

THE GREAT BLUNDER OF THE CHURCH

In writing of “The Great Blunder of the Church” we are giving special attention to the great blunder of confusing and mixing the hope, calling and program of Israel, with the hope, calling and program of the Church, which is designated, “the Body of Christ.” Many have been taught the great blunder of mixing law and grace, which mixture produces a perverted gospel which subverts the soul. But the great blunder, to which we refer, which includes frustrating the grace of God by bringing into the reign of grace some of Israel’s program from under the reign of law, goes far beyond that. Many spiritual “grace” preachers, who would never intentionally mix law and grace, do mix the “kingdom of heaven” program, in the Synoptic Gospels and in the Book of Acts, with the program designated “the dispensation of the grace of God.” They also have failed to rightly divide the Word of Truth as to the different ministries of Peter and Paul, as stated in Galatians 2:7 to 9.

It must be obvious to any one who gives the matter even a little thoughtful consideration, that plenty of blunders have been made to bring about the present condition in Christendom, with the Christian Church divided into more than two hundred sects and factions, preaching messages that differ in many points, and carrying on many different spiritual and religious programs.

Inasmuch as the Lord Jesus Christ was, and is, omniscient, He is not surprised at the confusion, rivalry, competition and controversies in His divided Church; but surely it must grieve Him. According to His own words, “a house divided against itself cannot stand.” Matthew 12:25. Therefore, the visible church organizations are doomed to an awful fall. We thank our Heavenly Father that there are on earth, and in heaven many sinners saved by grace, who are joined to the Lord Jesus in an eternal and inseparable union, members of the one Body mentioned in Ephesians 4:4 and described in Paul’s Epistles. This true Church will be salvaged out of the wreck and ruin of Christendom.

Any Christian or Bible-reader, who does not see in the Scriptures the fact that there is but one Church of Christ in this particular “grace” period in which we live, and in which men have lived for nearly 1900 years, must, be incurably stupid. Hear God’s plain statement: “There is one Body.” Ephesians 4:4.

Romans 12:4 and 5:

“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

“So we, being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

Yes, God has but one true Bible Church in this particular age of grace, and the one Head of that one Body is the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God in heaven.

I Corinthians 12:13:

“For by one Spirit are we all BAPTIZED into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

Ephesians 2:15:

“Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain ONE NEW MAN, so making peace.”

“One Body”—“The New Man”—“Christ and His Church one Flesh”. Ephesians 5:30 and 31.

We repeat that the one and only Head of the one true Body (Church) is the Lord Jesus Christ Who is in the heavens. Ephesians 1:19 to 22. In striving to emerge from the dark ages

denominationalism undoubtedly has been unavoidable. In some instances it has safeguarded weak and ignorant Christians. But surely it has been the trick of Satan to cover up the glorious truths in God's Book concerning the hope, calling, program and destiny of the one true Bible Church which is the Body of Christ.

In speaking of the sad spectacle of the Church on earth, so hopelessly divided that nothing but the coming of Christ can ever bring His saints together, we are not referring to the division known as "Roman Catholicism" and "Protestantism." The Romanists claim over two hundred million adherents. They are so completely Judaized that the communicants have to be saved in spite of the perverted doctrines and unscriptural practices included in their ritualistic religion. There is utterly no hope for them except as the individual Romanist is delivered by the gospel of the grace of God from his mixture of Judaism, Christianity and paganism.

The ritualism of Romanism came as a result of that which began in the day of the apostles. Read the issue of the Jerusalem council, in Acts 15, and note the question in Acts 15:10 and the decision of that council in Acts 15:24 to 29. We quote the question.

Acts 15:10:

"Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?"

Then note the words from the Holy Spirit by the pen of Paul: "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Galatians 5:9. The ritualism, fanaticism, religious legalism and "salvation by works" movements in Christendom have come as a result of the leaven of Judaism, mixing Israel's program into the "grace" program which the risen Christ gave to Paul.

Paul speaks of himself, in the first person pronoun, about 1,200 times in the Bible. He had a most unique ministry, as he had a unique conversion, and very special dispensations. Note these words:

Ephesians 3:1 and 2:

"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward.

For several centuries Christians have been emerging from the corrupted Christianity of the dark ages and the progress has been very slow. Christians, trying to escape from one religious blunder, have gone into another, and denominationalism and tradition have much retarded the recovery of "Body" truth and hindered in the matter of obeying II Timothy 2:15 for the intelligent, Scriptural selection of God's spiritual program for members of the Body of Christ, so that members might walk worthy of the calling wherewith they are called. Ephesians 4:1.

Virtually every group, assembly or organization of Evangelical Christians has incorporated in its Church creeds and instructed its members to practice, something Israelitish; something of religion which the Lord never intended for the period of grace. The selection from the Bible of that which belongs to God's spiritual program and the rejection of that which does not belong is sometimes no easy task. But surely God has some intelligent Scriptural principle, in obedience to II Timothy 2:15, by which the Spirit-taught student of the Scriptures may know how to appropriate and apply the Scriptures to walk well pleasing unto the Lord. Quite frequently the members of one denomination, who have their established denominational program, are ungraciously intolerant with the members of another denomination, whose denominational creed and practices differ in some details, even though the members of both denominations may agree as to the inspiration of the Scriptures, the eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, salvation by faith in Christ's redemptive work and in other fundamental doctrines.

We shall not have time to go into all these details; but surely our reader will agree with us that, because of traditions and fear of men, nearly every organized group of Christians has arbitrarily, promiscuously, and capriciously selected, or rejected, from the Four Gospels, the Psalms and Prophets, and the Book of Acts, some of the messages and program of Israel which have no rightful place in the Body of Christ. From the earthly ministry of Christ and His apostles, and from the Church of the "Acts" period, they have selected or rejected such of those religious programs as seemeth good to them without apology, explanation, or intelligent Scriptural exegesis, and nearly one hundred percent of them have, intentionally, or unintentionally, carried over something that rightly belonged to Israel's God-given program, but which has no place in God's spiritual program for the Body of Christ. All the members of this Body are to see what is "the fellowship (dispensation) of the mystery." Ephesians 3:9.

The Great Blunder has resulted from many blunders. We name several of them. Men of God have taught that the Old Covenant began with the first chapter of Genesis and that the New Covenant began with the first chapter of Matthew. They have not learned that there is not one statement concerning the Old Covenant in the Book of Genesis, because the Covenant of Sinai, made "Old" by the death of Christ, was not given until Exodus 20. Christian men seem to have forgotten that the Nation Israel had its beginning about 1800 years before Christ and that the people who lived before Jacob's name was changed to Israel, were not Israelites. They have failed to note, and thereby be governed in their Church creeds, the division God mentions in Romans 5:13 and 14, and Galatians 3:19: "From Adam to Moses when there was no law (no Old Covenant)" and "the law (Old Covenant) was added to the Abrahamic Covenant until Abraham's Seed (Christ) came."

Christian men apparently have failed to note that both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant were Israelitish. Jeremiah 31:31 to 37.

Many Christian preachers have preached to God's people, under grace, in the Body of Christ, the earthly kingdom promises, made to Israel, belonging to an entirely different dispensation.

Christians have for centuries been taught that Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, John the Baptist, Peter and Paul all belonged to the same Church. Their preachers and teachers have failed to differentiate between Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of Israel in Palestine, and Paul's mystery, "Christ in you the hope of glory." Acts 2:22 and Colossians 1:24 to 27. Many of them have overlooked the fact that Jesus on earth was Israel's minister of the circumcision, sent only to Israel, made under the law to redeem Israel. Romans 15:8; Matthew 15:24; Galatians 4:4 and 5.

Many of them have failed to recognize the transition period of the Book of Acts, the place of Israel in the Book of Acts, and the very important truth of Galatians 2:7 to 9. We quote these verses:

Galatians 2:7 to 9:

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me (Paul), as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter:

(For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the Same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles) ;

And when James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

THE KINGDOM GOSPEL AND GRACE

As Jesus Christ, on earth, was a minister of the circumcision, sent only to Israel, and was born King of the Jews (Matthew 2:2), we find these words in the first verse of the first Record of His earthly ministry “The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.” Matthew 1:1. And although in Luke 3:23 to 38, we find the genealogy of Mary back to Adam, yet we learn in Luke that Christ was sent to the sons and daughters of Abraham. Luke 13:16 and Luke 19:9. Christ did not speak of Adam and the covenants God made with man before the circumcision of Abraham. In the first and second chapters of Luke we learn that Christ was born of the seed of David, in the City of David, in the house of David, to take the throne of David, to fulfill the promises which God made to Abraham and David concerning Israel. Luke 1:67 to 80 and Luke 2:27 to 32. The gospel of the kingdom is mentioned in Matthew 4:23; Matthew 9:35, and Matthew 24:14, and in Mark 1:14, and Luke 9:6. “The kingdom of the heavens” is mentioned more than 30 times in Matthew. This kingdom had to do primarily with Israel established in their own land under their true King David. The kingdom message and program of Matthew 10:6 to 8 will not fit into the “dispensation of the grace of God” which Christ committed unto Paul (Ephesians 3:1 and 2) and the “all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies” for members of the Body of Ephesians who are seated in the heavenlies in Christ. Ephesians 2:5 and 6 and Ephesians 1:3 and 4. There is a great difference between the gospel of II Timothy 1:9 and 10 and “the gospel of the kingdom.” Compare Matthew 10:6 to 8 with II Timothy 1:9 to 11.

Matthew 10:6 to 8:

“But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely ye have received, freely give.”

II Timothy 1:9 to 11:

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” Whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”

Think of the confusion and failure that would result if an evangelist should try to carry out in this day of grace the program of Matthew 10:6 to 8.

The kingdom of heaven, mentioned in Matthew 10:6, was not given to Gentiles in Christ before the world began; but was promised Israel after Abram was circumcised. In this period of grace the evangelist preaches eternal life through faith in the crucified and resurrected Christ, and then the pastors and teachers teach the members of the Body of Christ to walk by faith and not by signs. No “grace” messenger would preach for this dispensation, “heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give.” Matthew 10:8.

