world, had been accomplished.¹ The promises given by God through the ages of a Savior, Christ, had been fulfilled. The Old Covenant, with its types and shadows pointing to the Messiah, was perfectly satisfied.

When the body of that God-man, Immanu-El (or Immanu-Elohim, meaning, "God with us"), was taken down from the cross and laid away in Joseph's tomb, the focal point of the ages had been reached. He whom Isaiah had called, "... Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty Elohim, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace,"² had been laid upon that cold slab of death. Surely heaven stopped and all the angels and all the seraphim and every other celestial being stood still in awe and wonder. When the body of that virgin-born Son of God, Jesus the Christ—of whom it is written:

*Who is the image of the invisible God, . . . by whom were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: . . .*³

—yes, when that blessed sacrificial body, limp in death, was tenderly laid away in Joseph's family sepulcher, and a massive stone rolled into place and sealed, the redemption plan of God was complete—unequivocally complete!

No words of man can adequately describe the full significance of the death and burial of Jesus, the ever-blessed Messiah. If He

had been only a son of Adam's fallen race, the matter would long ago have been forgotten. But this was none other than the Son of God, the second Person of the divine Trinity, who had taken upon Himself the form of man, and had become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.⁴ When His sacred body lay cold in death, sealed in that tomb of finality, **the old creation itself terminated in Him**; the Old Covenant Law of commandments and ordinances, came to its close; the temple, with its earthly priesthood and sacrificial altar and sacred sanctuary, became obsolete. Earth's Creator, Jehovah-Jesus, lay cold in death.

Utter Darkness

The Sabbath day commemorated the Creator's rest upon completion of the total creation. It looked back upon that beautiful earth that God had made. As it is written, "... [God] rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."¹

But now the scene had changed. **Sin** had destroyed the beauty of that earth which loving hands had formed. And now the Creator has set about to renew or recreate this blighted and fallen creation. He has taken upon Himself the form of His fallen creature, man, and led the way to Calvary where **sin** has extracted its full payment, even death.² The Creator has been crucified! Death has claimed the life of the long-promised Messiah! The tomb has engulfed Him! The Most High has become the Victim of the grave! There He is, sealed, cold, defeated, dead.

No hopelessness has ever been more absolute and penetrating. The sun hid its face. The earth quaked. Lightning flashed across the darkened sky and thunders rolled. Unquestionably this was the blackest and darkest day in all the world's history. Famines may beset the earth, pestilence may stalk its peoples, but no darkness can compare with the blackness of that Sabbath day when the man, Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel, lay cold in death and the grave. His disciples were disillusioned and in despair. Undoubtedly Satan held high carnival over the sealed tomb of Him who had come specifically to bruise the serpent's head.³ Jesus' mission was to "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; . . ." ⁴ And here it was not Satan, but the Messiah Himself that lay the Victim of death and the grave. Though He was the Son of God, yet

he tasted death and the ignominy of defeat for every man.⁵

Absolute Termination

We stand in awe and wonderment before this scene of His death and burial. None should overlook its unconditional finality, and none should miss its overwhelming implications. There have never been such abysmal darkness and utter hopelessness as prevailed throughout that fateful Sabbath day when the Messiah, the Son of God, lay imprisoned in death.

The grave is the absolute termination and end of everything! Ceremonies, philosophies, doctrines, or traditions, however beautiful they may be, are of no avail. Circumcision or uncircumcision has no meaning. Standing in the presence of that sealed tomb, all such things as Sabbath days, or holy days, the eating of meat or the refraining from meat, the keeping of the Law, the Ten Commandments, the Old Covenant with its ceremonies: all have become void and empty. They have lost their meaning and are vain.¹

Paul expressed the emptiness of all these things when he wrote of the "...cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."² When Jesus was crucified and buried, the attractions and allurements of the world passed away. To Him who lay imprisoned in the dark, cold tomb of death, the old creation with all its appurtenances had passed away. Everything had terminated, positively and conclusively, in the grave.

Paul accounted himself to have been crucified with Christ and buried with Christ. Lying there on that cold rock slab with Him, sealed in the tomb of death, Paul considered the old life—all things of this sin-benighted earth—to have terminated. Absolutely everything—his religion, his ambitions, his earthly relationships, and his hopes—terminated in the grave with Christ.³

The book should be closed. Everything of the past has gone into the grave. There is nothing left. No man had any hope. No religion had any efficacy. All religions and doctrines had become null and void. (Nothing short of a new beginning—a new creation—could have any meaning.) The cross of Christ was conclusive. The grave ended it all.

THE END

*When I survey the wondrous cross,
On which the Prince of glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

*Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
Save in the death of Christ, my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.*

*See, from His head, His hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

The Dawning of Easter

Nothing less than a total resurrection or re-creation by the omnipotent hand of the almighty God could turn Calvary and the tomb into victory, and transform the darkness of that grave into triumph. Only a new birth or a new creation could break the chains of that inexorable prison of death and set Jesus free. And that is exactly what the prophets throughout the ages had declared was going to happen! God would resurrect the Messiah from the dead! Peter declared, “. . . it was not possible that he should be holden of [death].”¹ And King David sang of the Messiah, “. . . thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.”²

On Sunday morning following the Sabbath, about daybreak, Jesus arose!³ He came forth from that sealed tomb in resurrection power. His triumph was abundant and glorious, as became the Son of God! He stepped forth in absolute victory, the first fruits of the

resurrection from the grave, the mighty Conqueror, and the Captain of our salvation! An angel rolled back the stone that the disciples might look in and see that the Master was not there. He had risen indeed!

When the hosts of Israel emerged from the great Red Sea in Egypt, following their leader Moses, a nation was born. Pharaoh and all his army sank to the bottom of the sea, but Israel was free. The watery grave gave up its prey. A new nation spread out over the sands on the shore. So, Jesus, the Messiah whom Moses prefigured, arose triumphantly from that impossible grave. And all who follow Him join Him on that resurrection shore.

Jesus died on Calvary, He was buried in the tomb, and He arose the third day, the first to be born again from death and the grave.⁴ Likewise, every believer must embrace the cross of Jesus, he must be buried in the tomb with Him, and he must be born again from the grave with Him.⁵ Thereby he becomes "...a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."⁶

The New Birth

A man becomes a disciple of Jesus when he believes in Him and leaves all to follow Him.¹ And truly, His yoke is easy and His burden is light.² His way is real and very practical. It involves total identification with Him. Paul wrote, "I am crucified with Christ: . . ."³ Such union is the beginning of the Christian life. A man embraces the cross and identifies himself with the crucified Savior. Jesus died in my stead, and I count His death as my death. I died on Calvary, identified with the person of Jesus Christ. I believe that He died for me, and I become a participant in His death on Calvary.

Jesus taught His followers, "...Ye must be born again."⁴ You must embrace His death on the cross and His burial in the tomb and become a partaker of His resurrection triumph! You must be crucified with Christ, laid away in the tomb, and risen again with Him as on that glorious Easter morning.

Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians, "...God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." He envisions himself and every Christian as having been crucified when Christ

was crucified, and buried when Christ was laid away in the tomb. He continues, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature [a new creation]." ⁵

Christians then are believers who by faith have been crucified on Calvary with Christ, buried with Him in the tomb, and raised again in resurrection life—born again from the grave. Neither beautiful philosophies, nor ceremonies, nor Sabbath days, nor holy days, nor the Ten Commandments—none avail anything; only a new creation can satisfy. Like their Master in the tomb, believers, too, must be resurrected from that grave. Only a new birth, or a new creation at the hand of the Almighty can break the chains of the prison of sin and death, and make men true children of God. Paul declared to the Corinthian church, "...if any man be in Christ, **he is a new creature**: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." ⁶

It was the Holy Spirit of God that went down into the tomb and resurrected the Lord Jesus from the chains of death. ⁷ And it is the same Holy Spirit that moves upon the life of the believer and transforms him, bearing witness that he is a child of God. ⁸ He has been born again. He has been resurrected and lifted up from the pit of sin and death into the glorious liberty of life and sonship with God. ⁹ Saint John wrote exultingly, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him:" ¹⁰

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7. The New Birth

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10. I John 3:2



The Supper at Emmaus
by Rodriguez (1599-1660)

*The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1914.*

*“And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us,
while he talked with us by the way,
and while he opened to us the Scriptures?” Luke 24:32*

Chapter Twenty-One

The Messiah's Resurrection OR First Fruits of the Grave

Introduction: The Pattern

- 1. Messiah, First Fruits of Harvest**
- 2. The Gospel to Abraham**
- 3. The Hope of Israel**
- 4. Not Possible**
- 5. The Promises**
- 6. Messiah's Glory**
- 7. A Supernatural Body**
- 8. An Earnest of the Resurrection**

The Messiah's Resurrection

Fifteen hundred years before its fulfillment, Jehovah gave Moses the pattern:

*These are the feasts of Jehovah, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the **fourteenth day** of the first month at even is Jehovah's passover. And on the **fifteenth day** of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto Jehovah: . . . an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. . . . [T]hen ye shall bring a sheaf of the first fruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before Jehovah, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath [the sixteenth day] the priest shall wave it.¹*

This holy convocation was celebrated by the Jews during the first month² of each year throughout the many centuries since Moses. It was the first of three great annual feasts.

On the evening of the fourteenth day of Nisan (Abib) the Passover lamb was sacrificed. This sacrifice marked the hour of Israel's redemption by blood. For without the shedding of blood there could be no redemption.³ Its importance before God could not be overstated. Every family must offer its lamb. Nothing else would suffice. It was either a lamb or the death of the firstborn by the sword of the angel.

The fifteenth day marked the beginning of the feast of unleavened bread. This day⁴ was a special Sabbath in which no unnecessary work was done. The bread was unleavened, in memory of the haste with which Israel had left the land of her bondage.

None of the leaven of that land was carried away with her. She became a new lump, a new nation before Jehovah.

On the evening of this fifteenth day a sheaf of ripe barley was cut by the priests and prepared into flour. Following this Sabbath, on the morning of the sixteenth day, about five pints of the flour were mixed with three-fourths of a pint of oil and a handful of frankincense, and then waved (shaken to and fro) before Jehovah. This offering represented the **first fruits of the harvest**. This was the pattern. It was ordained by Jehovah Himself.

Messiah, First Fruits of Harvest

The pattern given to Moses was a beautiful prophecy of the coming Messiah. Its observance as a national feast each year through the succeeding centuries emphasized the exceeding greatness and importance of that which was prophesied. Its perfect fulfillment came about in this manner.

On Friday afternoon, the fourteenth day of Nisan (or Abib), probably in the year 32 A.D., the Passover lamb was slain by the priests in the temple. Simultaneously the man, Jesus the Messiah, was sacrificed on Golgotha's rugged cross. He died there as "...our passover..." lamb¹ in perfect fulfillment of the pattern. We have been redeemed "...with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:..."² They took Him down from the tree and tenderly laid Him away in a rock-hewn tomb in the nearby garden. There His body rested over the Sabbath, the fifteenth day of Nisan.

That same Sabbath day, at evening, the priests cut the first fruits of the harvest of barley and brought it to the court of the temple. There they thrashed it and ground it, preparing fine flour to be offered the following day.

Then early Sunday morning on the sixteenth day, the priests waved their first fruits of the barley harvest before Jehovah. At the same hour, Jesus arose "...from the dead, and [became] the firstfruits of them that slept."³

Paul preached those things "...which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Messiah should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead,..."⁴ And again Paul wrote, He "...is the beginning, the firstborn from the

dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”⁵ John wrote, He “. . . is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, . . .”⁶ In keeping with the pattern, Jesus, the Messiah, became the First Fruits of the harvest from the grave.