In the gospel of the kingdom, the King, David’s throne, and Israel restored, are in view. The gospel of grace, the gospel of the uncircumcision, is a grace message for the salvation of individual sinners who were once aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers of the Covenant of Promise. Ephesians 2:8 to 13. The nations are yet to be brought to God by the preaching of “the gospel of the kingdom.” Zechariah 8:23; Isaiah 61:19 and 20. The “kingdom” age is to follow this present age. Under the New Covenant all Israel is to know the Lord.

Hebrews 8:8 and 10; Romans 11:26. This is to be for the fathers' sake (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob). Romans 11:27 to 29.

While it is true that no sinner, since the creation of man, has been saved apart from the shed blood of Christ, it must be seen that "the gospel of the kingdom" and "the gospel of the circumcision" are linked together. Peter had the keys of the kingdom of heaven and the gospel of the circumcision. Matthew 16:17 and 18; Galatians 2:7 and 9.

Before and after the death of Christ Peter was given the task of preaching to circumcised Israelites. Matthew 10:5 and Galatians 2:8 and 9. He did preach to one company of God-fearing, Jew-loving, praying Gentiles. Acts 10:2 and 22. Note how different his message to those Gentiles and Paul's messages to Gentiles. Why? Because the Gentiles were different and because Peter had the keys to the kingdom of heaven and the gospel of the circumcision, while Paul had the dispensation of the grace of God and the gospel of the uncircumcision.

Acts 10:34 and 35:

"When Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him."

Titus 3:5 to 7:

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit; Which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ offer Saviour."

In the Book of Acts there is no record that Peter, or any of the Twelve, preached outside of the land of the circumcision, or, with the exception of the household of Cornelius, to any but the circumcision. If they did for a while, Galatians 2:7 to 9 brought that ministry to an end. This has reference to the "Acts" period.

Thus we see, from the day Abram was circumcised, about 1893 B.C. (Genesis 17), until Cornelius was saved (Acts 10), until the Holy Spirit said, in Acts 13:2 "separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them," both Israelites and Gentiles received blessings from God on the condition of circumcision. Therefore the gospel of the circumcision takes us back to Genesis 17:6 to 16, about 1893 B. C.

But then we have the gospel of the uncircumcision, the gospel of reconciliation, and the calling according to God's grace and purpose in Christ before the foundation of the world. Galatians 3:8 and 2:7; II Corinthians 5:17 to 21; II Timothy 1:9 and 10.

Note the words to Paul in Acts 26:16:

"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." Here we note that Paul received his revelations on the installment plan. The student of the Scriptures must recognize the principle of progressive revelation (confined to the limits of the Bible) and see how new revelations from heaven may supplement Divine truth previously revealed, or may supersede it. This should show us the fallacy of red-lettering the words which God spoke in His Son in Matthew, Mark and Luke, as though these words were more important for the members of Christ's Body than the messages of Romans, Ephesians, Colossians and other Books. The words which Christ, from heaven, gave Paul for the members of His Body are as much inspired as are the words of Jesus in the Gospels and are equally as important for the obedience and practice of believers in this day of grace. In fact, we dogmatically affirm that all Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, should be studied in

the light of Romans, Ephesians and Colossians, if we would rightly divide and rightly appropriate and apply the Word of Truth.

SOME DISPENSATIONAL QUESTIONS

We might ask many questions of men of God who have apparently made little or no effort to give any Scriptural explanations as to the seeming contradictions and discrepancies in the Bible. In the interpretations and applications of the New testament Scriptures by denominational church-leaders, the Bible is left with many seeming contradictions and discrepancies.

We trust these questions will provoke our readers to something more than a passing thought.

1. Why did Christ instruct His apostles in Matthew 16:20, not to testify to Israel that He was Christ, or their Messiah, and afterward rescind that order? Acts 2:36. Acts 9:13. Acts 17:3 and Acts 18:5.
2. Why did Christ denounce His people Israel as “serpents” and “vipers” in Matthew 23:33 to 39, and then, after His death, have Peter address them so tenderly in Acts 3:17 and 18 and 25? Open your Bible and compare these two portions of the Word of God. Note Matthew 23:33—”ye serpents . . . ye generation of vipers” and then note Acts 3:25: “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.”
3. Why did the Lord permit Israel to remain protected and preserved by His Covenant, protected by Rome, receiving the favour of Rome all through the thirty years covered by the Book of Acts? During those years Israel had access to the Temple and Jerusalem. Their high-priest and priests continued in charge. This was after Christ pronounced His awful judgment upon them.
4. What is the meaning of God’s message in Acts 3:19 to 21, inviting Israel to repent so that they might enjoy the kingdom and the kingdom blessings promised to Israel by the Old Testament prophets? Surely Peter was not here telling individual Israelites to be saved by grace and become members of the Body of Christ?
5. Why did Peter declare, in Acts 5:29 to 31, that Jesus Christ had been raised from the dead to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins? Where did the Gentiles come in? Does this not prove that the “far off” of Acts 2:37 are the “far off” Israelites of Daniel 9:7?
6. Why was Paul chosen to be the Apostle to the Gentiles and sent out after Peter preached to one company of Gentiles, the household of Cornelius? And why did Christ give Paul’s gospel to him by special revelation and send him to Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy? In other words; why Paul? Acts 13:46. Romans 11:11 and 13. Galatians 1:11 to 18. We repeat: “why Paul; if Paul was chosen to carry on with Peter’s gospel and the same program?”
7. Is it not a fact, that because of the prayer on the cross for Israel, “Father forgive them, for they know not what they do,” God gave Israel the opportunity to commit the UNPARDONABLE sin against the holy Spirit, in the Book of Acts period as they had committed the PARDONABLE sin against the Son of man when they had Him crucified? Matthew 12:31 to 33.

8. Why did the Lord tell the Twelve Apostles to remain in Jerusalem and the Apostle Paul to get out of Jerusalem? Acts 8:1 and Acts 22:17, 18 and 21.
9. Why was it, that some years after Christ told the Twelve to disciple all nations and preach the gospel to every creature, they accepted Paul's instructions to limit their preaching to the circumcision? Matthew 28:19 and 20. Mark 16:14 to 16. Galatians 2:9. Who went into all the world to preach to the nations? Colossians 1:6. I Timothy 2:5 to 7. II Timothy 4:17.
10. In the light of these questions and the Scriptural answers, is it not a fact that the Christian preacher, who preaches that the Nation Israel was set aside before Peter, with the Eleven, preached on the day of Pentecost, doth greatly err, not knowing the Scriptures? Why Acts 13:40 and 41, "Beware", if it had already happened?
11. Why, after the words of Christ, in John 12:37 to 42, does God grant to Israel the privilege of repenting for same time after the day of Pentecost, and for seven or eight years restrain His apostles from preaching to Gentiles? Note the similarity of judgment in John 12:37 to 42 and Acts 28:25 to 28, and the delay in execution until after the "Acts" period had passed.
12. Why was there, during the "Acts" period, one order for the Jews that believed and another order for the Gentiles that believed? Acts 21:18 to 20. Acts 21:24 and 25. Acts 15:19 to 25. And why, during that period, did Paul become as one under the law to them who were under the law, and as one not under the law to Gentiles? I Corinthians 9:20. Read Matthew 23:33 to 39 and then answer, "why was God's order 'to the Jews first'" during Acts?
13. Why is it that so many church-leaders have been so influenced by denominational creeds and so blinded by tradition that they have neither taught nor believed Romans 11:25? "that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in?" And then what? Israel saved. This truth is called a "mystery" or a "secret". But it has not been a secret since the truth of Romans 11 was preached.
14. Why is it that men of God, considered able Bible-expositors, have not seen the significance of God's judgment upon Israel recorded in Acts 28:25 to 28 about 63 A.D., about thirty years after most Bible teachers have dated the fall of Israel? And why does the "Acts" period close before the acts of Paul have ended?
15. Why is it that very, very few church-leaders, pastors or teachers, have made any effort to obey Ephesians 3:9: "and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ?" And why were about half of Paul's Epistles written before the "Acts" ended and about half thereafter?
16. What intelligent Bible exegesis can Christian preachers give to proves that the Pentecostalists are Scripturally right or wrong in their endeavor to recover for the members of Christ's Body the tongues, healings, signs, miracles, and visions of the Book of Acts? Is there no Scriptural antidote for their fanaticism? Is there no cure for their religious disease? Is, or is not, the message and spiritual program of Peter, in Acts, for the Church today? Surely it must be admitted by every thinking person, if there was no change in God's Divine program after the "Acts" period closed, the Pentecostalists are the only Christians who are making any effort to carry out the commission and program of Mark 16:15 to 18 and to perpetuate the message and acts of the apostles and Christians of the "Acts" period.

Dispensationalism is the only cure for the doctrinal blunders of the Church. Some “dispensationalists” have gone to such extremes that their remedy is worse than the disease. This remedy, sometimes called “Bullingerism” or “Hyperdispensationalism,” leaves the student with just as many blunders.

On the other hand, the generally accepted dispensationalism of those who have accepted and are propagating the dispensational divisions of the Plymouth Brethren, have no cure for Pentecostalism, inasmuch as these Plymouth Brethren Premillenarians begin the Body of Christ, “the dispensation of the mystery,” “the dispensation of the grace of God,” before Saul of Tarsus was converted, before he received his revelation of grace from heaven, before the dispensation was committed to him. These teachers, with such teachings, are utterly helpless to render any Scriptural aid to those who have been led into the Pentecostalist delusions. They can offer criticism and condemnation, but no Scriptural corrective.

These Plymouth Brethren “dispensationalists” are in charge of the leading Bible schools and although they are spiritually and Scripturally sound in the fundamentals of the Christian faith, they have mistaught so many of their students dispensationally and have such a stereotyped program that they feel they cannot afford to change from their error at this late day. Such a change would involve a confession of wrong teaching; such a confession requires much grace and humility. So what? So they will continue to teach what they have been teaching.

The Baptists are in control of the Fundamentalists and their name must be defended. They must continue to blunder so they can continue to be Baptists. And so the tongues, healing and sign movements will thrive and continue as a menace to Christians.

Now we have observed that all of these fallacies and failures have come because of the great failure to follow Paul all the way to his last revelation and completely deliver the “grace” message from Israel’s message and program.

We are going into this study in detail, under the three-fold heading of: “Circumcision,”—“Baptism,”—“The Lord’s Supper.”

CIRCUMCISION BAPTISM AND THE LORD’S SUPPER

Circumcision began when Abram’s name was changed to Abraham, about 1693 B.C. Abram was at that time 99 years of age. Genesis 17:24.

Most Christian preachers seem to believe that baptism began with John the Baptist. Matthew 3:3 to 11. But the Greek word (baptismos), in Hebrews 9:10, should be translated “baptism.” Baptisms, ceremonial washings, had been practiced in the religion of the Jews for about 1500 years, at the time John the Baptist baptized with water that Christ might be made manifest to Israel. John 1:31. “Leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ . . . of the doctrine of baptisms”. Hebrews 6:1 and 2.

The Lord’s Supper was instituted not many hours before Christ was nailed to the cross. It was instituted at the time of Israel’s Passover. Matthew 26:19 to 29. “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.” I Corinthians 5:7. All Judea went out to be baptized of John. Matthew 3:5 and 6. Only the Apostles were present when the Lord’s Supper was instituted. John’s water baptism, with repentance, was a requirement for the Divine blessing of God upon His Covenant people. This Covenant was called also the Covenant of Circumcision. Acts 7:8. Only circumcised people were baptized. It was to this people that John was sent. Luke 1:16 and 80. John 1:31. If we have Scriptural authority for saying that John the Baptist preached a salvation message to individual

Israelites, we have Scriptural authority for stating that John's water baptism was essential for salvation. On the other hand, the Apostles did not eat the Lord's Supper that they might be saved; for the Lord had already said, even to the Seventy, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven. Luke 10:20. Concerning the Apostles and others, Christ had given them eternal life. John 17:2.

Water baptism and the Lord's Supper are never linked together and called "ordinances" for the Body of Christ. The word "ordinances" in I Corinthians 11:2 is "paradosis", "traditions."

Let us keep in mind the fact that Christ, on earth, did not give eternal life, or call to be His disciples, any uncircumcised or unbaptized Israelites. Christ Himself was circumcised and baptized for He was the Minister of the Circumcision with an Israelitish confirmation ministry. Romans 15:8.

CONCERNING CIRCUMCISION

With God circumcision was something more than a worthless religious rite. Moreover, the study of circumcision in the Scriptures requires more than a superficial study. Physical circumcision was symbolic of spiritual circumcision. The physical ceremony, cutting off the flesh, therefore, spoke of the Divine work by which God deals with the flesh of the believer. The flesh is always against the Spirit. These two are contrary one toward the other. Galatians 5:17. "They that are in the flesh (sinners) cannot please God." Romans 8:8. Saints that walk in the flesh do not please God.

When you have read this message you will agree that the study of circumcision is no simple lesson.

We quote a verse of Scripture which we dare say has had very little serious consideration or prayerful study;

Colossians 2:11:

"In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ."

In what sense is the believer circumcised spiritually by the circumcision of Christ? In the very same sense that his old man was crucified with Christ when the believer received his spiritual baptism into Christ and experienced the baptism burial of Colossians 2:12:

"Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead."

Think of the many servants of the Lord who have covered up the blessed truth of Colossians 2:12 by reading water into it. This is altogether contradictory to the spiritual truth that the Lord would teach members of the Body with respect to religion in Colossians 2:8 to 18.

The context of Colossians 2:12, and the language of that verse, should prove to any sane and spiritual Christian that if the circumcision of Colossians 2:11 is Divine, and not made with hands, so the baptism of Colossians 2:12 is the work of God and has nothing whatever to do with work by the hands of men.

As physical circumcision was demanded by God and practiced by God's people until the time came for the believer's spiritual circumcision and the revelation as to the meaning of that spiritual circumcision, so physical baptism was demanded, preached and practiced before God's time was at hand for the believer's spiritual baptism and the revelation of its meaning. Because of the Jews, Cornelius was baptized after he believed. Acts 10:41 to 47. Because of the Jews, Timothy was circumcised after he believed. Acts 16:3. But let us remember that both physical

baptism and physical circumcision were given by God before members of Christ's Body received spiritual baptism or spiritual circumcision.

THE CIRCUMCISION AND BAPTISM OF CHRIST

Perhaps, we understand the spiritual baptism of Christ better than we understand the spiritual circumcision of Christ. We often hear zealous baptizers instructing their disciples to follow the Lord Jesus in baptism; but never do they urge them to follow the Lord Jesus in circumcision. We have learned from Colossians 2:11 and 12 that the believer needs the circumcision as much as he does the baptism. But the subject of circumcision has been sadly neglected. And this is largely responsible for some of the blunders that we are mentioning under the general heading, "The Great Blunder of the Church."

The Saviour received His name "Jesus" when he was circumcised physically: "And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, His name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb." Luke 2:21.

Now let us note the two baptisms of Christ—His "water" baptism and His "death" baptism.

Luke 3:21:

"Now when all the people were BAPTIZED, it came to pass that Jesus also being BAPTIZED, and praying, the heaven was opened."

Luke 12:50:

"But I have a BAPTISM to be BAPTIZED with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?"

Which came first with Christ? His physical baptism with water. But what spiritual benefit does man receive because of Christ's water baptism or where is the Scriptural proof that the believer, saved by grace, without religion, will in any way be benefited spiritually by following Christ to the water font or tank, river or lake?

By which baptism of Christ is the believing sinner saved? By Christ's death baptism. Luke 12:50. After Christ's death baptism He was buried (perhaps not down in the ground but above the ground). Then He arose and sat down in the heavenlies.

The believer of Romans 6:3 to 10 has been baptized into the death of Christ. He has been buried by baptism with Christ. He has been raised to walk in newness of life. His old man was crucified. Any student of the Bible, who knows even in part, "the dispensation of the grace of God," which was committed unto Paul for the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:1 and 2), knows that no man can baptize his fellowman into the death of Christ. He knows full well that that baptism is spiritual and Divine and not in any way with human hands. The human mouth undoubtedly helped to bring it about. II Corinthians 3:6 to 8.

Now we, in grace, are agreed that water was not needed either before the believer was baptized into Christ's death or after he was baptized into that death to in any way help to bring about that baptism into death. Therefore, they who teach water baptism as essential to produce the spiritual benefits of Romans 6:3 to 18, are unscriptural. Equally unscriptural are those who teach that water baptism, after the believer's baptism into the death of Christ, is necessary to make that Divine baptism valid or more efficacious and real, or to prove to the believer or the world that that Divine work is genuine. A believer's holy walk is his witness to the world that he has been baptized into the death of Christ and raised to walk in newness of life. His water baptism proves nothing to the world.

This goes to show that Christians who use water today do not understand Romans 6:3 to 10 or Colossians 2:11 and 12. They simply do not know what Scripture to quote to prove their baptism theory and why they are baptizing. Their best answer is “denominational tradition.” It is a game of follow the leader instead of obeying II Timothy 2:15.

If the sinner really believes the gospel of redemption by the death and resurrection of Christ, he is immediately crucified with Christ, dead with Christ, buried with Christ, raised with Christ, and seated in the heavenlies with Christ. The very best way to convince the world of this identification and new life is for the believer to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called. Water can neither aid in thus identifying the believing sinner with Christ in His crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection or can “no water” in any degree prevent him from thus being identified. Every water baptism doctrine and practice today is only religious fallacy.

Physical circumcision could as easily be read into Romans 6:3 to 17 as could physical baptism. Physical circumcision will do as much for any believer today as will physical baptism.

Now compare Romans 6:4 and 6 with Colossians 2:11 and 12 and note the same truth. Let us note something of the meaning of circumcision and baptism.

Romans 6:4 and 6:

“Therefore we are buried with Him by BAPTISM into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” “Knowing this, that our old man is (was) crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

Colossians 2:11 and 12:

“In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with Him in BAPTISM, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead.”

The sinner’s need is Christ’s circumcision and Christ’s baptism. Christ is in heaven and can neither physically circumcise nor baptize any person on earth. Since His “grace” revelation from heaven, to and through the Apostle Paul (who was sent not to baptize—I Corinthians 1:17), no believer has needed the physical symbolic cutting off of the flesh or the symbolic washing away of sin. Man’s need is only Christ’s circumcision and Christ’s baptism not made with hands.

We shall go into this in detail in dealing with water baptism.

FROM ADAM TO ABRAHAM

But now for Scriptural light on circumcision. We have already learned that no one of God’s servants from Adam until Abram was 99 years old was circumcised. Abram was circumcised about 2100 years after Abel was declared righteous without circumcision. Circumcision of the flesh had a very definite time of beginning. That time is recorded in Genesis 17. We quote,

Genesis 17:4 to 14:

“As for Me, behold My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish My Covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee and to thy seed after thee, the land

wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep My Covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is My Covenant, which ye shall keep, between Me and you and thy seed after thee: Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the Covenant betwixt Me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house or bought with money, of any stranger which is not of the seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and My Covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting Covenant. And the uncircumcised man child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My Covenant.”

Genesis 17:24 to 26:

“And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son.”

Undoubtedly the Presbyterians and others would never have started off with their fallacy, teaching that sprinkling takes the place of circumcision, if they had carefully studied Romans 4:10 to 12. Let us look into these verses.

Romans 4:10 to 12:

“How was it then reckoned: when he (Abraham) was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also. And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.”

Abram was called in uncircumcision. When? Abram was called and declared righteous by faith 430 years before Jehovah gave Israel the Ten Commandments, the carnal ordinances, the divers baptisms and the meats and drinks. Galatians 3:17; Hebrews 9:10. Abram received the promise, the Covenant, the gospel from God 430 years before Jehovah and Israel entered into that Covenant at Sinai, which was afterward made “Old.” Hebrews 8:7 to 11.

Abram was neither a Jew nor an Israelite. He was declared righteous in uncircumcision. God would not permit the promised son, Isaac, to be born while Abram was Abram in uncircumcision. Isaac was born one year after uncircumcised Abram became circumcised Abraham, and Isaac was circumcised when 8 days old, as were Christ, Saul of Tarsus, and others. Philippians 3:5.

“For Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was an hundred years old when his son Isaac was born unto him. Genesis 21:2 to 5.

Abraham was 75 years of age 430 years before the law was added to the gospel. Galatians 3:8, 17 and 18; Genesis 12:4. We quote,

Galatians 3:6 and 8:

“Even as Abraham (Abram) believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.”

“And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed.”

Galatians 3:17 and 19:

“And this I say, that the Covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.”

“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hands of a Mediator.”