The Gospel to Abraham

The word **gospel** means “good news.” And it is significant that our King James Bibles read, “And the scripture. . . preached [a long time] before the **gospel unto Abraham**, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.”¹ That was good news indeed! To Abraham was given the **Covenant promise** that Jehovah would send the Messiah who would **redeem His people** from their sins and **resurrect them** from the grave. This Covenant promise was not only for the Jews, Abraham’s natural descendents, but for men of all nations who would believe God as Abraham did. “That is what the Scriptures mean when they say that God made Abraham the father of many nations. God will accept all people in every nation who trust God as Abraham did.”²

Man has never known an enemy comparable to death. Adam’s descendents have stood helpless before it throughout the ages. Death has claimed every man—because of sin.³ But the Messiah has come in fulfillment of the promises and “. . . hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: . . .”⁴

The Messiah has broken the chains of death and made us heirs of life, partakers of His resurrection. As the Scriptures proclaim, “But God. . . hath quickened us together with Messiah, . . . And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: . . .”⁵ And again, “If ye then be risen with Christ. . .”⁶—what a transcendent assumption! “. . . [Y]ield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, . . .”⁷

The Hope of Israel

Paul set forth the resurrection from the dead as **the hope of Israel**. When he was arrested in the temple of Jerusalem, he was placed before the chief priests and the council of the Jews. There he brought their accusations into sharp focus. He stated them plainly,

“...of the **hope and resurrection** of the dead I am called in question.”¹ The priests who had crucified Jesus were not about to accept His resurrection and Lordship. These were the bases of their intense hatred against the apostle.

When he stood before the high priest Ananias, in the presence of the Roman Governor Felix, Paul declared:

*... this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead,*²

Porcius Festus succeeded Felix as the Roman Governor. So when King Agrippa visited the new Governor in Caesarea, Festus told the King about this peculiar prisoner whose accusers “...brought none accusation of such things as I supposed: But had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.”³ Then when he was brought before them and asked to answer for himself, Paul affirmed:

*... now I stand and am judged for the **hope of the promise** made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.*⁴

The Jews were ignorantly fighting to destroy the very fundamental hope of their nation. Their hatred of Jesus had become a blinding obsession.⁵

At Rome, though a prisoner chained to a military guard, Paul invited the chief of the Jews to visit him. “For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you: because that for **the hope of Israel** I am bound with this chain.”⁶ Paul's passionate desire was that his people, the Jews, should recognize the manifold benefits that Jehovah had promised and was now fulfilling through their Messiah, the Lord Jesus.

Not Possible

How could death hold the Son of God, the second Person of the divine Godhead? How could the almighty Creator, though veiled in human flesh, be chained in the dark recesses of the grave? To the weeping Martha He said, “. . . I am the resurrection, and the life: . . .”¹ He was the fountain and source of both. Death could not hold Him, as it is written, “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was **not possible** that he should be holden of it.”²

On that great Day of Pentecost forty-nine days later, Peter stood before the astonished multitude and quoted from the beautiful Psalms of King David regarding the Messiah:

*. . . I foresaw Jehovah always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*³

*. . . [T]he patriarch David, . . . is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore 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 Messiah to sit on his throne; He seeing this [a long time] before spake of the resurrection of Messiah, . . . This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.*⁴

“For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, Jehovah saith unto my Adonai, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool.”⁵

The Promises

“. . . [A]ll the promises of God in him [Messiah] are yea, and in him, Amen, . . .”¹ The long chain of divine promises that extend from Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, and all the prophets, looked forward to the Messiah. The prophets stared in wonderment at His redemptive work on Calvary and His triumph over the tomb.

Man has faced no enemy comparable to death and the grave. When sin entered into the world, death came, hand in hand. And so death has reigned over every man.² God's promise of earthly life is only threescore years and ten. When they are gone, the grim reaper calls and man steps over the great divide into that unseen land beyond the river. And when we look at the normal death toll, even without war and pestilence, it is appalling. There are some three million natural deaths in the United States every year!

If in this life only we have hope, then we are like the beasts of the field. We are but dumb creatures, slaves to our passions and appetites. "If we will never live again after we die, then we might as well go and have ourselves a good time: let us eat, drink, and be merry. What's the difference? For tomorrow we die, and that ends everything!"³

But God promised a Savior, the Messiah, who would conquer death and the grave and provide us life and immortality. In the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia, Paul stood and preached, "... we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, **God hath fulfilled** the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus. . . ." Then he quoted three Old Testament Scriptures that looked forward to this glorious event:⁴ (1) "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee."⁵ A thousand years before, the psalmist sang this hope of the Messiah's resurrection from the grave; (2) Isaiah foresaw the coming of Messiah, "... I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."⁶ Paul knew that this prophecy referred to the resurrection of the Christ. Jehovah's sure mercies to David provided a Son who would smite Satan's kingdom, and arise from the prison of death to sit upon David's throne, the throne of Jehovah; and (3) "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [Sheol, the grave]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."⁷ The Spirit of Christ, which was in King David, foresaw Messiah's triumphant resurrection. And Paul affirmed that these Scriptures were fulfilled in the resurrection of this Messiah.

Messiah's Glory

The Holy Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets of old

testified of the sufferings of the Messiah and the glory that should follow.¹ Jesus stated to the Emmaus disciples that the Scriptures bore out this pattern concerning Himself. "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."²

When Jesus was transfigured before His three disciples on the mount, "... his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as light."³ Luke tells us that Moses and Elijah joined Him there and they shared His glory and spake with Him "... of his decease [suffering] which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."⁴ This was God's order for His only begotten Son: extreme suffering followed by fathomless glory. For He was made "... perfect through sufferings."⁵

It was in the resurrection that Jesus entered into His glory. And it is in the resurrection of believers that we shall arise and share His glory. The bodies we have now are temporal. "... [T]hey become sick and die; but they will be **full of glory** when we come back to life again."⁶ "... [W]hen Messiah who is our real life comes back again, you will shine with him and share in all his glories."⁷

Paul's earnest prayer for the Ephesian saints was that they might "... see clearly and really understand **who Messiah is and all that he has done**..."⁸ This is all revealed and made plain in His resurrection. For it is in the resurrection that we

*... begin to understand how incredibly great his power is to help those who believe him. It is that same mighty power that raised Messiah from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in heaven, far, far above any other king or ruler or dictator or leader. Yes, his honor is far more glorious than that of anyone else either in this world or in the world to come.*⁹

The apostle John described Him in His glory: "... His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; ... And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**"¹⁰

A Supernatural Body

The sure promise of all the Scriptures is the resurrection of Christian believers. Paul wrote to the Philippian saints, "...we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body," ¹ Or as Taylor's *Living Letters* renders it, "When He comes back He will take these dying bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies **like His own**,"

"But every man in his own order: Messiah the firstfruits; afterward they that are Messiah's at his coming." ² That is the order. Jesus, the Messiah, died for every man, went into the prison of death and the grave, made a shambles of it, and arose in majestic triumph. "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them. . . ." ³ He completed the work and ascended up on high to the Father's right hand. There He is reigning until that glorious hour when with trumpet sound He shall return, ". . . and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." ⁴

. . . [O]ur earthly bodies which die and decay are different from the bodies we shall have when we come back to life again, for they will never die. The bodies we have now embarrass us for they become sick and die; but they will be full of glory when we come back to life again. ⁵

Every human being has a body just like Adam's, made of dust, but all who become Christ's will have the same kind of body as his—a body from heaven. Just as each of us now has a body like Adam's, so we shall some day have a body like the Messiah's. ⁶

Saint John expressed our confidence, ". . . now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; . . ." ⁷

An Earnest of the Resurrection

The outstanding hope of every Christian believer is the resurrection of his body from the grave. ¹ Water baptism is a symbol of the believer's burial and resurrection. ² In like manner,

the baptism in the Holy Spirit is an earnest (or first installment) of the Christian's resurrection, as it is written, "...after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession,"³

This whole creation of man and his world "...groaneth and travaileth in pain. . . ."⁴ It is nothing new. Man has been in a morass of trouble ever since Adam, and his trouble has continued to become worse. For his trouble stems from the one fundamental source, namely, his sin and rebellion against God. This world of trouble and suffering is common to all men.

And not only they [the rebellious], but ourselves also [who have surrendered to the Messiah], which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.⁵

Paul confessed this to be his confidence, "...if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."⁶ The tremendous impact of this verse is contained in the words, "...if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead **dwell in you**," That same mighty Holy Spirit that went down into the grave and resurrected the body of our Lord, dwells in the Christian's body. The Holy Spirit tabernacles in these redeemed vessels of clay.

His presence in our lives is a foretaste of resurrection glory. It is an earnest or down payment on the resurrection of our bodies.

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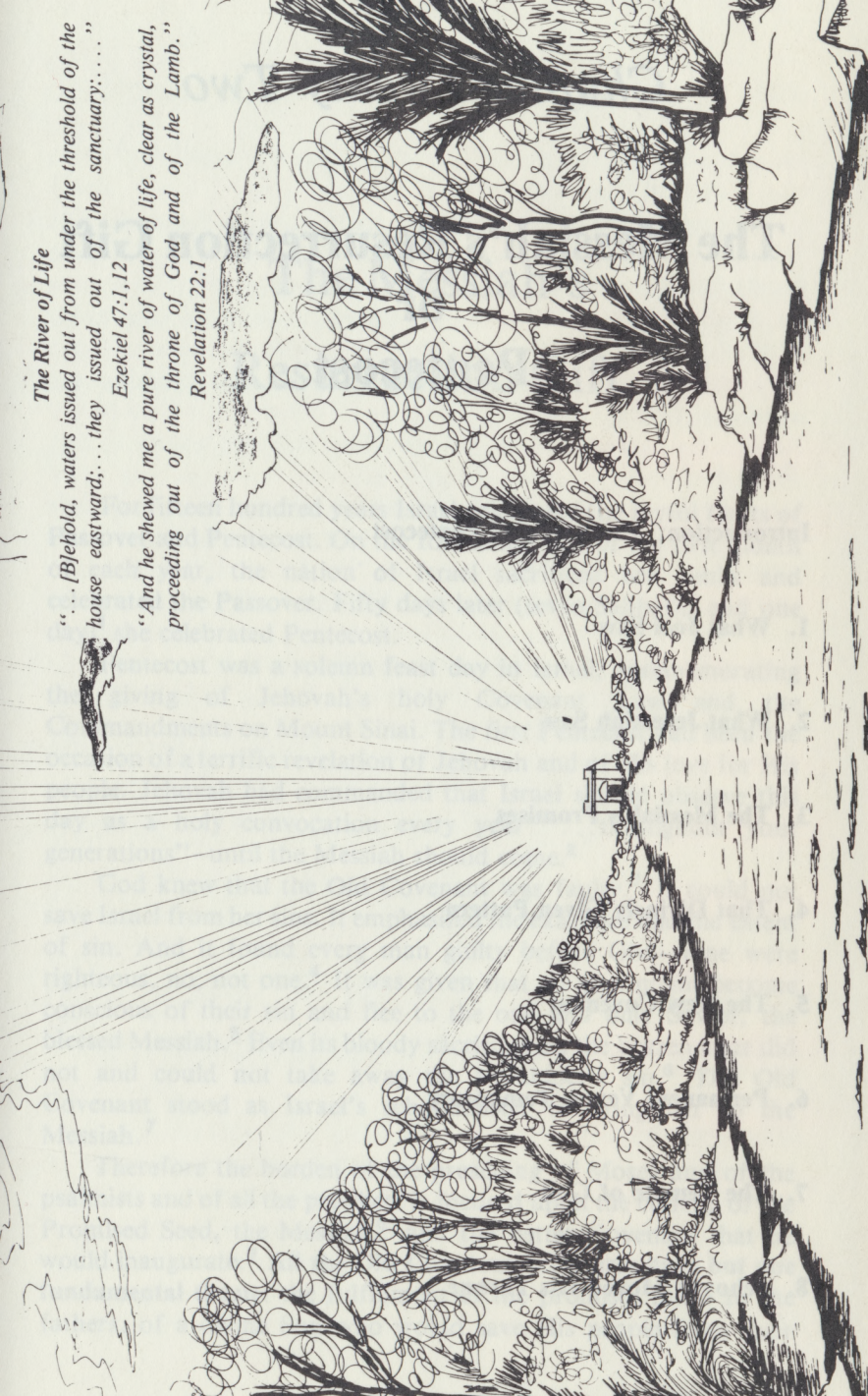
The River of Life

“... [B]ehold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward;... they issued out of the sanctuary:...”