We can never understand the truth of the Lord concerning God’s gospel and God’s spiritual program for the Body of Christ, “the dispensation of the grace of God,” until we get the meaning of Galatians 3:8 and Galatians 2:7. Note these two verses. We shall refer to them later, but here they are;

Galatians 3:8:

“And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached BEFORE the gospel unto Abraham, saying, in thee shall many nations be blessed.”

Galatians 2:7:

“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the UNCIRCUMCISION was committed unto me, (Paul) as the gospel of the CIRCUMCISION was unto Peter.”

Note the “before” of Galatians 3:8. Before what? Before the law was added to the promise. Before the Covenant (Old) was added to the Covenant of Promise. The added “Law” Covenant did not annul either the Covenant that God made with uncircumcised Abram or the Covenant that He made with circumcised Abraham. Galatians 3:17.

How important it is to know the difference between “Abram” and “Abraham.” Abram and Abraham, the same man, but we must distinguish between God’s Covenant with this man as Abram and His Covenant with him as Abraham. It is because churchmen have failed to do this that Christians have been confused concerning the doctrine of Abraham’s seed and children. Before the law (430 years) God preached the gospel to Abram. The Twelve Apostles were custodians of the gospel of the circumcision through Abraham and Isaac.

Galatians 2:7 to 9:

“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me (Paul), as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter: (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles) And when James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hands of fellowship, that we should go to the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.”

The Twelve never heard the gospel of the uncircumcision of Galatians 3:8 and Galatians 2:7 until they learned it from Paul. When? Galatians 2:1 and 2. “Fourteen years after.” This was more than fourteen years after Paul was converted. I urge you to read many, many times Galatians, chapters 1 and 2.

If Abram was called and declared righteous at 75 (Genesis 12:4) and was circumcised when he was 99 years old (Genesis 17:24), he was a righteous man 24 years before he was a circumcised man. But let us again be taught the truth that Abram, the Gentile, was declared righteous in uncircumcision. He must, of necessity, have been (as Abram) an uncircumcised Gentile in order that Galatians 3:8 and 2:7 might be true. In justifying Abram, the Gentile, in uncircumcision 24 years before he became circumcised Abraham, the Scriptures foresaw the

justification of Gentiles of Paul's day, and our day, without circumcision, baptism or any kind of religious ceremony. Abram, the uncircumcised, had no religion. Neither has any member of the Body of Christ, under grace, Scriptural right to any religion.

If it could be proved that baptism took the place of circumcision (and it positively can not), then it could be proved by Galatians 3:8 that baptism was for only the flesh descendants of Abraham, the circumcised, and not for the Gentiles saved by the gospel of the uncircumcision. Certainly Gentiles baptized during the "Acts" period were not baptized because baptism took the place of circumcision.

CIRCUMCISION BEFORE THE LAW

The law was given at Sinai about 1492 B.C. Abram was circumcised and circumcision instituted by God about 1893 B.C. Think of the year of the Chicago World Fair—1893 A. D.

Note these words spoken by Christ on earth:

John 7:22 and 23:

"Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision: (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

If a man on the day received circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at Me because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?"

Here we note that circumcision belonged to two Covenants; the Abrahamic and the Mosaic (Old). But we shall later see why circumcision was not abolished while Jesus Christ was on earth, and why it was carried over into the "Acts" period.

Now let us read the words spoken by Stephen to the Jews who were guilty of the murder of the Prince of Life.

Acts 7:8:

"And He gave him the Covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs."

These particular children of the Covenant, addressed by Stephen, were all circumcised in the flesh, but they were uncircumcised in heart. (Acts 3:24 and 25; Acts 7:51). Here the Holy Spirit makes it plain that the Covenant of circumcision was given before Isaac was born, before the twelve sons of Israel were born. The Jews would indeed circumcise on the sabbath. Circumcision held a very important place in the history of the Jews. It was required for fellowship in their religion. Remember from the twelve sons of circumcised Jacob (Israel) came the twelve tribes, and that Christ chose twelve circumcised apostles and that they are yet to sit on twelve thrones and judge twelve tribes of Israel. Matthew 19:28.

Genesis 17:14:

"And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people: he hath broken My Covenant."

Ponder these words in your heart and learn why the Jesus had to be circumcised. In this connection we quote;

Joshua 5:7 and 8:

"And their children, whom he raised up in their stead, them Joshua circumcised for they were uncircumcised, because they had not circumcised them by the way. And it came to pass, when they had done circumcising all the people, that they abode in their places in the camp, till they were whole."

All the male Israelites, who reached the land, promised Israel in the Covenant of circumcision (Genesis 17:8), were circumcised, and the blessing of God followed. No circumcision; no fellowship in Israel's religion and worship. "Cut off from the people." In the light of Israel's history, we should be slow to condemn those who went among Paul's Gentile converts and taught "except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." Acts 15:1.

What a difference between Genesis 17:14 and Galatians 5:2 and 5:12.

Genesis 17:14:

"And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken My Covenant."

Galatians 5:2 and 12:

"Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing."

"I would they were even cut off which trouble you."

"Cut off," if not circumcised in Genesis. "Cut off" for circumcision in Galatians. The answer—"different economies."

JESUS OF NAZARETH AND THE JEWS

We can well imagine what kind of a reception Jesus of Nazareth would have received, had He not been circumcised, when we read the condemnation of Peter ten years later by the Jewish Christians in Acts 11:3: "saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them."

Jesus was born King of the Jews. Matthew 2:2. This meant "King of the Circumcision." Jesus was made under the law and therefore under circumcision to deliver them who were under the law. Galatians 4:4 and 5.

Matthew 15:24:

"But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Luke 19:9:

"And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forso much as he also is a son of Abraham."

All of the sons of Abraham were circumcised and one claiming to be the Son and Seed of Abraham, and Israel's promised Messiah had to be circumcised.

Matthew 1:1:

"The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham."

Galatians 3:16:

"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 Christ."

Hebrews 2:16:

"For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham."

In our study, Romans 15:8 and Galatians 4:4 and 5 are very important verses.

Romans 15:8:

"Now I say that Jesus was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers."

Galatians 4:4 and 5:

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

If the Holy Spirit informs us that Jesus Christ was the minister of the circumcision, we should not only believe it with all our hearts, but we should study diligently the full meaning of Romans 15:8 and Galatians 4:4 and 5. Most, emphatically were the twelve apostles instructed by Jesus Christ, the Minister of the circumcision, while He was on earth, not to go to the uncircumcision, but only to the circumcision. Matthew 10:5 and 6. About twenty years later the Lord again made it plain that these same apostles were to confine their gospel preaching to the Circumcision.

Galatians 2:9:

“And when James, Peter and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.”

In the next preceding verse, Galatians 2:8, the same statement is made of Peter that might have been made of Jesus of Nazareth.

Galatians 2:8:

“For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the Same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.”

Now we have noted that Jesus Christ was the circumcised Minister to the circumcision, with a message and ministry of confirmation. Romans 15:8. So also the Twelve were circumcised ministers to the circumcision with a ministry of confirmation. “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him.” Hebrews 2:3. The witness of the confirmation ministry of Christ, Who came to fulfill the law and the prophets, was miracles, wonders and signs. John 6:36 and Acts 2:22. The witness of the twelve circumcision messengers is given in Hebrews 2:4: “God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will.” In this connection note Paul’s words in II Corinthians 12:12.

II Corinthians 12:12:

“Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.”

Acts 5:12:

“And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people: (and they were all with one accord on Solomon’s porch).”

Acts 19:11:

“And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul.”

Now carefully note these words recorded in Acts 2:22:

Acts 2:22:

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.”

Jesus of Nazareth, a Jew, in the land of the Jews, put on display in the midst of the Jews by supernatural demonstrations. God would never have expected Israel to receive into their fellowship, under the law, one who had not been circumcised. Those who teach that Jesus Christ came to do away with circumcision and put water baptism in its place, have not been Bereans—

“Who searched the Scriptures to see if these things be true.” Again, remember that Jesus Christ was both circumcised and baptized. Again remember, that members of His Body have received His circumcision as well as His baptism; both made without hands. We are to manifest the true circumcision of Philippians 3:3, and the real spiritual baptism of Romans 6:1 to 6.

PROFIT AND NO PROFIT

Let us compare and contrast—

Romans 3:1 and 2:

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly because that unto then were committed the oracles of God.”

With—

Galatians 5:6:

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”

Galatians 6:15:

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision but a new creature.”

Philippians 3:3:

“For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

Note in Galatians 5:2: “if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.” What advantage is there of circumcision? “Much in every way.” Romans 3:2.

From the Scriptures quoted we note contradiction unless we obey II Timothy 2:15, “rightly dividing the Word of Truth.”

Israel was God’s holy nation. Through the thirty-nine Books of the Old Scriptures the writers were talking about one Nation, Israel, and only about such other men and nations as had dealings with Israel. All of these thirty-nine Books were written by Israelites. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell us about the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth in the land of the Jews. These four men were Israelites. The twelve apostles were Jews and Israelites. The Lord Jesus was sent to Israel, those to whom God had given the vineyard. Matthew 21:33. “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” John 1:11. The Lord said, “salvation is of the Jews.” John 4:22. On the day of Pentecost Jewish preachers preached to devout Jews from every nation under heaven (Acts 2:5). “Ye men of Israel.” “To all of the house of Israel.” Acts 2:36. In the minds of twelve Jewish preachers, Christ was raised from the dead to give Israel repentance and forgiveness of sin; and it was not lawful for them to preach to a Gentile. Acts 5:30 and 31; Acts 10:28; Acts 11:19.

The Israelites were “the children.” the Gentiles, “the dogs.” Matthew 15:26. The Israelites were the natural branches and the Gentiles the wild olive tree. Romans 11:16 to 24. The Jews were nigh to God and the Gentiles were afar off. Ephesians 2:17. The Israelites were God’s Covenanted Commonwealth, but the Gentiles were strangers and aliens, even alienated from the life of God. Ephesians 2:11 and 12 and Ephesians 4:18. The time came, however, when God sent forth the message “no difference.” Romans 10:12.