Ezekiel 47:1,12

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb,”

Revelation 22:1



Chapter Twenty-Two

The Messiah's Resurrection Gift or Pentecost

Introduction: Passover and Pentecost

- 1. What Joel Saw**
- 2. What Jeremiah Saw**
- 3. The Messiah's Promises**
- 4. That Divinely Given Pattern**
- 5. The New Covenant**
- 6. Permanent Versus Temporary**
- 7. The Temple of God**
- 8. Jehovah Moved His Throne**

The Messiah's Resurrection Gift

For fifteen hundred years Israel celebrated the joyful feasts of Passover and Pentecost. On the fourteenth day of the first month of each year, the nation of Israel sacrificed her lambs and celebrated the Passover. Fifty days later (seven Sabbaths and one day)¹ she celebrated Pentecost.

Pentecost was a solemn feast day in Israel, commemorating the giving of Jehovah's holy Covenant Law and the Commandments on Mount Sinai. The first Pentecost had been the occasion of a terrific revelation of Jehovah and of His love for His people. Jehovah had commanded that Israel should observe this day as a holy convocation every year "...throughout your generations"—until the Messiah should come.²

God knew that the Old Covenant was faulty.³ It could not save Israel from her sins. It emphasized the existence and the extent of sin. And it found every man guilty before God—none were righteous, no, not one.⁴ It was given that all men might become conscious of their sin and flee to the one and only Savior, the blessed Messiah.⁵ Even its bloody sacrifices on the brazen altar did not and could not take away the worshiper's sin.⁶ The Old Covenant stood as Israel's schoolmaster to bring her to the Messiah.⁷

Therefore the burden of the preaching of Moses and of the psalmists and of all the prophets is focused upon the coming of the Promised Seed, the Messiah,⁸ and the better Covenant that he would inaugurate.⁹ **All the Old Covenant Scriptures have but one fundamental theme:** the fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers, of a divine Son who would save His people from their

sins¹⁰ and fill them with the Holy Spirit.¹¹

Passover was only a type or pattern. And Pentecost was likewise only a type or pattern. Israel observed these two great feasts throughout the many centuries in anticipation of the coming of God's anointed Messiah, to whom these types unerringly pointed. They were given by Jehovah as solemn feasts in Israel "...till the seed should come to whom the promise was made;..."¹²

What Joel Saw

The prophet Joel preached some eight hundred years before the Messiah was born. He saw the vast blessings in store for God's people at the time of the incarnation. He declared, "...[I]t shall come to pass in the last days, saith Elohim, **I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh:**¹ . . . And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be saved.**"²

Joel saw the coming of the Messiah. By the Holy Spirit that rested upon him, he prophesied of the great salvation that He would bring and the copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit that He would give. Salvation for "...whosoever shall call,..." and the Spirit poured "...upon all flesh:..." What a tremendous prophecy!

His prophecy was brief. But Joel stated the ministry of the promised Messiah in simple and clear terms. This was the vision of the Spirit repeated in a variety of ways by all of the prophets. It pointed forward to the Messiah whose ministry would fulfill all the promises made to the Fathers. This is what God had promised to Abraham so long ago, "...in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."³

What Jeremiah Saw

Jeremiah wept over Israel during some of the darkest days of her history. He prophesied a couple hundred years after Joel. He, too, told of the ministry of the glorious Messiah. His prophecy as quoted in the epistle to the Hebrews gives us a clear and concise outline of the Messiah's redemptive work and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit:¹

(1) A better Covenant,² better than the one given at Mount Sinai;

(2) A New Covenant,³ in contrast to the Old Covenant given at Sinai;

(3) "...[T]his is the covenant... I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts:..."⁴ This Covenant is in contrast with the Old Covenant written upon tables of stone;⁵

(4) "...[A]ll shall know me, from the least to the greatest."⁶ All New Covenant believers who are baptized in the Holy Spirit, as this prophecy envisions, will certainly know Jehovah personally. They need no priest save the Messiah Himself to stand between them and their God. For they are "... a **chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar [purchased] people;**..."⁷ and

(5) "...[T]heir sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."⁸ How wonderful! How stupendous! These have been covered "...with the precious blood of Messiah, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:..."⁹

The Messiah's Promises

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."¹ John magnified the excellent greatness of the Messiah, saying, "...he...is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:..."² John knew that this Messiah would fulfill all the expectations of the prophets. As the Scriptures said, He would **redeem His people from their sins and fill them with the Holy Spirit.**

Saint John recorded the marvelous promise of the Messiah in these words:

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet [crucified, risen, and] glorified.)³

Jesus called attention to the fact that the Scriptures, the Old Testament prophets, said that all of this was going to happen when He the Messiah came.

On the night that He was betrayed, Jesus spoke much of the Holy Spirit that was to come. He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth," ⁴

Again, ". . . If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." ⁵

"... [T]he Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." ⁶

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: . . ." ⁷

"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." ⁸

After those tragic but awesome days of His betrayal, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection, He met with His disciples on several occasions. Doctor Luke gives us this beautiful record of one of those times, saying that Jesus (the risen Messiah),

... being assembled together with them [his disciples], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, ⁹ which saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. ¹⁰

That Divinely Given Pattern

Before the making of most products, patterns are first formed. From these patterns the finished articles are then cast. The patterns are only temporary in the making of the final product, and only incidental to the process. When the item is completed, its pattern is

discarded. Only the finished article is finally important.

Now Moses and the giving of the Old Covenant Law at Mount Sinai were a beautiful type or pattern of the Messiah and of the giving of the glorious New Covenant Law.¹ Fifty days after the Passover in Egypt and Israel's rebirth from the grave of the great Red Sea, Moses ascended the mount and bowed before the throne of the God of Israel. There he received of Jehovah God two tables of stone on which were written the Old Covenant Law, the Ten Commandments.²

Moses carried these tables of stone down to the camp of Israel. There he built the Tabernacle³ with its outer court, its holy place, and its holy of holies. He placed the Old Covenant tables of stone in an ark of shittim wood overlaid with gold.⁴ This he deposited in the holy of holies and covered it over with a mercy seat of pure gold. It was designed to be Jehovah's majestic throne in the heart of the camp of His people Israel.⁵

When the work of building the Tabernacle was completed⁶ and the ark with its Old Covenant tables of stone was in place,⁷ then Moses anointed the Tabernacle and all that was therein.⁸

Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle.⁹

That was the pattern. Now it was fifteen hundred years later "...when the day of Pentecost was fully come, . . ."¹⁰ This New Testament reference, of course, is to the regular annual feast day of Pentecost fifty days after Passover. It commemorated the first Pentecost when Jehovah's holy Covenant Law was given at Sinai, and the glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle. The Messiah has now formed His Church. He has finished the work. Now He proceeds to place the glorious New Covenant Law into the holy of holies of His Church.

Fifty days have passed since the real Paschal Lamb, the Messiah, was crucified on Calvary, laid away in a rock-hewn grave, and resurrected in transcendent splendor. He, like Moses, has ascended to the blessed throne of the great Jehovah God.¹¹ Like

Moses the pattern, He has received the New Covenant Law, which is none other than the Holy Spirit of Jehovah God, the third Person of the ineffable Trinity.¹² “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”¹³

Our Moses, the Messiah, has carried this beautiful New Covenant Holy Spirit back down to earth to His waiting disciples. There He set about building His Church with living stones, that is, with His blood-purchased disciples.¹⁴ The glorified Messiah is building His Church or Tabernacle specifically like the Mosaic pattern, to be the permanent throne and dwelling place of the eternal Jehovah God.

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.¹⁵

This event was in fulfillment of the ancient pattern and of all the prophecies. After He had completely settled the matter of sin by His own sacrifice on Calvary's cross and had ascended up and been glorified at the Father's right hand,¹⁶ the Messiah now shed forth the blessed Holy Spirit upon His disciples. This was in beautiful satisfaction of the pattern when the Old Covenant Law was given at Sinai fifty days after the first Passover in Egypt.

When a large crowd had gathered and Peter had explained to them that the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ and this subsequent outpouring of the Holy Spirit were all in perfect fulfillment of the Scriptures, and

...that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ, . . . they [the large crowd] were pricked in their heart, and said. . . Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the

*remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as Jehovah our God shall call.*¹⁷

This is that which was spoken by Joel, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and all the prophets, "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; . . ." ¹⁸

This outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the New Covenant that Christ has given to men. He purposed that every believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit. Every believer should have God's holy Covenant Law written by the finger of Jehovah upon the fleshy tables of his heart.¹⁹

The baptism in the Holy Spirit was for every blood-washed sinner, for every follower of the Lamb. Our God intended that every Christian, not only in the first century of the Church but in every century since should be filled or baptized in the Holy Spirit.

David Womack tells us that this ideal was reality during the early days of the Church.

*During the first century all Christians were baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke with other tongues; in the second century most of the Christians had this experience; by the third century some Christians were filled with the Spirit; and in the fourth century the baptism in the Holy Spirit was apparently forgotten.*²⁰

The New Covenant

The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers that Christ "...has also made us competent servants of a new Covenant, which is **not a written code but a Spirit**; for the written code kills, but the Spirit gives Life."¹

The New Covenant is written by the finger of God, not on tables of stone,² but upon the mind and soul of redeemed men and upon the fleshy tables of their hearts.³ The New Covenant is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in the heart and soul of the believer. Jehovah has moved His throne from the ark of shittim wood which held the

two tables of stone⁴ to the heart of the Christian believer. Jehovah no longer dwells in a tent of rams' skins and of badgers' skins.⁵ But He dwells in the hearts of His devoted followers.

Many Christians study and seek to live by the words of the New Testament Bible, but neglect the consecration required to be filled with the Holy Spirit. They live and worship under a New Testament decalogue and rob themselves of the glorious victory of a Spirit-filled life. Every Christian should live by the words of the New Testament and, at the same time, welcome the fullness of the Holy Spirit into his life. He should let the Spirit write the message of the New Testament upon his heart. Such is normal Christian experience.

Paul compares the glory of the two Covenants: the one from Mount Sinai and the other one given at Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. The former was commemorated annually by the Feast of Pentecost, and the latter was in fulfillment of the Feast of Pentecost.