Even the Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, was a Jew. It seems from Acts 16:16 and 17 (we and us) and Acts 16:20, “being Jews,” and from other Scriptures, that Luke also was a Jew. If Luke was not a Jew by birth, he was a Jew by religion before he became a Christian. So all of the

sixty-six Books of the Bible were written by Jews. All of the service and worship of God in the Old Testament dispensation was in the hands of Israelites. Romans 9:4 and 5. Under the law God's priests, kings, prophets and judges were Israelites. There was a court for the Gentiles. Many Gentiles became Jews. Esther 8:17. Gentile proselytes were circumcised. Read Matthew 15:22 to 27 and note the advantage in being an Israelite and not a Gentile. Read Luke 7:1 to 11 and see that the only Gentile man, mentioned in the Four Gospels as receiving a blessing from Jesus of Nazareth, received that blessing because he not only took a place in subjection to Israel, but he loved that Nation, built them a synagogue and had a Jew intercede with Christ for him.

After observing these facts we should not wonder at the condemnation Peter received even from Christian Jews when he had preached to an uncircumcised Gentile about seven years after Christ had died. Acts 11:1 to 5. Note also in Acts 21:28 that even in 60 A.D. it was a religious crime for an uncircumcised Gentile to enter the temple at Jerusalem.

What must be our conclusion? There was a decided advantage in circumcision. What a radical change, what a revolutionary doctrine to the Jews, when Paul went out with his new message received by revelation from Christ in heaven; that Gentiles turned to God from idols could be the people of God without circumcision. No profit in circumcision unless it was spiritual circumcision of the heart.

Even the suggestion of this drove some Jews to murder.

Acts 22:17 and 18:

“And it came to pass, that when I was come again into Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance.” “Get thee quickly out of Jerusalem.”

Acts 22:21 and 22:

“And He said unto me, Depart, for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.”

Acts 23:12:

“And when it was day certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.”

This matter of circumcision was indeed a serious problem in Paul's ministry; as water baptism is indeed a serious problem among Fundamentalists today. Most of them are as bitter against “no baptism” as the first-century Jews were against “no circumcision.” As circumcision then took away the offense of the cross and gave men something for a vain show in the flesh, the same is true of water baptism today.

After reading the fifteenth chapter of Acts, it is not difficult to imagine that little groups were here and there earnestly arguing circumcision “pro and con”; most of them “pro”. The great question then was, “to be or not to be circumcised.” This question did not concern Jewish Christians. Jewish Christians continued for several years the practice of circumcision with the sanction of The Twelve and Paul. Paul, during those several years, was becoming a Jew to the Jews. I Corinthians 9:20. Therefore, he circumcised Timothy, “because of the Jews.” Acts 16:3. Paul, however, would not permit Titus, the full Gentile, to be circumcised. Galatians 2:1 to 4. “To be or not to be baptized,” should today call for a council among Fundamentalists. Some councils are being held but they are quite exclusive. that is, only the “pros” are permitted to take part. The “cons” have no voice in the councils and this leaves the vote unanimous “to be baptized.” But after they vote unanimously for the water ceremony, then the discussion must be closed, for fear the “cons” will hear that the “pros” are divided as to whether it is household immersion (putting little babies in the bath tubs), Presbyterian sprinkling, as the seal of the New

Covenant, baptizing for church-joining, immersing for a witness to the world, or immersing to prove to the world that the believer has put off the old man and put on the new. Many beloved brethren, who have seen “no water in this dispensation of grace” are taking the course of least resistance. Like Peter, who took on a little religion, “fearing them which were of the circumcision,” they fear “them which are of the baptism.”

The “somewhats” among the baptizing Fundamentalists prefer boycotts and misrepresentations to a conference with the “no water” brethren for a Scriptural investigation of the doctrine. These baptizers know full well that they could never answer the questions of brethren who see the utter confusion among the baptizing Christians who are subdivided into many different “baptism” camps. God has ordained and instructed that the unity of the Spirit is to be kept on the doctrine of “one baptism.” Ephesians 4:3 to 6. If this “one baptism” is water, which of the many water theories is the one for unity? There is no agreement among the baptizers as to the one water baptism.

The large majority of Christians like much religion mixed with Christ and Christianity. Even among “grace” preachers, not particularly loyal to denominationalism, the large majority of them must hold on to something religious. Although the believer is “complete in Christ.” (Colossians 2:10), these brethren seem to think religion will add to that completeness, although they say they practice water baptism to witness that they are complete. Water baptism would have to be included in the fruits or good-works by which sinners would know the baptized are saints.

Now referring to Galatians 5:6 and Galatians 6:15, we quote these verses again:

Galatians 5:6:

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision: but faith which worketh by love.”

Galatians 6:15:

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision but a new creature.”

Let us keep in mind that Galatians was not written until more than 20 years after Christ died. Although we read in Ephesians 2:14 and 15, that Christ on the cross broke down the middle-wall of partition between the circumcision and the uncircumcision, in the ministry of the Twelve, recorded in the Book of Acts, that partition remained. Acts 10:28; Acts 5:30 and 31; Acts 11:19.

It is not easy to learn from the Book of Acts just when the Twelve ceased to sanction circumcision. However, after Paul received from Christ by revelation, the message, which he called “my gospel” (Romans 2:16; Romans 16:25; II Timothy 2:8) circumcision lost the advantage. And with the passing away of that advantage then, in his grace message, the Apostle to the Gentiles took his uncompromising stand against Israel’s physical circumcision and emphasized two great facts with respect to circumcision.

First: That physical circumcision was needless and worthless for the believer who was in Christ Jesus.

Second: That the circumcision which remained was spiritual circumcision; the circumcision of the heart.

God’s people, from Sinai to the present day, have occupied two positions: “under the law” (physical circumcision) and “in Christ” (spiritual circumcision). He that is circumcised physically, as a religion, is debtor to the whole law and has fallen from grace. Galatians 5:3 and 4.

In grace, members of Christ's Body are not under the law. Romans 6:14. Therefore they must not be circumcised; and yet they have been circumcised by Christ's circumcision. Colossians 2:11.

Philippians 3:3:

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

Here we know that members of Christ's Body are "the circumcision" without Israel's covenant of circumcision. Acts 7:45.

If there is any value in physical baptism or physical circumcision, certainly the circumcised or baptized person could not say "no confidence in the flesh."

CONCERNING WATER BAPTISM

Let us note carefully Colossians 2:11 and 12:

Colossians 2:11 and 12:

"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.

Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him, through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead."

And again we affirm that by the simplest principle of Bible study, if the circumcision of Colossians 2:11 is not physical but is made without hands, neither is the baptism of Colossians 2:12 physical baptism that can be received by human hands. Moreover, the very argument that the Holy Spirit makes all through the chapter rules out the very thought of water baptism in verse twelve. Carefully note what is accomplished in the life of the believer by this burial and you will admit that water on the believer's head, or all over his body, could not produce such spiritual results. It is admitted by any intelligent Christian, who is a messenger of the grace of God, that the believing sinner receives this Divine blessing by a Divine baptism without any kind of water ceremony, either before or after the Divine baptism.

"Unanimously agreed," say the "grace" preachers—but. But what The believer should finish up with water baptism. Finish up what? There is nothing to finish. "Ye are complete in Christ." Colossians 2:10. Ask that "grace" preacher this question, "is there a single verse where one member of the Body of Christ is told to baptize with water another member of that Body, or help to get the sinner into that Body? The answer is emphatically, "no." Ask him, "is water baptism essential to salvation?" "No." Can a believing sinner become a member of the Body of Christ and remain in that Body until the day of redemption without being baptized in water? "Yes—but." But what? "But he should be baptized." By whom and for what? What does the water do for the justified believer? What Scripture declares that the baptism should be by a clergyman or by a layman? Give the chapter and verse for the answer. Presently we shall submit every verse in the New Testament Scriptures concerning baptism and shall ask you to mark the verses supporting your views.

In obedience to which Scripture do the Presbyterians or Baptists baptize? The mode and significance of the ceremony by the Presbyterians is so different from that of the Baptists that the two have nothing in common except water, little and much. There are godly and spiritual men in both denominations. Which denomination is right about the water? Chapter and verse? If the Lord had intended that the practice of water-baptism should continue in this period of grace He

would not have left the teaching so uncertain that even the most spiritual men of God are at variance and cannot possibly agree.

The Baptists and other immersionists prove immersion by several Scriptures. Also by the word “baptizo.” These Scriptures are John 3:23; Mark 1:9; Acts 8:38 and 39, and Romans 6:4. They are positive that this word always means to submerge or dip under. It is difficult to prove this by the Scriptures. The washings of Hebrews 9:10 should read “baptisms” (being the same word as the baptisms of Hebrews 6:2) Those Old Testament Israelitish ceremonial washings were not all “immersions.” Most of them “sprinklings” and “pourings” and “anointings.” But they were “baptismos.”

DO THESE SCRIPTURES PROVE THE BAPTISTS’ THEORY?

John 3:23:

“And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there; and they came, and were baptized.”

Mark 1:9:

“And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came front Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized of John in Jordan.”

Acts 8:38 and 39:

“And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Phillip and the eunuch; and he baptized them. “And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Phillip that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”

Romans 6:4:

“Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

By interpreting the burial of Romans 6:4 water baptism, Baptists prove that the other verses establish the fact that the baptized were immersed. If the water ceremony is to show that the believer baptized into the death of Christ (Romans 6:3 and Luke 12:50) has been put under water because Christ was put under the ground, then Matthew 27:60 and 61 shows the weakness of this argument. The baptism of Romans 6:3 and 4 transforms the sinner. If it is water, water is efficacious and meritorious.

Immediately it should be admitted by any intelligent person that if the Baptists have the correct interpretation and meaning of water baptism, the twelve apostles may have received Baptist baptism as to mode, but certainly not as to its meaning. These, and many others, received their water baptism several years before Christ died. Some months after they were baptized unto repentance for the remission of sins, it is recorded of them.

Mark 9:10:

“And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.”

Note the words of Peter in Matthew 16:21 to 25, at the time the Lord revealed His death, burial and resurrection to Peter. Also note concerning Peter’s and John’s ignorance of Christ’s resurrection in John 20:9. Surely you will not believe that John the Baptist’s baptism had anything like the significance that present-day Baptists give to their watery burial. And, if, as some Baptists teach, water baptism before Pentecost was a kingdom ordinance, and on the day of Pentecost Christian baptism took on a new meaning, then surely the apostles should have

received a new baptism. But they did not. They were not rebaptized with so-called “Christian” baptism.