The Old Covenant that brings death was given with such glory that the people could not look upon the face of Moses because of its brightness—a transient luster. “Shall we not expect **far greater glory** in these days [of the New Covenant] when the Holy Spirit is giving life?”⁶

“If the [Old Covenant] that leads to doom was glorious, **much more glorious** is the [New Covenant] plan that makes men right with God.”⁷

“For, in fact, that [Old Covenant] which was so glorious. . . has no glory at all in comparison with the surpassing glory [of the New Covenant].”⁸

“For if that [Old Covenant] which was to be abolished came with glory, much more is [the New Covenant] **which is permanent** arrayed in glory.”⁹

“Since we know that this **new glory will never go away**, we can preach with great boldness, . . .”¹⁰

This infilling or baptism in the Holy Spirit gives men great power in preaching the gospel. Israel's rulers and elders and scribes marveled at the fearlessness of Peter and John after the Day of Pentecost. The timid and vacillating Peter who had cowered before the accusing finger of a mere maid but fifty days before¹¹ now

stood forth and preached boldly before the rulers of the people. "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."¹²

Permanent Versus Temporary

The New Covenant is permanent!¹ The Holy Spirit whom the Lord Jesus has poured upon His blood-washed Church is no temporary type or pattern of something yet to come. The New Covenant baptism in the Holy Spirit is the ultimate fulfillment of God's delightful plan of His dwelling in the bodies of blood-bought men. The Holy Spirit dwells in bodies of flesh today and will dwell in resurrected bodies tomorrow, like Jesus' resurrection body.

The Old Covenant was temporary.² It was intended to terminate when it was fulfilled and satisfied by the magnificent Messiah, to whom it so faithfully pointed. Each year the giving of the Old Covenant was celebrated by a feast called Pentecost. When the Messiah "...had by himself purged our sins, [He] sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;..."³ and "...having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost,..."⁴ He proceeded to baptize His disciples, as all the Scriptures said He would.⁵ And Peter assured the people in Jerusalem that "...the promise [of this lovely gift of the Holy Ghost] is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."⁶

The Lord Jesus is building His Church "...upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, [He] himself being the chief corner stone;...In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."⁷ This building or tabernacle is God's permanent sanctuary. It is sanctified "...through the blood of the everlasting covenant,..."⁸ It fulfills the words of Jesus when He said, "...If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and **make our abode with him.**"⁹

The Temple of God

In the outpouring of the Holy Spirit we have the fulfillment of

God's eternal plan for His dwelling in the blood-cleansed holy of holies of men's hearts. Paul declared with much emphasis, "Know ye not that ye are the temple [tabernacle] of God [Jehovah Elohim], and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"¹ Could anything be more beautiful and positive? Christian believers are the sanctuary and tabernacle of the mighty God upon this earth.

And again, "... what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."² "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"³

The glory cloud of Jehovah's presence no longer hovers over the Tabernacle in the wilderness, nor even over the temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. The Old Covenant with its Tabernacle (or Temple) is long since fulfilled and passed away. The glory cloud now hovers over those disciples of Jesus who have been baptized in the blessed Holy Spirit.⁴ They are the earthly sanctuary of Jehovah. They are the living temple of the Most High.

To the Ephesian Church Paul set forth God's wondrous plan of redeeming both Gentiles (who were far off from God) and Jews (who were nigh) through the blood of Christ. He has fused them both together into Christ, so that there is only one body, the Church, of which Christ is the Head.⁵

*We who believe are carefully joined together with Christ as parts of a beautiful, constantly growing temple for God. And you also are joined with him and with each other by the Holy Spirit, and are part of this dwelling place of God.*⁶

Jehovah Moved His Throne

The first Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover in Egypt, saw the giving of God's holy Covenant Law amid an awesome display of fire and rolling thunder. The Ten Commandments were written upon two tables of stone by the very finger of Jehovah! The Tabernacle was erected and the two tables of stone were deposited in the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies, which was Jehovah's dwelling place among His people. The Tabernacle was Jehovah's throne.

The second Pentecost, seven weeks after the resurrection of the Messiah, saw the giving of the Holy Spirit with tongues of fire. Jehovah's beautiful Covenant Law was now written, not on tables of stone but upon the fleshy tables of men's hearts.¹ This New Covenant Law was not placed in an ark of shittim wood in a Tabernacle of goats' skins and badgers' skins. This New Covenant Law was deposited in the holy of holies of the bodies of redeemed men.

At the time of the first Pentecost, Jehovah set up His throne in the pilgrim Tabernacle. Later Solomon's temple replaced the Tabernacle. Jehovah, in all of His majesty, dwelt in the midst of His people Israel.² At the time of the second Pentecost, Jehovah moved His throne from the holy of holies of the tabernacle or temple on Mount Moriah to the living temple of men's hearts. Jehovah no longer dwells in a temple made of wood and stone; Jehovah dwells today in the blood-washed sanctuaries of the physical bodies of His people. He has no other residence upon this earth.

When the true Paschal Lamb of God, the Messiah Himself, bowed His head in death upon the cross of Calvary, the temple on Mount Moriah came to its end. The angels of God tore asunder the massive veil that separated the holy of holies and the holy place.³ The significance of the temple (as the pattern) was finished. On the Day of Pentecost, Jehovah moved His throne from the type to its fulfillment, from the temple on Mount Moriah to the hearts of believers. The Tabernacle and the temple have been replaced by Jehovah's permanent resting place: the New Covenant temple of God which is the body of Christian believers, of which Jesus the Messiah is the Head.⁴

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Maranatha, Our Lord Cometh!

“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:
and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn,
and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven
with power and great glory.” Matthew 24:30.

“... [A]nd behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat
like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown,
and in his hand a sharp sickle.” Revelation 14:14

Chapter Twenty-Three

MARANATHA!

Our Lord Cometh

or

Christ's Second Coming

Introduction: God's Perfect Timing

- 1. Jesus' Promises**
- 2. That Blessed Hope**
- 3. Not All Will Die**
- 4. Do Not Be Ignorant**
- 5. Revelation of the Lord Jesus**
- 6. Coming As a Thief**
- 7. Feast of Harvest**

Maranatha!

Our Lord Cometh

God's clock keeps perfect time. "...[W]hen the fulness of the time was come,..."¹ Jesus was born. He was born right on schedule, in God's perfect time.

Some five hundred years before His birth, the angel Gabriel informed Daniel concerning the time of the Messiah's coming:

*Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, . . . [F]rom the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: . . . And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, . . .*²

This marvelous prophecy foretold a period of sixty-nine weeks of years ($69 \times 7 = 483$ years) from the going forth of the decree³ by Artaxerxes Longimanus, King of Persia, to the suffering of the Messiah. This all came to pass according to God's exact timing.

The second coming of Christ is no less scheduled and certain. Forty days after His resurrection the disciples stood on the Mount of Olives and saw their Lord ascend into the heavens.

*And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.*⁴

Maranatha,⁵ meaning “our Lord cometh,” is an untranslated Aramaic expression, which was probably in the vernacular of Palestine in the time of Paul. It is thought to have been a kind of watchword among the early Jewish Christians.

Jesus' Promises

The three synoptic writers, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, put emphasis upon the words of Jesus regarding His coming again at the end of the Christian age. Matthew wrote:

*... this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. . . . For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. . . . [A]nd they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other.*¹

Jesus described the desolation of Jerusalem under the Roman General Titus in 70 A.D.:

*... there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*²

Then He repeated the promise of His coming, saying, “. . . when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.”³

The Master spoke in direct and positive language, teaching men to be diligent in their Christian lives and to watch intently for His return. He also spoke in parables, saying, “Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching:”⁴ Some will be ready but others will be negligent, careless, and not ready when He comes.⁵ He illustrated:

I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken [caught up to meet his Lord in the air], and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.⁶

That Blessed Hope

“... [T]he grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us...” how we ought to live! It teaches us “...that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for **that blessed hope**, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;...”¹ This blessed hope of the people of God is intended to encourage and strengthen us in the face of trial and adversity in this pilgrim life. Jesus, our Messiah, is coming again. If this hope burns in the human breast it will cause a man to turn away from ungodliness and worldly lust, and to fervently follow the Lord.

The disciple Peter declared by the Spirit:

... the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ... ?²

That blessed hope is not only a comforting hope, it is also a **purifying hope**. We must be diligent that we may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless.³

If this hope does not effectively constrain a man to put away the “... works of the flesh, ...”⁴ then nothing will. Saint John served the Lord Jesus to a ripe old age. He loved his Lord and evidently thrilled at the hope of His coming again. And he wrote, “... every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [the Lord] is pure.”⁵

Not All Will Die

“Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep [die],” Some will be living when Jesus comes again. “. . . [B]ut we shall all be changed. . . .”¹ The dead will be raised and given glorified, spiritual bodies. Also we who are still alive at His coming will be changed and given new spiritual bodies. Both the dead and we who are alive will be transformed into His likeness.

This will all happen “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised [with] incorruptible [bodies], and we [who are alive] shall be changed.”²

*It will all happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet is blown. For there will be a trumpet blast from the sky and all the Christians who have died will suddenly become alive, with new bodies that will never, never die; and then we who are still alive shall suddenly have new bodies too.*³

This is indeed an exciting revelation to Christian believers. It was foreseen and foretold by the prophet Isaiah seven hundred years before Paul repeated it. Isaiah had described it as a great feast and celebration when Jehovah would destroy the veil or covering of death that is spread over all people. “He [Jehovah] will swallow up death in victory; and Adonai Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces;”⁴

Do Not Be Ignorant

The Scriptures have been written for our instruction.¹ We need not be ignorant of these vital truths. We should study them and know them well, for ignorance leaves Christians subject to the bitter anguish and hopelessness of the unbeliever. Understanding turns the blackness and darkness of the grave into confident hope.²

We know that Jesus died. And we know **why**. He, the all-blessed Messiah, died for our iniquities, redeeming us from our sins. He was laid away in the grave, from which He arose the third day in majestic triumph. And so we are confident that when He comes again, He will raise all His believing saints (from both Old and New Testaments) from the grave: every believer shall arise.³

Paul is very emphatic. He says we have this truth directly from

the Lord. The Christians who are alive when the Lord comes again will have no advantage over those who sleep in their graves. But rather, “. . . the dead in Christ shall rise first, . . .”⁴ When the Lord Jesus descends from heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, we who are privileged to be alive in that hour shall stand by and watch the graves open and the saints of years past come forth with brand new, supernatural bodies like the resurrection body of our Lord Himself.

Then we, too, shall be changed. Our earthly bodies made of clay will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and we shall rise to meet our Lord in the air.⁵ Hallelujah!

Revelation of the Lord Jesus

Men in their ignorance and blindness may now revile His blessed name. Satan is the prince and the power of this present world.¹ God has ordained it so. Our Lord wants Christian disciples who will grow in grace and in His likeness in this kind of world.² And so we follow Him and serve Him, “. . . waiting for the coming [or the revelation] of our Lord Jesus Christ: . . .”³ We are taught “. . . to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he [God] raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”⁴

We live in a troubled world, ruled over by the forces of darkness.⁵ The Captain of our salvation lived in this same world before us.⁶ And He triumphed over it. He left us this stirring promise, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”⁷ So our calling is to be overcomers with Christ.

Soon,

*. . . the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels; In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, . . .*⁸

There is nothing new about these plans. God has revealed them throughout the Scriptures. Enoch, the seventh patriarch from

Adam, prophesied of the future revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. By the Holy Spirit that rested upon him, he foresaw these things, saying, "Behold, Jehovah cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all. . . ." ⁹The revelation of our Lord Jesus will come suddenly, right on schedule!

Coming As a Thief

Scoffers are still saying, ". . . all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." ¹ They are willingly ignorant that long ago, scoffers said the same thing right up ". . . until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all." ² There will always be evil men, even among Christians, who will insist, in part, "My lord delayeth his coming." ³ But be not deceived; time is no object with God. ". . . [T]he day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; . . ." ⁴ He will come on an ordinary day, without warning. The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God!