Moreover, by comparing Mark 1:4 and Luke 3:3 with Acts 2:38, we will certainly disprove the statement that the Twelve inaugurated the dispensation of grace with a new meaning to water baptism on the day of Pentecost. We submit the three Scriptures

Mark 1:4:

“John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins:”

Luke 3:3:

“And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.”

Acts 2:38:

“Then Peter said unto them: Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Now the fact of the matter is, that no Baptist preacher preaches Acts 2:38 today. They have had many bitter controversies with the disciples of Alexander Campbell and the Pentecostals who do preach Acts 2:38, and teach that water baptism is essential to salvation, a factor in salvation according to Mark 16:15.

Mark 16:16:

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Note the order “believeth”—“baptized”—“saved”. Which Baptist preaches this order?

No Baptist preacher observes the order in Acts 19:4 to 8. “Water baptism”—“imposition of hands”—“Holy Spirit baptism”—“speaking with tongues”. Neither will any Baptist preacher deny that every sprinkled, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, and Reformed believer has been baptized into the death of Christ and buried with Christ by baptism without being immersed in water. Christ actually was crucified, died, was buried was raised and is seated in the heavenlies. The believer is crucified, dead, buried, raised with Christ and seated with Christ in the heavenlies, but he need not go to a cross or up into heaven to prove this. Neither must he be buried in the ground or in water. Some one started this, and others “like sheep” said, “me too.”

Now it is apparent, without any deep thinking, that if the watery burial ceremony and teaching of the Baptists is in harmony with the Word of Truth, rightly divided, then the sprinkling ceremony of the Presbyterians, with their teaching that water sprinkling is the seal of the New Covenant as circumcision was the seal of the Old Covenant, is ridiculously absurd. And the strange thing is that the “baby-sprinkling” Presbyterian Fundamentalists and the “water-burial” Baptist Fundamentalists will unite in their warfare against other Fundamentalists who are thoroughly convinced that the one baptism of Romans 6:3 and 4; Colossians 2:12, and Ephesians 4:5, is a Divine baptism. Denominations must have “denominational” baptism and “denominationalists” cannot be Bereans. Acts 17:11.

If the Presbyterian teaching be Scriptural, Christ should have been sprinkled when He was eight days old instead of having been circumcised. But what do we find to be true? The truth is, that no one who was uncircumcised received baptism from the beginning of John the Baptist’s baptism to the baptism of Cornelius and his household, about seven years after the day of Pentecost, that is, so far as there is any Scriptural record.

The arguments to support any of the twenty or more water baptism theories preached and practiced by Christians, are faulty, and many of them altogether contrary to sound Bible doctrine.

Water baptism has divided members of Christ's Body into factions and religious feuds and always hinders obedience to Ephesians 4:3 to 6.

Ephesians 4:3 to 6:

“Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

Here we have, in grace, the “one baptism” that makes the believing sinner a member of the Body of Christ. If it is water, then sprinkling makes Presbyterians members of Christ's Body, and immersion makes Baptists members of Christ's Body. According to the Bible there are no Presbyterian or Baptist members.

Some say the ordinances of I Corinthians 11:2 are water baptism and the Lord's Supper. The truth is, that the word “ordinances” in that verse is “paradosis” and means “tradition.”

Water baptism and the Lord's Supper are never linked together in the Bible as ordinances for the Body of Christ.

There is much more Scriptural proof of the water-baptism teaching of the Pentecostals and the Campbellites than there is for the teaching of either the Baptists, the Presbyterians, or the Plymouth Brethren. “Baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins” can be proved by certain Scriptures, but not sprinkling as a seal of the New Covenant, or a water-burial as a witness to the world. Certainly the eunuch in Acts 8:18 to 28 was neither a Presbyterian nor a Baptist. In the desert he certainly did not witness to the world.

HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM

Concerning “household” baptism, we read in the Scriptures that Cornelius' household was baptized with him; that Lydia's household was baptized with her; that the household of the Philippian jailer was baptized with him; that the household of Stephanas was baptized with him. Acts 10:44 to 48; Acts 16:14 and 15; Acts 16:31 to 33, and I Corinthians 1:16. How useless are all our arguments as to whether or not there were included in one or all of those households some children so young that they were not competent to intelligently exercise faith in Christ and His gospel. Those who are uncompromisingly opposed to water baptism for children too young to be responsible for their faith quote Acts 8:37; Acts 16:34; Acts 18:8; Acts 8:12. Inasmuch as Acts 8:12 informs us that men and women were baptized, and is silent about children, therefore, some argue that no children were baptized. This is by no means positive proof. So unless we turn to church fathers, church history and tradition, we must wait until we reach heaven before we can state positively that little children were or were not baptized with their parents. Some find it very difficult to deal with I Corinthians 7:14, concerning the children of believers, “but now are they holy.”

Of course, we have heard the argument that if helpless little baby boys, children of Israelites, were circumcised when eight days old, then helpless little babies, both boys and girls, should be baptized. Some preachers among the Reformed and other Covenant denominations, and among Lutherans, teach that water baptism admits the little baby into the benefits and blessings of Christianity and the Church. I heard one Lutheran preacher declare that this was becoming a Christian by accident.

So again we see that there is as much difference between the meaning and mode of water baptism as taught by the Reformed denomination, by the Presbyterians, and Lutherans, and the meaning and mode of water baptism taught by the Baptists and Plymouth Brethren, as there is between night and day. If those of the one group are at all Scriptural in their teaching, surely those of the other group are unscriptural. They have nothing in common.

PLYMOUTH BROTHERS HOUSEHOLD IMMERSION

Some Plymouth Brethren teach “household” baptism, or immersion, for the babies of Christian parents. In support of this religious ceremony they quote I Corinthians 10:1 to 11. We quote I Corinthians 10:2 and 11:

“And were all BAPTIZED unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.”

“Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

If these things happened for ensamples to us, let’s read about “these things” in Exodus, and see what did really happen.

“And the Lord 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, to go by day and night. Exodus 13:21.

“And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.” Exodus 14:21.

“And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.” Exodus 14:22.

Let us see by reading all of the context that the Holy Spirit, in I Corinthians 10, is not saying that what happened to Israel means that Christians today should be immersed with their babies, but that they should take heed lest they fall.

Not one of the Israelites, adults or children, were even sprinkled by the waters of the Red Sea. They went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground. If that speaks of water baptism God should keep all our enemies off of us and kill them if they pursue us. Again we see the folly of playing “follow the leader”. The Israelites were not willing to accept Moses’ leadership. God made them willing by performing two great miracles. The Holy Spirit calls this baptism. Miracles are the credentials of God’s leaders. John 5:36, Acts 2:22, Hebrews 2:3 and 4, Acts 5:19, II Corinthians 12:12.

Again we affirm that every water-baptism theory taught by the different sects and denominations in Christendom is religious fallacy and cannot be supported by “rightly dividing the word of truth”. There is no sound exegesis that will eliminate tongues, visions and sign-gifts from the program of God’s Church of today that will not likewise eliminate water-baptism.

We can imagine how this statement does stir up the old natures of some immersionists who declare that they were immersed to show that the old man has been put to death: but we challenge any one of their recognized champions to meet with a group of spiritual men and women and prove their teaching by the Word of God, permitting us to answer their theory with the same Word of God.

It may be folly to ask you to study the Scriptures as an unprejudiced Christian, as there are no unprejudiced Christians, but do your best and mark the Scriptures as we are requesting in a later chapter of this message. Let’s do our utmost to obey Ephesians 4:3 to 8.

CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER

The great majority of Christians take it for granted that the Lord's Supper is a part of the program of the Christian Church. Very few included in this great majority can give the Scriptural reason as to why, how and when they should gather at this Supper, which is called in their denominational church creeds, "a church ordinance." If the church creed and church officials say the Supper should be served every Sunday morning, or on one Sunday every two months, or irregularly now and then, the church creed, or the church leaders, are considered sufficient authority for the time and place of the Supper. Some denominations feel quite sure that God's people should gather every Sunday for the Lord's Supper. They seek to prove, by Revelation 1:10, that the first day of the week is the Lord's day; and they earnestly contend for the Lord's Supper each Lord's day. However, they do not claim that it is unscriptural to gather at the Lord's table at other times. They use Acts 20:7 to prove that Christians should gather on the first day of every week at the Lord's table for the Lord's Supper.

Acts 20:7:

"And upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

Other Christians quote from the same twentieth chapter of Acts, verse 11, to show that Acts 20:7 has nothing to do with the Lord's Supper.

Acts 20:11:

"When he therefore, was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, even till break of day, so he departed."

Opinion is much divided as to whether or not Acts 2:42 and 2:46 have any reference to the Lord's Supper. Some say "yes". Some say "no". We quote these two verses:

Acts 2:42 and 46:

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

"And they, continuing daily, with one accord, in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."

No one can prove from the Scriptures that John in Revelation 1:10 was referring to Sunday or the first day of the week when he said, "I was in the Spirit on (in) the Lord's day." No one can prove from the Scriptures that Christians may not, with God's full sanction, gather for the Lord's Supper on ten or fifty-two Sundays during the year and at any time they chose. This should be settled by the language of I Corinthians 11:26: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."

Just what kind of bread and what kind of wine shall be served at the Lord's Supper and in what manner shall who serve it? These things may trouble honest, earnest, inquiring Christians who want to be sure that they are obeying the Scriptures. They may, or may not, diligently search the Scriptures for definite information and Divine light. They may just consider the pastor or Bible-teacher final authority and follow him into truth or error; or they may look carefully and prayerfully into God's Book and still be uncertain and unconvinced. So many Christians have wondered whether the bread should be leavened or unleavened, whether it should be a whole loaf (I Corinthians 10:17) or a broken loaf. Will crackers do? Whether the wine should be red, white or yellow, fermented, or unfermented. Should we use one cup or individual cups? Who is Scripturally qualified to serve the bread and wine to other Christians? Should a clergyman or a

reverend preside at the table and give orders to his subordinates? Should we exclude from the table God's children who are not of our sect? Whatever the answers to these questions be the answers should be Scriptural answers and those who have diligently and prayerfully studied all the light on the subject to be found in the Bible know that some of the questions are not satisfactorily answered.