Our God ". . . is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." ⁵ The gospel is a universal call toward every man in every nation to repent and come to God through Christ, and become an heir of God and a joint heir with the Lord Jesus Christ. King David sang, "But thou, O Jehovah, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." ⁶ Christ's return is being delayed partially to give more sinners opportunity to repent and to find His wonderful peace and salvation. Peter requested, ". . . remember why he is waiting. He is giving us time to get his message of salvation out to others." ⁷

But His coming is at hand. It is to be an hour of greatest joy to them who are ready and watching. But it shall be an hour of fearful judgment to the careless and the wicked.

. . . God has commanded that the earth and the heavens be stored away for a great bonfire at the judgment day, when all ungodly men will perish. . . . [A]nd then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise and the heavenly bodies will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be

*burned up. . . . But we are looking forward to God's promise of new heavens and a new earth afterwards, where there will be only goodness.*⁸

Feast of Harvest

Harvest is the close of each annual season. When all the crop has been gathered in and stored away in the barn, another summer has passed into history. Of the three great annual feasts of Israel,¹ only one, the Feast of Harvest, remains prophetically unfulfilled.

Passover has been perfectly fulfilled in the crucifixion of the Messiah and His glorious resurrection. **Pentecost** has been beautifully satisfied in the copious outpouring of the Holy Spirit both in the early centuries of the church and now in this final twentieth century. Only the **Feast of Harvest** remains. And in the regathering of Israel we see this closing feast in process of fulfillment. Jesus pointed out, ". . . When these things **begin** to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."²

In the generation in which we live, we have stood amazed before the unfolding of two prominent signs of His imminent return:

(1) Beginning around the turn of the present century, a revival of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit began. Since then, scores and then hundreds and then thousands and now hundreds of thousands have been baptized in the glorious Holy Spirit with speaking in other tongues as on the Day of Pentecost and through the first centuries of the early church. The Holy Spirit has been literally poured upon all flesh around the world.³

(2) Beginning likewise about the turn of the century, the Jews began to return to the homeland of their fathers.⁴ In 1917 there were about 90,000 Jews in Palestine. By 1948 their number had increased to 300,000. By 1967 their number had multiplied to 3,000,000. And the nation has continued to grow, having an estimated population of 3,4100,000 in 1975.⁵

Every Christian today can well lift his voice with the ancient watchword, Maranatha! Our Lord cometh!

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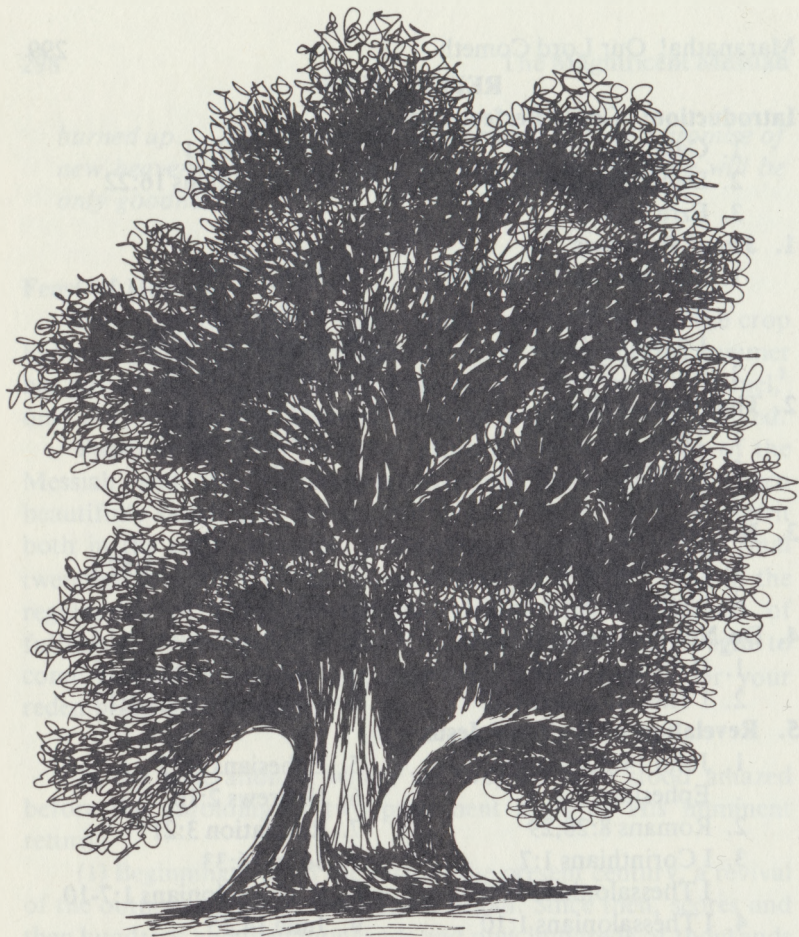
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That Old Olive Tree of Israel

"... [the mystery of Christ] Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:..." Ephesians 3:4-6.

"For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree." Romans 11:24

"The Royal Line of David will be cut off, chopped down like a tree; but from the stump will grow a shoot—yes, a new Branch from the old root. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him,..." Isaiah 11:1 L

Chapter Twenty-Four

This Mystery

or

The Grafting in of the Gentiles

Introduction: Abraham Was a Gentile

1. A Spiritual Covenant

2. The Israel of God

3. The Righteousness of Faith

4. Israel Stumbled Over the Messiah

5. Hath God Cast Away His People?

6. The Good Olive Tree

7. Children of Abraham

This Mystery

Abraham was born a Gentile in Ur of the Chaldees.¹ While still a Chaldean, he became justified before God by his faith in the word of Jehovah. As it is written, "And he [Abraham] believed in Jehovah; and he counted it to him for righteousness."² Jehovah pardoned his idolatry (paganism) because of his faith. And Abraham became "...the father of all them that believe,..."³ This fact is very significant. All them that believe as Abraham did have become Abraham's children, whether they be Jew or Gentile.⁴

Some fourteen or fifteen years after his justification by faith, long after Jehovah had declared him righteous and had made with him an everlasting Covenant, Jehovah gave to Abraham the seal of circumcision and Abraham became a Hebrew, and the Jewish nation was born.⁵ The Scriptures definitely present Abraham's justification by faith as a Gentile, many years before.

While Abraham was still a Gentile, before he had entered into the seal of circumcision, Jehovah told him that all the families of the earth should be blessed through him.⁶ In fact Jehovah promised that Abraham should be the heir of the world through the righteousness of faith.⁷ Therefore, the promise was made sure to all of Abraham's seed, to the Gentiles who would be justified by faith the same as Abraham had been, and also to the Jews, his earthly descendants.⁸ "That is what the Scriptures mean when they say that God made Abraham the father of many nations. God will accept all people in every nation who trust God as Abraham did."⁹ The Gentiles were included in the original Covenant with Abraham, before the Hebrew nation was born.¹⁰

Jehovah has always had but **one method of justifying sinners,**

whether they be Gentiles without the Law or Jews under the Law. "... [I]t is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to **all the seed**; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,...."¹¹ Otherwise we must accept Paul's emphatic alternative, "... God's promises... are meaningless, and faith is foolish."¹²

A Spiritual Covenant

The tragic mistake of men throughout the ages has been to reduce Jehovah's promises to an earthly and carnal realm. But Jehovah is neither earthly nor carnal. The unfathomable Jehovah who created the heavens and the earth is definitely spiritual. And all His thoughts and promises are spiritual.

Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. . . . It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: . . . Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting Elohim, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.¹

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit. . . ."²

Let us not make Jehovah, the Elohim of all the Scriptures, a carnal being. We cannot reduce God's thoughts and words to mere earthly things. His thoughts are spiritual and His words are eternal. "... [H]ow unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"³ Jehovah's Covenant promises to Abraham were spiritual, in keeping with His very nature.

But we mortals are carnal and earthly, for our thoughts are of this earth. How then does a spiritual God convey His thoughts to an earthly people? He must use man's language to be understood. Therefore all of God's promises to men have been couched or described on an earthly plane and set forth in man's human

experience. The spiritual promises of God have all had an earthly application. To Abraham Jehovah promised a numberless posterity and a land of his own. This promise was beautifully fulfilled through the many ages to the natural seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And their children, the Hebrew nation, inherited the Promised Land and continued to dwell there to the extent of their faith and obedience. But they forfeited God's blessings and were led away captive into all nations upon their blind rejection of their Messiah, Jesus. And now Jehovah has brought a remnant of this people, the Jews, back to the land of their fathers in this modern twentieth century, still in fulfillment of the promises.

But the material fulfillment of God's promises does not satisfy their spiritual content and intent. The prophets through the many ages foresaw the calling of the Gentiles as well as the Jews in fulfillment of the Covenant promises to Abraham. They foresaw the coming of the Messiah and His rejection by the earthly seed of Abraham, and the calling of both the Gentiles and the Jews who would believe.⁴

The Israel of God

Jacob's name meant "supplanter." But in prayer and supplication he wrestled with the angel of God and prevailed. "And he [Jehovah] said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."¹ Jacob exclaimed, "...I have seen Elohim face to face, and my life is preserved [redeemed]."² Hosea tells us that Jacob wept and made supplication. His wrestling was not merely corporeal but it was spiritual as well. Likewise all men should find times of wrestling in prayer with God. No man has sought the face of God in vain, but rather, Jehovah seeketh men who will worship Him.³

Jehovah called Jacob by that beautiful, spiritual name, Israel, meaning "prince with God," as a result of his faith in supplication and prayer. Jacob, a weak and frail human being, prevailed through faith with the almighty Elohim! It was a spiritual struggle; it bore a spiritual victory. And the nation that descended from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was called Jacob after the flesh and Israel after the spirit.⁴

There is no more gracious solicitation of God's favor for a people than the apostle Paul expressed in his letter to the Romans for Israel, his kinsmen in the flesh. He recounts their privileged position:

*... to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ [the Messiah] came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.*⁵

But he notes that the children of the flesh are not necessarily children of God. But the children of the promise are counted for the seed.⁶ Only those who have the faith of Abraham and of Isaac and of Israel are the true children of Israel. The apostle manifests deep feeling for all the Jews, but especially for Jews who believe. They are Jews, not only in the flesh but also in the spirit. They are the circumcision that is of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter only.⁷

The apostle marshals up these great truths of the Scriptures to confirm his stand. "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated [abominated]."⁸ God saw in Jacob and in his children after him that spark of faith that he loved. He also saw Esau's rebellious unbelief and that of his posterity after him. Esau was a profane and faithless man.⁹ Though he were Abraham's grandson, yet **his unbelief cut him off from the Covenant promises of Jehovah.**

The Righteousness of Faith

The prophet Habakkuk, a contemporary with Jeremiah, declared unequivocally, "... the just shall live by his faith."¹ This concept is basic in the Scriptures. As it is written, "And he [Abraham] believed in Jehovah; and he counted it to him for righteousness."² Abraham stands out through all the pages of history as the patriarch of faith, the Father of the Faithful. Saint Paul concludes that "... the promise, that he [Abraham] should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith."³

This was the good news (gospel) heralded by the Messiah when He came. As Saint Paul proclaimed, “This message [of faith in the Messiah] was preached first to the Jews alone, but now everyone is invited to come to God in this same way.”⁴ And Saint John added, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”⁵

The Law was not of faith, but of works, as Moses said, “Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am Jehovah.”⁶ But Nehemiah observed:

*... they dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, . . . and hardened their neck, and would not hear. . . . Nevertheless for thy great mercies' sake thou didst not utterly consume them, nor forsake them; for thou art a gracious and merciful God.*⁷

David chanted the words:

*Jehovah looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no not one.*⁸

And Isaiah protested:

*But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, . . . [W]e look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, . . .*⁹

The Scriptures assert that “. . . all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; . . .”¹⁰ “. . . God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.”¹¹

... [T]he Scriptures tell us that no one has ever yet kept God's laws; all have sinned by breaking them, and so no one is saved by obeying them. The only way left to get what God promised is

*through faith in Jesus the Messiah, and the promises are given to all who believe Him.*¹²

The conclusion to the matter is very simple. The Scriptures prove that none have a right to God's favor save through His wonderful grace, whether they be Jew or Gentile. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be saved."¹³

This is an amazing conclusion. God's grace has been extended to the unlikely and undeserving Gentile dogs, while the children of the kingdom have been turned away.¹⁴ Men who believe should note this well, as Paul affirmed, "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: . . ."¹⁵

*Well then, what shall we say about these things? Just this, that God has given the Gentiles the opportunity to be saved by faith, even though they really were not seeking God. But the Jews, who tried so hard to be right with God by keeping his laws, did not find his salvation. Why not? Because they were trying to be saved by keeping the law and being good instead of by depending on faith.*¹⁶

Israel Stumbled Over the Messiah

The Jews of Jesus' day were intensely religious. But tragedy of tragedies, they missed the righteousness of God which they sought. Why did they miss it? Because they sought righteousness, **not by faith but by the works** of the Law. They stumbled over that Rock, Jesus the Messiah. For the prophet Isaiah had said, "Therefore thus saith Adonai Jehovah, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste [or be confounded]."¹ Isaiah further affirmed, ". . . he [the Messiah] shall be for a sanctuary [to them that believe]; but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel. . ."²

For countless ages Jehovah had promised a Messiah that would save His people from their sins and make them righteous

before God. Those who believe, like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and the prophets, saw His coming with true delight. But when He came the church was strangely blind. The teachers of the Scriptures had become so much engrossed with their works of religious service and so filled with religious pride that they completely passed by Him. Their interpretation of the words of the prophets was only carnal and material. They stumbled over the meek and lowly Messiah.

The scribes and teachers of Jesus' day had their minds set on a mighty, militant prince. They categorically rejected the meek and lowly Prophet from Nazareth, riding into Jerusalem on a docile little donkey amid the hosannas of the multitude.³ They did not know the Spirit of their Jehovah Elohim that was in Christ Jesus. The psalmist had written, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner."⁴ They did not recognize Him. In their blind anger they condemned and crucified Him.

Therefore Peter proclaimed to the Jewish nation, "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. **Neither is there salvation in any other:** for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."⁵ Jesus Christ is that Rock. He is God's Chosen, the Messiah.

Hath God Cast Away His People?

Has God abandoned the Jews, Abraham's earthly children? Has God deserted the people of His Covenants and promises? They rejected and crucified the very Lord of Glory! And God's righteous judgment has destroyed their land, torn asunder their cities, burned their temple with fire, and scattered the nation to the four corners of the earth. Are they then lost and cast off forever?

Of course not! Paul wrote:

Remember that I myself am a Jew, a descendant of Abraham and a member of Benjamin's family. No, God has not discarded his own people whom he chose from the very beginning. Do you remember what the Scriptures say about this? Elijah the prophet was complaining to God about the

*Jews, telling God how they had killed the prophets and torn down God's altars; Elijah claimed that he was the only one left in all the land who still loved God, and now they were trying to kill him too. And do you remember how God replied? God said, "No, you are not the only one left. I have seven thousand others besides you who still love me and have not bowed down to idols!" It is the same today. Not all the Jews have turned away from God; there are a few being saved as a result of God's kindness in choosing them.*¹

Jehovah Elohim has not changed! His promises have not changed. His Covenants still stand. The Jews, Abraham's earthly children, "...are beloved for the fathers' sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."² God will not repent of nor change His gifts and His calling. Furthermore, the prophet Jeremiah wrote of Israel:

*Thus saith Jehovah, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, . . . If those ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also 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 all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith Jehovah.*³

And King David sang of the faithfulness of Jehovah, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."⁴

Saint Paul saw the salvation of individual Jews like men's being brought back to "...life from the dead..."⁵ "...[T]here are a few being saved as a result of God's kindness in choosing them."⁶ They constitute only a remnant of Israel, as "[Isaiah] also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: . . ." ⁷ And again, Isaiah set forth, "Except Jehovah Sabaoth had left

unto us **a very small remnant**, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.”⁸

What a pathetic situation! How tragic the blindness of this favored people. Isaiah cried:

*... they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. For Jehovah hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.*⁹

“... Most of the Jews have not found the favor of God they are looking for. **A few have**—the ones God has picked out—but the eyes of the others have been blinded.”¹⁰

The Scriptures foretold the calling of the Gentiles.

*First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But [Isaiah] is very bold and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.*¹¹

Finally, we believe, a revival is coming to the Jews, Abraham’s earthly people. As it is written, “... some of the Jews have set themselves against the Gospel now, but this will last only until all of you Gentiles have come to Christ—those of you who will. And then all Israel will be saved.”¹² A revival will break forth among the Jewish people and a host will own Jesus as their long-sought Messiah. He is preparing many Jewish hearts today for a revival in Israel!

The Good Olive Tree

The world is filled with wild olive trees. They are of little worth to God. They are the aggregate of godless men the world over. They are atheist or infidel. They are without God completely, or they are simply without faith. They correspond to the Amorites, Hittites, Girgashites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites whose cup of iniquity was overflowing.¹ They have no part nor

interest in the kingdom of God.

Romans 1:18 through verse 32 describes the foolish, darkened hearts of sinful, rebellious men: vile, reprobate, wicked, covetous, malicious, despiteful, proud; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; heathen, idolaters, blasphemers, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, boasters, and inventors of evil things. Surely the earthly descendants of Abraham should have no part in this useless and worthless wild olive growth. But they do. In tragic fact, "...God hath concluded them all [Jew and Gentile] in unbelief,..."² that He might deal with all on the basis of mercy alone. "...[F]or there is no difference:...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,..."³ The Messiah, the Lamb of God "...slain from the foundation of the world,"⁴ has brought the **wonderful offer** of mercy and forgiveness to whosoever believeth on Him,⁵ whether they are Jew or Gentile, bond or free, rich or poor, black, yellow, red, or white. The gospel is offered to all.

Saint Paul introduces the graphic thought of the good olive tree as representing the true Israel of faith. Most of the stock and branches have been broken off because of unbelief. But the stump and the roots are there, solid and sturdy. They represent the fathers: Abraham and Moses and King David and the prophets and the faithful of Israel. The stump and the roots are holy.⁶ They are the Israel of faith, the Church⁷ and kingdom of the living God. They represent the body of believing saints, the worthies of faith through the many ages past. All the promises and covenants of the mighty God are resident in them.

Isaiah prophesied, "THE ROYAL LINE of David will be cut off, chopped down like a tree; but from the stump will grow a Shoot—yes, a new Branch from the old root. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him,..."⁸ Thus Isaiah foresaw the coming of the Messiah, David's Son, springing forth from the old stump as a beautiful new Shoot or Branch.

"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."⁹ Thus the prophet continues his vision by the Spirit of the coming Messiah. The stump and roots are of the good olive tree. And from it springs forth the Messiah of Israel,

Jesus the lowly Prophet of Nazareth. Resting in His salvation is indeed glorious.

Now here is a most remarkable thing: through unbelief most of the natural branches have been broken off and in their place many branches from the wild olive trees have been grafted in. And these latter have become partakers of "...the root and fatness of the olive tree;..."¹⁰ In fact Jehovah is grafting into this good olive tree all those who "...call upon the name of the Lord."¹¹ He is grafting in both Jews (who really belonged there in the first place) and Gentiles. Both are grafted in on the same terms: repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; there is no difference.¹²

On the day of Pentecost the multitudes were pricked in their hearts when they realized that the Prophet, Jesus, whom they had crucified, was both Lord and Messiah. And they

said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, What shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ. . . ,and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as Jehovah our God shall call.¹³

Thus we behold the **goodness** and **severity** of God: goodness toward all them that believe whether they be Jew or Gentile, and severity toward the rebellious and unbelieving. Gentiles are cut out of the wild olive tree and grafted contrary to nature into the good olive tree, and Jews the natural branches are grafted back into their own olive tree.¹⁴ All this is done on the simple basis of faith in the Messiah.

Children of Abraham

In conclusion we must understand

... that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached [a long time before] the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.¹

Thus we understand that Jehovah told Abraham about this while he was still in Ur of the Chaldees, before he had left the land of his fathers and made his pilgrimage to Canaan.

“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.”² All the promises of sonship, including the promise of the Holy Spirit, and of the resurrection, and of life for evermore, belong to us. Both Jew and Gentile, we have been adopted into the great family and household of God. “And now that we are Christ’s we are the true descendants of Abraham, and all of God’s promises to him belong to us.”³

Herein is the mystery of the Church.

*And this is the secret: that the Gentiles will have their full share with the Jews in all the riches inherited by God’s sons; both are invited to belong to his church, and all of God’s promises of mighty blessings through Christ apply to them both when they accept the Good News about Christ and what He has done for them.*⁴

This is what our God has always planned to do through Jesus Christ, our Lord.⁵

We Gentiles are reminded that when we were without Christ, we were enemies of God and of His children, “. . .being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: . . .”⁶ But by His death on Calvary, the Messiah “. . .took the two groups that had been opposed to each other [the Jews and the Gentiles] and **made them parts of himself**; thus he fused us together [as] one new person, and at last there was peace.”⁷ We are both one in Christ Jesus.

Paul closed his letter to the Galatians with much feeling. See these welts on my shoulders and back and legs! See these scars on my cheeks and the sides of my head! These are the brand marks of Jesus Christ! “From now on please don’t argue with me about these things, for I carry on my body the scars of the whippings and wounds from Jesus’ enemies that mark me as his slave.”⁸

Paul has been writing of the deepest conviction of his life. There were those Jewish teachers claiming to be Christians who

went among the believers teaching that Christians must be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses in order to be saved. They insisted that Gentiles must become Jews through circumcision in order that they might enjoy the blessings of Christ. And they gloried in all the converts that submitted to their teachings.

And it should be remembered that the temple still stood in all its glory on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. The daily sacrifices of lambs and bullocks were diligently carried on by the priests. Every evidence was made to prevail that nothing had changed. The incident of Jesus' crucifixion was ignored. These temple services provided strong evidence in favor of the legalizing teachers of the Jews' religion.

But Paul's conviction was clear and positive.

*God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.*⁹

To be a Christian one must be crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, and resurrected a new person (born again) in Christ. When Jesus, the Messiah, the true Paschal Lamb of God, bowed His head on Calvary's rugged cross and cried, "It is finished,"¹⁰ and the angels of God tore asunder the veil of the temple from the top to the bottom,¹¹ the temple was through. Its services were rendered meaningless and void. A few years later the Roman armies actually tore it apart and burned it with fire. Then a few centuries later the Mohammedans under General Omar erected a heathen mosque on the site. The Mosque of Omar still stands there today. It is second in importance only to Mecca to the vast millions of Allah's worshipers.