However, we could say the same thing about the right way to conduct a Sunday-School, a prayer-meeting, Sunday church services, according to the Word of God. Because we cannot find specific instructions concerning all the details as to our programs when Christians are assembled for worship, prayer and Bible study, we should not abolish these services. Neither should we do away with the Lord's Supper because we cannot be fully convinced that every detail is clearly set forth in the Holy Scriptures, as to when, how and why. On the other hand no Christian should endorse or support some other Christians who are conducting the Lord's Supper contrary to the plain teachings of the Word of God.

It is evident from the fact that godly, spiritual, faithful students of the Scriptures differ as to the importance, order, and service of the Lord's Supper, and that some details are not clearly presented in the Bible.

Some church theologians have taught that, as water baptism under the New Covenant has superseded circumcision under the Old Covenant, so the Lord's Supper, under the New Covenant, has taken the place of Israel's other ordinance, the eating of the Passover every April. A careful study of the Scriptures will fail to reveal that the rite of water baptism, which takes but a few moments, takes the place of circumcision which remained in the Israelite's flesh from the eighth day of his life until he died. Moreover, we have seen that no uncircumcised man was baptized from Matthew 1:1 to Acts 10:43 to 47. We have also seen that Israel had divers baptisms (Hebrews 9:10), with circumcision under the law. In the study of Acts we learned that circumcision continued to be practiced by Israelitish Christians as long as baptism was practiced.

"From Adam to Moses," is a period of time designated in the Bible. Romans 5:13 and 14. During those 2500 years the Scriptures say "when there is no law". Romans 5:13 and 14. From Adam to the flood (when Noah was 600 years of age), for 1656 years God's people had no religion, either circumcision, baptism, or the Passover. They found grace in God's sight and by faith offered sacrifices whereby they obtained witness that they were righteous. Hebrews 11:1 to 10.

During those 1656 years there was no Old Testament: hence no Old Testament saints. The antediluvian saints were not Old Testament saints. Neither were there any Israelites before the flood. The antediluvian saints were not under the law.

From Noah and the flood to the call of Abram, about 427 years, there were no Israelites, no Jews, and no Old Testament saints. Abram, the uncircumcised Gentile, believed God and was declared righteous. Genesis 15:6. He had no religion. He was neither a Jew nor an Israelite. His father, Terah, was an uncircumcised Gentile, an idolater. Joshua 24:2. Isaac and Jacob were neither Jews nor Old Testament saints. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the fathers mentioned in Romans 11:28.

Jacob's name was changed to "Israel" about 247 years before the law was added: (Galatians 3:19) before there was an Old Testament: that is, the Covenant that God made "Old" by the death and resurrection of Christ.

After the flesh, Jews came from Judah, the fourth son of Jacob, or Israel. But after God gave His religion to Israel and preserved the descendants of Judah, all Israelites, practicing the

Jews' religion, were called "Jews". It was no longer a matter of being a descendant of Judah, but a matter of being a Jew by religion. Read Esther 8:17.

The Passover was very much a part of the Jew's religion and was to be observed by the Israelites annually to remind them of God's judgment upon the first born of Egypt and His mercy upon all Israelites covered by the blood of the lamb. Exodus 12.

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Because baptism is mentioned in I Corinthians 10:2 and the Lord's Supper is mentioned in I Corinthians 11:20, some Christians believe that I Corinthians 11:2 refers to the two ordinances, "baptism and the Lord's Supper".

I Corinthians 11:2:

"Now I praise you brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ORDINANCES as I delivered them to you."

The Greek word here translated "ordinances" is "paradosis" and should be translated "traditions" and there is here no reference to water baptism and the Lord's Supper. Moreover, there is no water baptism in I Corinthians 10:2. Israel was baptized unto Moses. It was by two miracles. In other words, Jehovah caused Israel to receive Moses and follow his leadership by performing two great miracles, the cloud and the opening of the Red Sea. Exodus 14:21 and 22. The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground. Exodus 14:22. Note the number of Israelites who crossed the Red Sea.

Exodus 12:37:

"And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses, to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children."

Not one of these 600,000, or of their children, was baptized in or with water. They all crossed in the sea and over the sea on dry land.

We should see from this the utter fallacy of the teaching called "household baptism." Those who propagate this fantastic doctrine, practice the immersion of believers' babies and children with their parents because the little Israelites went through the Red Sea with the adults protected by the cloud.

We will be helped in our study, if few keep in mind that there was no Nation Israel until about 1700 B.C., about 2300 years after Adam left the Garden of Eden. It will also be of help, if we keep in mind that Jehovah and Israel, at Sinai, with Moses as mediator, entered in that "Law Covenant" which we now call, "The Old Covenant." The terms of that Covenant are found in the Book of Exodus beginning with the twentieth chapter. According to Galatians 3:19 that Old Covenant was added to the Covenant that God made with Abram. It was added 430 years after Abram received his call and was declared righteous in uncircumcision. Moses was 80 years of age when he received from God the Ten Commandments, the carnal ordinances, divers baptisms, and meats and drinks for Israel. Exodus 7:7. At the time Moses received the law from God, Moses being descended after the flesh from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, was covered by the Covenant of promise. But Moses entered into a new experience after God spoke to him on Mount Sinai. He spent 40 years of his life under the new dispensation, that is, under the law. He died at the age of 120. Therefore, we see that Moses lived in two different dispensations. In the second one, under the law, he was protected and blessed under the Abrahamic Covenant. Moses belonged to the circumcision under both Covenants.

THE PASSOVER

Note that the Lord told Israel of the Passover ordinance several months before He gave them the law.

Now after these facts are in our minds we study Exodus 12:21 to 28 and Leviticus 23:4 to 6:

“Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover. And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the basin; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning. For the Lord will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.

And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the Lord will give you, according as He hath promised, that ye shall keep this service. And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses. And the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went away, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they.” Exodus 12:21 to 28.

HOLY CONVOCATION—LEVITICUS 23:4 TO 6

“These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.

In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover.

And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread.” Leviticus 23:4 to 6.

From these Scriptures we learn that the Lord commanded Israel concerning the meaning of the Passover, some weeks before He gave them the Ten Commandments at Sinai. Later on they were again instructed concerning the holy convocations and feasts which they were to keep annually. Among those feasts we find “Passover,” “Unleavened Bread” and “Pentecost”.

More than twenty years after Christ died on the cross we read in Acts 20:16 that Paul wanted to be at Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. We read in Acts 12:3 and Acts 20:6 concerning “the days of unleavened bread.” This should teach us that the Israelites were observing, their feasts, during the Book of Acts when Paul was becoming as one under the law to those who were under the law. I Corinthians 9:20.

It is because of some of these facts that there are certain Christians today, some of them very spiritual men, who teach that the Lord's Supper was a continuation of the Passover. They teach that after the statement of Paul, in Acts 28:25 to 28, the Lord's Supper no longer belonged to the spiritual program of members of the Body of Christ, but passed away with water-baptism, miracles, tongues and other signs. They claim by Romans 11:17 to 24 and Romans 15:27 that the Gentile Christians, during the “Acts period” belonged to an “Israelitish Church”; and that the hope of that Israelitish church was an Israelitish kingdom hope. Some of these brethren go so far as to teach that during the “Acts period” Gentile believers did not partake of the Lord's Supper.

Of course, if it was strictly an Israelitish feast, a continuation of the Passover, they did not meet on the first day of the week, 52 times or more each year, but only once a year, on the fourteenth day of April. To be strictly Scriptural they should also teach that only Levites were eligible to serve the other Israelites at the Lord's Supper.

They also teach that the ministry of Melchizedek, as high priest, pertains to the Nation Israel and not to the Body of Christ. We quote from Genesis 14 concerning Melchizedek and Abram to show that Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek when he was an uncircumcised Gentile several years before Isaac, the promised seed, was born of circumcised Abram. "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all." Genesis 14:18 to 20.

Now we admit that the church has made a great blunder in confusing the hope and calling of Israel with the hope and calling of members of Christ's Body. But we cannot correct one blunder with another blunder which is just as serious.

Then these brethren, sometimes called "ultradispensationalists", erroneously argue that because water-baptism is mentioned in the tenth chapter of I Corinthians and because water-baptism is not mentioned in Paul's prison Epistles (only the one Divine baptism of Ephesians 4:5) and because the sign-gifts of the twelfth chapter are not found in Paul's prison Epistles, therefore the Lord's Supper of I Corinthians 11 should be dropped with the water baptism and signs. They teach that that ordinance belonged only to the "Acts" transition period. We shall show presently why such reasoning is faulty, illogical and contrary to sound exegesis of the Word of Truth.

But now let us look into the Scriptures that deal with the Lord's Supper. For some Divine reason the details as to the Passover Supper, and what has been called the institution of the Lord's Supper, is not given in the Gospel of John. Neither is The Great Commission; neither is The Lord's Prayer (Our Father). Neither are the Lord's kingdom of heaven parables recorded in John's Gospel.

But we find the record of the Passover and the Supper in Matthew 26:17 to 30, in Mark 14:12 to 25 and Luke 22:7 to 20. We urge our readers to carefully read each one of these accounts. You look into Matthew 26:17 to 30 and Mark 14:12 to 25. We quote the record from Luke 22, so that we might include Luke 22:29 and 30. We quote these two verses first.

Luke 22:29 and 30:

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me. That ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the Twelve Tribes of Israel."

Now we quote:

Luke 22:1:

"Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover."

Luke 22:7:

"Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the Passover must be killed."

Luke 22:12 to 20:

"And he shall shew you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. And they went and found as He had said unto them: and they made ready the Passover. And when the hour was come He sat down, and the Twelve Apostles with Him. And He said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more

eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And He took the cup and gave thanks and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. And He took bread and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is My body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament of My blood, which is shed for you.”

Because the Lord’s Supper was instituted before the Body of Christ had its historic beginning it is argued by some brethren that it should be eliminated from the program of the Body of Christ. But we call your attention to verse 23 in I Corinthians 11. We quote:

I Corinthians 11:20 to 34:

When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, tarry one for another. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation. And the rest will I set in order when I come.

Now note verse 23. The Lord gave special orders to Paul concerning the Lord’s Supper for members of the one Body of I Corinthians 12:13. But Paul wrote to the same saints in the same Epistle “Christ sent me not to baptize”. I Corinthians 1:17. We quote also;

I Corinthians 10:16 to 21:

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice. to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord’s table, and of the table of devils.”