Paul prayed earnestly for all Christian believers that they might know **who Jesus really is** and **what He has done**.¹² When men grasp the full identity of the man Jesus Christ, the mighty, majestic Messiah, the Son of almighty God; and when they comprehend His crucifixion as Paschal Lamb on that wretched altar called Calvary; and when they behold Him risen, triumphant over hell, death, and the grave, and seated at "... the right hand of the Majesty on high; ..." ¹³ they cannot but cry out with Thomas, "**My LORD and my GOD.**"¹⁴

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6. The Good Olive Tree

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Blowing the Shofar (Trumpet)

*“In the seventh month, in the first day of the month,
shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets,
an holy convocation.” Leviticus 23:24*

Chapter Twenty-Five

Israel's Sacred Calendar or Modern Israel

In God's Calendar of Events

Introduction: This Mystery

- 1. The Biblical Background**
- 2. Feast of Passover**
- 3. Feast of Pentecost**
- 4. Feast of Tabernacles**
- 5. Israel's Sacred Calendar**
- 6. Passover Fulfilled**
- 7. Pentecost Fulfilled**
- 8. Tabernacles Being Fulfilled**

Israel's Sacred Calendar

“...I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery,...”¹ wrote Paul, who prided himself as the Apostle to the Gentiles. But he was an Israelite by birth, and certainly most familiar with the fact of his nation's blindness. The long-awaited Messiah had come. But His people, Israel, were strangely blind. They knew Him not. In fact, they violently hated Him and His followers. So they rejected Him and even crucified Him.

Paul suffered much cruelty and persecution from these Jews. But he knew that Israel's blindness was only in part and that it would last only until the fullness of the Gentiles should be accomplished. Then, as the ancient prophets foretold, God would send a revival to Israel. “...There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:...”² “For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”³ This blindness has stood as a deep mystery both to the prophets of past centuries and to the Church during this age. But its termination is near at hand.

We, today, have witnessed a rebirth of national Israel. The struggle in the Middle East has emphasized this fact to all the world. A modern nation of Israel has sprung up in the fatherland of Palestine, though still in blindness and unbelief.

The Biblical Background

Abraham had two sons. The eldest, Ishmael, was born of an Egyptian slave woman. The younger, Isaac, was a child of promise, born of Abraham's beloved wife, Sarah. Ishmael became the father of the Arab nations while Isaac became the father of Israel. There

has been a feud between these two peoples, ever since Ishmael as a child and his slave mother were cast out of the home of Abraham. For Sarah had demanded, "...Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac."¹ The modern struggle between Arab and Israelite is of long standing—many centuries, even millenniums.

Isaac's son, Jacob, was a man of faith. Therefore, God renamed him Israel (meaning, "a prince with God"). Through famine, God sent Jacob with his twelve sons and their families into Egypt. There they dwelt and multiplied, but the Egyptians reduced them to slavery. For the better part of four long centuries they languished beneath the oppressor's lash. But Jehovah heard their weeping and saw their sorrow and tears, and in spite of their anguish He molded them into a nation, some 2,500,000 people at the time of the exodus. They were Abraham's children and heirs of the Covenant of promise.

Feast of Passover

The story of Israel's exodus from Egypt is one of the greatest ever told. Every move was symbolic of God's redemptive plan to be accomplished by the coming Messiah. God sent plagues upon Egypt and upon Pharaoh, terrible and grievous beyond description. After nine of these horrible plagues, Pharaoh demanded of Moses, "...Get thee from me, ...see my face no more; for in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die."¹ And Moses responded, "...Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more."

At the word of Jehovah, Moses instructed the people of Israel to prepare themselves a lamb for each household. God had said, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you."² God directed every family to slay its lamb on the fourteenth day of this first month at evening. The men should take of the blood with a bunch of hyssop and strike it on the two sideposts and upon the lintel of every home. And that evening the family should eat the flesh of their lamb roasted with fire. They should eat with their loins girded, their shoes upon their feet, and their staves in hand. They were to be ready to leave Egypt at a moment's notice. It was Jehovah's

Passover.

That night the death angel passed through the land and smote the first-born son in every household throughout all the land of Egypt but passed over every home where the blood had been sprinkled. At midnight a cry of tremendous anguish arose. There was a **dead son in every home**. There was a dead horse in every stable, a dead cow in every barn, a dead sheep in every sheepfold—the first-born of every creature throughout all Egypt was slain in that tragic hour. Pharaoh cried out against Israel, “. . . Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, . . . and be gone; . . .” And the Egyptians groaned, “. . . We be all dead men.”³

Israel as a nation arose at midnight and took her leave from the land of her bondage. She went out with all that she had, her children, her flocks, and all the goods the anxious Egyptians loaded upon her. The cloud of God's Shekinah appeared over her homes in Goshen and went before her.⁴ Her path was plain and unmistakable. Jehovah, in the glory cloud of divine presence, led the way. God led her, not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; but He led the people through the wilderness of the Red Sea. He deliberately directed them southward so that Pharaoh could say, “. . . They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.”⁵ God led them down the western bank of the Red Sea. He really put them into a corner from which they must cross the sea to escape Egypt and pursue their journey to freedom.

Pharaoh's heart was hardened. He saw a vast host of slaves slipping out of his grasp. So he gathered together his army and pursued after them and overtook them camped on the banks of the sea. The nation cried out against Moses, but Moses was unperturbed. He believed God. “. . . Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.”⁶

Moses stretched forth his rod at the word of the Almighty Jehovah, and the sea rolled back, opening up a channel a mile wide with great walls of water towering skyward on either side. Israel moved forward and marched across the bottom of the Red Sea on

dry ground. All night long, Israel marched so that at the break of dawn, this people had reached the other shore and were safe and secure on the other side.

During the hours of the night the glory cloud became a wall of darkness between the army of Pharaoh and the host of Israel. The former could not come near though they tried with all their might. As the morning sun arose, the tide of those walls of water was once more released and returned to its strength, overflowing the armies of Pharaoh and destroying them to a man. But Israel had passed through the depths of the sea. The Passover lamb had died in her stead and she had passed through the open grave--baptized beneath the flood tide of the great Red Sea. A new nation was born. Israel was resurrected from the depths of the sea, and God said, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you."⁷ God said that in this first month of each year through the ages to come, Israel should remember this Passover and her triumphant rebirth from the sea.

On the fourteenth day of the first month of every year, she should sacrifice the Passover Lamb, and on the sixteenth day, she should celebrate a feast of First Fruits of Harvest, in remembrance of that glad morning of resurrection triumph when the nation had emerged as the first fruits from that watery grave.

Feast of Pentecost

From the Red Sea, Israel traveled southward following the glory cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. What a sight! Two and one-half million slaves were now free! They were marching toward the Promised Land with their families and their flocks and all their earthly possessions. And the LORD GOD Jehovah, their divine Deliverer, led the way before them.

After seven weeks, on the fiftieth day (**Pentecost** means "fiftieth") from the Passover and her rebirth from the grave of the great sea, Israel encamped before Mount Sinai.¹ Moses went up and stood in the presence of Jehovah on the heights of the mount and received of the LORD two tables of stone on which were written the Ten Commandments, the Covenant Law of a holy God.

He then descended from the mount and deposited the Ten Commandments in an ark of shittim wood in the holy of holies of

the Tabernacle which he had built. Then the "...cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle."² Israel's magnificent God had literally set up His throne in the sanctuary in the very center of their encampment.

The Day of Pentecost, fifty days from Israel's miraculous deliverance from Egypt, became an annual memorial. It was to be remembered by an annual feast before Jehovah. God told Israel that they should remember it perpetually throughout their years **forever** as the day of First Fruits of the Harvest. It was never to be forgotten in Israel, commemorating the day in which God personally gave His holy Covenant Law to His chosen people.

Then, figuratively speaking, there followed a long, hot summer. For forty years Israel wandered in the wilderness because of her unbelief. She lived as a nomadic people dwelling in tabernacles made of skins and branches and boughs, thrown up as shelters wherever the cloud of Jehovah's presence chose to rest. For forty years, Israel sojourned in the wilderness lands, dwelling in tents and tabernacles. And in remembrance thereof,³ **at the close of the journey**, God gave Israel her third and last great national feast.

Feast of Tabernacles

a. Trumpets or Rosh Hashana

"... In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation."¹ "...[I]t is a day of blowing the trumpets unto you."² Dr. Edersheim states, "During the whole...[d]ay, trumpets and horns were blown in Jerusalem from morning to evening."³ "Instead of the mere blowing of the trumpets of the temple at the time of the offering of the sacrifice, it was 'a day of blowing of trumpets.'⁴ "...[T]hey began to blow at sun-rise and continued till sun-set."⁵

The first day of the seventh month was thus consecrated by Jehovah as a Feast of Trumpets. Its meaning was not explained. But it was observed by Israel through the centuries according to its divine ordination.

b. Atonement or Yom Kippur

Then on the tenth day of the seventh month, Israel observed the great Day of Atonement. The high priest offered sin offerings both for himself and for all the people. On this one and only occasion each year he pressed back the veil of the sanctuary and entered the holy of holies into the very presence of Jehovah God on His throne. There he sprinkled the blood of the sin offerings upon the mercy seat, making atonement for himself and for all the people.⁶

Moses gave specific instructions:

Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: . . . and ye shall afflict your souls, . . . For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. . . [A]nd ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.⁷

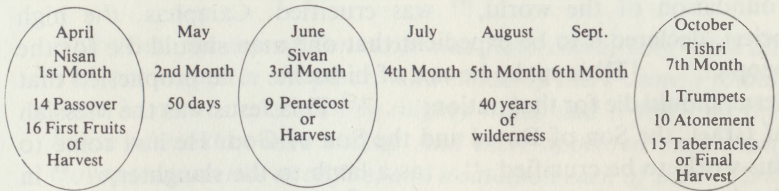
Thus through the many centuries the sanctuary services provided blood atonement and a symbolic entrance into the holy of holies. The people observed the day with fasting, repentance, and prayer.

c. Tabernacles or Sukkoth

“. . . The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be a feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD.”⁸ This was the final feast. It was climactic. It came at the end of the wilderness journey and every succeeding year thereafter. It marked the close of harvest, the end of the season. The fields were all garnered. The crops were in and the barns were full. Summer had ended and winter was at hand.

This was the third and last of the great annual festivals, at which every male in Israel was to appear before Jehovah in the place that He should choose. “Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles. . . after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine; . . .”⁹ And “. . . when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto Jehovah. . . .”¹⁰ The Feast of Tabernacles concluded the sacred calendar year.

Israel's Sacred Calendar



The civil calendar of Israel begins with Tishri (our October) and runs through the full year, whereas the sacred calendar¹ occupies only seven lunar months of the year, and corresponds roughly to April through October. This sacred calendar begins with Nisan (or Abib) in the spring and covers only the seven summer months. It consists of a “week of months” (seven months), evidently intended by its Author to be prophetic of the Messianic era. This calendar is ordained of God and well established in the Scriptures.

It provides for three annual religious feasts for the nation. “Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. . . the feast of unleavened bread. . . the feast of harvest. . . and the feast of ingathering. . . . Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord God.”²

During the fifteen hundred years from Moses to the Messiah, Israel celebrated these feasts in the first, third, and seventh months of each year. Not only so, but during the nearly two millenniums since the Messiah was crucified and Jerusalem destroyed and the Jews scattered over the earth, this people has continued in some form to celebrate these feasts before Jehovah. To this day, the orthodox Jew observes these feasts in the first and third and seventh months of each sacred calendar year. The dates of the three feasts are printed on many of our English calendars.

The validity of this sacred calendar has been proved by nearly thirty-five hundred years of observance by Israel. Its use from the days of Moses to this present hour confirms it as God’s prophetic calendar of events.

Passover Fulfilled

On the fourteenth day of the first month of Israel's sacred calendar, the man Jesus, as the Lamb of God "...slain from the foundation of the world,"¹ was crucified. Caiaphas, the high priest, declared it to be expedient that one man should die for the people. "...[T]his spake he not of himself: . . . he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; . . ." ² This Jesus was the Messiah of Israel, the Son of David and the Son of God. He had come to this world to be crucified, "...as a lamb to the slaughter, . . ." in the language of the prophet Isaiah.³ Thus Jesus was crucified according to the ancient pattern.

In the evening His body was taken down from the cross and laid away in a newly prepared rock-hewn tomb. The tomb was closed and sealed and a Roman guard was charged with its security. There His sacred body lay, cold in death, a prisoner of the grave, over the Sabbath day. But in conformity with the type, early on the morning of the sixteenth day, Jesus arose triumphantly, the First Fruits of the Resurrection. The Holy Spirit of God (sometimes called the Resurrection Spirit) went down into that grave and changed or resurrected the body of the Lord. And Jesus arose. The grave could not hold Him!

Jesus, as Israel's Messiah, was the Passover Lamb. He was the antitype of the Paschal lamb that was slain in Egypt so long ago. His resurrection was the first fruits of the harvest from the grave. As the nation of Israel had emerged in triumph from the grave of the Red Sea, so Jesus arose from the garden tomb in victorious majesty. The first annual feast of Israel was completely fulfilled and satisfied in the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

Pentecost Fulfilled

Fifty days sped swiftly by. The risen Jesus ascended into heaven and sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.¹ He had told His disciples not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Father: "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."²

On the fiftieth day from the Passover, on the sixth day of the

third month, Israel celebrated her second great feast of the year, Pentecost, the Feast of Harvest. On that day came the fulfillment of the type:

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.³

The Holy Spirit is the Resurrection Spirit that raised up Jesus from the grave.⁴ This same Holy Spirit is declared to be an earnest or guarantee of the resurrection of every Christian believer.⁵ To Moses God gave the Decalogue, His holy Old Covenant Law. Now, to His disciples, the glorified Messiah gave, not a law written on tables of stone, but the Holy Spirit who originally had written on those tables of stone: not a written code but the Author of that written code.⁶

Christians are deemed to have been crucified with Jesus, buried with Him in the tomb, and resurrected with Him on the third day. Then in conformity with the type, as it were, fifty days later, they are given God's holy New Covenant Law, written not upon tables of stone but upon fleshy tables of their hearts.⁷ In the baptism with the Holy Spirit, the Author of God's holy Law (the Holy Spirit) fills their hearts and lives with the divine presence. As the prophet promised, "... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;"⁸

This outpouring was in direct fulfillment of the Feast of Pentecost celebrated during the third month of every year in Israel. The Holy Spirit was poured upon the waiting Christian believers, the "first fruits of the harvest." This second feast of Israel had found **its perfect fulfillment** in the glorious outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Then, as in the type when she wandered forty years over the burning desert sands of Arabia following her rebellious unbelief at Kadesh-Barnea, Israel has wandered in the wilderness of exile.

Following that wondrous Pentecostal feast of Acts chapter two, the nation of Israel in her blindness and hatred of the man Jesus and His followers was scattered to the four corners of the earth. In 70 A.D. Jerusalem was destroyed. The temple was burned with fire and torn stone from stone. Since then, the nation has languished in exile for some nineteen hundred years, when, lo, we are thrilled to see before our very eyes the fulfillment of the third and last annual feast in God's sacred calendar. We should watch it expectantly.

Tabernacles Being Fulfilled

a. Trumpets or Rosh Hashana

Along about the turn of the nineteenth century the angel Gabriel evidently took up his trumpet and began summoning Israel to return from her exile to the homeland. In 1917 with 90,000 Jews living in Palestine, the British government issued its Balfour Declaration, making Palestine a national home of the Jews. Jerusalem surrendered to British General Allenby and was freed from the Turks.

Apparently Gabriel has continued to blow. Somehow the Jewish people have heard the trumpet sound and have continued their regathering to the land of their fathers. In 1948, with 300,000 Jews living in Palestine, Israel declared her independence. After a brief war with her Arab neighbors, her independence was established, though with precarious borders. Since then, Israel's population has multiplied to approximately 3,000,000, and the tension has continued to mount, with the Arab countries prepared determinately to once more invade Israel. In the words of the late Egyptian President Nasser, "We'll drive them into the sea."

On June 5, 1967, war broke out. But in a few short days, the fighting was over. Israel had driven Egypt back to the Suez Canal and had taken all of the Sinai Peninsula; she had shoved the armies of Jordan back to the river; she had driven the Syrians back beyond the approaches to the Sea of Galilee. In a matter of hours her armies might have been in the capital cities of Cairo, Amman, and Damascus. But she established her lines at Suez and the Jordan and beyond the Golan Heights. Israel had enlarged her land and reestablished her borders. But the Arab nations continue to breathe

out threatenings to drive her into the sea. They are building planes, tanks, and artillery, and generally rearming and training for further military conflict. But without question Israel has returned from exile to the land promised to her fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The nation is back and in possession of her ancient land.

b. Atonement or Yom Kippur

The apostle explained to the Hebrew believers that the annual services in the temple on the Day of Atonement were symbolical. The high priest took the blood of the sin offering into the holy place, pushed back the great veil, and entered the holy of holies. There under a cloud of burning incense he sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat.

The Holy Ghost thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect,¹

The Day of Atonement looked forward to the coming of God's perfect sacrifice for sin. The Messiah became that sin offering. After six horrible hours of suffering on Calvary's cross, Jesus the Messiah cried out, "It is finished." And He bowed His head in death. And when His sacred body was rent, ". . . behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; . . ." ² A door of access was thrown wide open into the holy of holies. Every blood-washed believer may now enter with boldness into the holiest of all. ³ The Messiah has effectively sprinkled His own blood before the mercy seat in atonement for every believing sinner.

Moreover the location of the Day of Atonement in the sacred calendar of Israel would appear to indicate that Jehovah had something special in mind for the nation of Israel. Surely this people is due for a revival. We cannot forget the Scriptures that state:

. . . blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of

*the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*⁴

The only doleful note sounded in the three great national feasts of Israel is found in the instructions for the observance of the Day of Atonement, on the tenth day of the seventh month. It was to be a day of **national affliction**.⁵ Israel fasted from the evening of the ninth day to the evening of the tenth day.

The three great national feasts of Israel were occasions for gladness, thankfulness, and rejoicing. Moses instructed Israel, "And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, . . . because Jehovah thy God shall bless thee, . . . therefore thou shalt surely rejoice."⁶ But the Day of Atonement was one of fasting and soul searching, ". . . and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto Jehovah."⁷

The Day of Atonement evidently typifies that crucial day in Israel's future of which Jeremiah prophesied, "Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; . . ."⁸ Daniel saw it as a ". . . time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: . . ."⁹ And the Master said, ". . . then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."¹⁰ John the Revelator calls part of it a gathering together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.

These Scriptures indicate that Israel as a nation is coming to a spiritual climax with Jehovah. We understand that there are hundreds of secret believers in Jesus among the Jews of Israel. When the nation is brought to her knees at Armageddon, there will be a remnant who will fall upon their faces and call upon the LORD, acknowledging Jesus as Israel's long-awaited Messiah.

c. Tabernacles (Harvest) or Sukkoth

Israel's sacred calendar concludes with the third great annual festival, the Feast of Tabernacles or Harvest. This is the grand finale of Israel's sacred year. The summer is past. The vineyards are garnered, the grain is in the barns, and the harvest is completed.

This feast can represent only the final regathering of a nation, and the sorrow and affliction through which it must pass in the conflagration of Armageddon to be centered in this crossroad of the world empires.

The Feast of Tabernacles marks the conclusion of Israel's sacred year, the end of the harvest, and the close of the age.¹¹ Of it Jesus said:

Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heaven shall be shaken: And then shall appear. . . the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

. . . Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When its branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation [very likely our generation that is looking on as these things are shaping up before our eyes] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.¹²

Adapting the Rev. Dr. A. Edersheim's thoughts, first published in 1873, we have this interesting outline:

ISRAEL'S SACRED HARVEST CALENDAR

1. The Passover Feast at the beginning of harvest
Looked back to the birth of Israel in their exodus, and
Forward to the true Passover sacrifice of Messiah.
2. The Feast of Pentecost during corn harvest
Looked back to the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, and
Forward to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of
Pentecost.
3. The Feast of Tabernacles or the Harvest-Thanksgiving
Looked back to their pilgrimage and dwelling in booths, and
Forward to the final harvest when Israel's mission should be
completed.¹³

“...[T]he fact remains, that the Feast of Tabernacles is the one only type in the Old Testament which has not yet been fulfilled.”¹⁴

After four long millenniums lighted by divine promises and prophetic utterance, the Messiah came.¹⁵ He was crucified, buried, and resurrected, thus fulfilling all the types and shadows contained in the Passover Feast. Then He ascended up to the Father’s right hand and poured forth the wondrous Holy Spirit upon His waiting disciples. During the two succeeding millenniums, He has fulfilled all the types and shadows contained in the Feast of Pentecost. He has built His Church and established His dwelling in the lives of redeemed men, thus concluding approximately six millenniums of sacred history. The seventh or sabbath millennium is right at the door.

The types and shadows contained in the third and last great feast, the Feast of Tabernacles or Ingathering, are being fulfilled in our generation. We are witnessing the final or concluding episode of divine prophecy. Jesus is coming again! Every Christian disciple should be waiting, earnestly expecting the sound of Gabriel’s trumpet¹⁶ and the glorious appearing of

The Magnificent Messiah

... who is the blessed and only Potentate,

THE KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS! ¹⁷

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"This is a book for those who are serious about knowing God's Word."

R. L. Cornwall, Pastor.

"The whole of history is incomprehensible without the Christ."

Ernest Renan, 1863.

Forward by C.M. Ward,
Mr. "Revivaltime." Revivaltime's
International Evangelist and
President of Bethany Bible College.

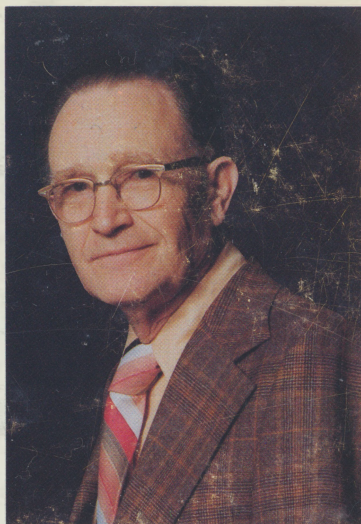
The present work results from an author, Atwood Foster, who has experienced a near lifetime of varied ministries: pastor, teacher, District Superintendent, national treasurer of his denomination, and corporate president of a multimillion dollar church financing program.

It was during the early years in the pastorate that Mr. Foster forged the basic concepts that form the reference structure of the inspirational messages of *The Magnificent Messiah*. During the many years of his church related ministries, the author shared with numerous congregations these meaningful messages of truth. As he ministered and studied, these topics expanded and deepened and have now taken form and shape in this present work: the result of more than 45 years of thought and prayer. Those years were filled with christian service:

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|-----------|--|
| 1931-1942 | Pastoral ministries in Washington and Oregon |
| 1937-1942 | District Secretary, Oregon District, Assemblies of God |
| 1942-1956 | Superintendent, Oregon District, Assemblies of God |
| 1956-1958 | General Treasurer, The Assemblies of God USA |
| 1950-1974 | Founder and President, Church Extension Plan |

Church Extension Plan was designed by Mr. Foster to help churches finance the purchase/construction of local church properties. He resigned after two years from the General Treasurer's office to give his full time to this program. During the twenty-four years of the author's tenure as president, some nine-hundred churches were recipients of its aid. Of these, the majority were in his denomination: however, some thirty other denominations were included in the scope of its services.

Who's Who in Religion, 1977, lists Rev. Foster.



*The
Magnificent
Messiah*