I Corinthians 5:7 and 8:

“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are, unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

I Corinthians 5:8 is used by some brethren to teach that the feast refers to the Lord's Supper and as feasts belonged to Israel and not to Gentiles, who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, the Lord's Supper feast has no place in God's spiritual program for the Body of Ephesians and Colossians. Ephesians 2:11, Colossians 2:14 to 18.

Let us now study some of the verses in the eleventh chapter of I Corinthians. We quote I Corinthians 11:23 to 26:

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is My body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took, the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do skew the Lord's death till He come.”

Let us consider:

1. “I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.”
2. “Ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.”
3. “This cup is the new covenant in My blood.”

This Epistle was written by Paul to the Corinthians between 55 A. D. and 60 A. D. Paul delivered to these Corinthians concerning the Lord's Supper that which he had received from the Lord. Inasmuch as Paul's first visit to Corinth, recorded in Acts 18:1 to 11, was about 54 A.D., Paul did not deliver the Lord's Supper to the Corinthians until more than twenty years after Christ ate the passover with the apostles, the same night in which He was betrayed. Paul must have had a very special revelation from Christ in heaven to give the Supper to the Corinthians.

Just how did the Apostle Paul know that the saved Jews in Corinth, and the saved Gentiles in Corinth, had been baptized in one Spirit into one Body, and that that one Body was Christ? I Corinthians 12:12 and 13. Surely there is not one single verse in the Old Testament Scriptures to even intimate that there would ever be such a Body of Jews and Gentiles. This truth of the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians also came to Paul by revelation. The Lord's Supper given to Paul by revelation was for the members of that one Body. Although there were Jews in that Body, note these words in I Corinthians 12:2: “Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.”

In the light of such plain truth what folly to teach, as some brethren (the disciples of Dr. E. W. Bullinger and Mr. Charles Welch) teach, that the Lord's Supper was not for Gentile believers; and if it was for them as members of the Body, mentioned in Corinthians, that is, the Church of God of the “Acts” period, it was given for a limited time. But the Lord's Supper ceased when the “Acts” period closed. It is argued by these brethren that the Gentile believers of the “Acts” period, were partakers of Israel's blessings (Romans 15:27) and were “Covenant.” Christians, in subjection to Israel in an Israelitish Kingdom Church. (II Corinthians 3:6). They assert that those Church-members, Jews and Gentiles, had Israel's hope, which hope was to be realized at the coming in person of Christ (His parousia). After the close of Acts, according to these brethren, a different Church had its historic beginning, the Body of Christ of Ephesians and Colossians; and the hope of that church was not the “parousia” of Christ or the hope of Israel, but rather the appearing of Christ in glory. Inasmuch as the Gentile members of the post-Acts Body were not New Covenant (Testament) saints, it is argued that they had nothing to do with the ceremony called “The Lord's Supper”, because the Lord said, “This is My blood in the New Covenant”. We shall discuss the New Covenant after we consider the words “till He come”.

TILL HE COME

The Corinthians were to come behind in no gift waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ “Who shall also confirm you unto the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ”. I Corinthians 1:7 and 8. “At His coming” they that are Christ’s are to be made alive. I Corinthians 15:22. The Philippians, with Paul, were waiting for Christ out of heaven to change their bodies of humiliation. Philippians 3:20 to 21. Paul and Titus, with all members of the Body of Christ, were waiting for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of Christ, to appear with Him in glory. Titus 2:13, Colossians 3:4.

Most assuredly the Corinthian Gentile saints were not waiting for Israel’s Messiah to come and take them to Canaan. They were not waiting for the kingdom hope of Israel. They were looking for the blessed hope of Titus 2:13. Until the realization of that hope at the coming of Christ, members of His Body were to break bread and take the cup, in remembrance of the death of Christ. That coming has not yet occurred.

“Till He come.” The Greek word “come” here is “elthe”. “Elthe” used also in II Thessalonians 1:10 is translated “shall come”. The more correct translation, “shall have come”.

Now in contrast with eating the bread and drinking of the cup to shew the Lord’s death till He shall have come”, let us note the word, of Christ when He partook of the Passover and instituted the Lord’s Supper the same night in which He was betrayed. “For this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.” Matthew 26:28 and 29.

In I Corinthians 11:22 to 28 there is no fulfillment of Matthew 26:29. Christ is not drinking it new with His twelve apostles in His Father’s kingdom. That will be after Christ comes as Israel’s Messiah and King. The “till He shall have come,” in I Corinthians 11:26, refers to the coming of Christ for His one Body. There is a great difference between “after He come” and “till He shall have come.”

Another reason given by some brethren for dropping the Lord’s Supper is because Christians can and do now partake unworthily of the bread and wine, and the Divine judgments of I Corinthians 11:29 to 34 are not visited upon them. The same argument could be advanced to show that the gospel should not have been preached after Acts 28:31, when the signs that accompanied the preaching of the gospel ceased. Romans 15:16 to 19. God’s servants have rightfully continued to preach the gospel, without signs, down to the present time; and God’s people have rightfully continued to partake of the Lord’s Supper, without signs, down to the present time. If they are intelligent Bible-taught, obedient believers they are still waiting “till He come”. What Christ is going to do with Israel, under the terms of the New Covenant, after He comes, is quite different from God’s purpose in this age, “for to make in Himself of twain one new man”. Ephesians 2:15. There is to be a new Israel with a new name (Hephzibah) in the land (Beulah). Isaiah 62:1 to 5. But this is to be quite different from the “one new man”. Certainly the Corinthian saints were not expecting to go to Beulah land as Hephzibah. The one new man of Ephesians 2:15 was the “one new man” of Romans, Corinthians and Galatians. Note Galatians 3:26 to 29.

Paul is to receive his crown of righteousness of II Timothy 4:1 and 8 and his crown of rejoicing of I Thessalonians 2:19 at one and the same coming of Christ. The same “till He come” argument that would do away with the Lord’s Supper would rob Paul of his crown of rejoicing.

Then how about:

THE NEW COVENANT

How about II Corinthians 3:6? “Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.” Now our question is, how about this statement of Paul in II Corinthians 3:6? We ask the question because there are some brethren who dogmatically affirm that members of the Body of Christ have absolutely nothing to do with either the New Covenant or the blood of the New Covenant. Of course the expressions “New Covenant” and “New Testament” are identical. These brethren state that the members of that Body of Christ, which is described in Ephesians and Colossians, were saved by the blood of Christ, but not by the blood of the New Covenant; and the Gentile members had been a non-covenant people and had nothing to do with Covenants which belonged to Israel. They therefore argue that, because the Lord Jesus in instituting His Supper, spoke of the blood as being the blood of the New Covenant, members of the Body of Christ have nothing to do with that Supper. If during the “Acts” period Gentile believers did remember the Lord’s death with the bread and wine, it was because that during that period Paul was a minister of the New Covenant. They quote to support their argument Romans 15:27 and Romans 9:4 and 5.

“It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.”

“Who are Israelites; 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 came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.”

Note that because the Gentile Christians, to which Paul referred in Romans 15:27, were partakers of Israel’s spiritual blessings they must have been included in Israel’s Covenants; and they must have had Israel’s hope and calling and not the hope and calling of Ephesians 4, because the Gentiles, referred to in Ephesians 2:11 and 12, had nothing to do with these Covenants. We quote Ephesians 2:12: “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”

In answer to these arguments we would say; First—That to take away from members of the Body of Christ everything Israelitish, mentioned in Romans 9:4 and 5, we would have to take away Christ; for He was of Israel, and declared in John 4:22, “Salvation is of the Jews.” Even in Corinthians believers were no longer to know Jesus after the flesh. II Corinthians 5:16. Second—We would call to the attention of our brethren that Ephesians 2:8 should read “By grace were ye saved.”

Therefore most of the Gentile members of the Body, described in Ephesians, were saved during the “Acts” period when Paul was an able minister of the New Covenant. The blood which Christ shed on the cross was the blood of the New Covenant. A believing Gentile could be saved by faith in the blood of the New Covenant without receiving all of the blessings of the New Covenant described in Jeremiah 31:31 to 35. It is true that that New Covenant has to do with Israel and will have a literal fulfillment in the salvation of that Nation who shall yet dwell safely in their own land, under the peaceful reign of their true King David. But if the Lord’s Supper is to be ruled out because the Gentile believer, in this day of grace, does not enjoy any of the spiritual benefits of the New Covenant, or the blood of the New Covenant, then, of course the same exegesis would deprive members of the Body of Christ of the spiritual benefits and

blessings recorded in the tenth chapter of Hebrews; and those recorded in the Epistle of John. The believer by such an exegesis could not claim Christ as Mediator, High Priest, Intercessor or Advocate.

Again, we would call to the attention of these brethren the fact that it was to the Corinthians that Paul wrote concerning the glorious gospel of Christ. II Corinthians 4:3 and 4. He wrote to them about the ministry of reconciliation, II Corinthians 5:16 to 21. This reconciliation message is the same as the reconciliation message in Colossians 1:20 to 28. In these verses in Colossians we have the very heart of the mystery. And this is Scriptural proof that the mystery of Colossians 1:20 to 27 is the mystery of II Corinthians 5:16 to 21. Certainly no Prophet of Israel ever foretold anything concerning the message of II Corinthians 5:16 to 21.

None of these disciples of Dr. Bullinger or Mr. Welch could point out where Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, during the "Acts" period, preached to Gentile believers, in his so-called pre-prison Epistles, any New Covenant gospel that is not God's message for today. Moreover, II Corinthians 5:16 is the refutation of the argument that Paul was preaching a kingdom message during the "Acts" period whereby Gentiles became members of a kingdom church.

We quote II Corinthians 5:16: "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more."

In all of this we see the fallacy of any argument that the Lord's Supper has no place in this reign of grace because it was instituted the night of the betrayal of Christ before the Body of Christ had its historic beginning. The claim that it is a Jewish feast because it was instituted in connection with the Jewish passover is refuted by the words, "till He come", and by the fact that the risen Christ instructed Paul to give the Lord's Supper to the members of His Body.

Now the argument that the Lord's Supper should be dropped with the close of the Book of Acts, if water baptism should be dropped, is not supported by Scripture. Water baptism and the Lord's Supper are never linked together in the Scriptures.

We submit for your consideration I Corinthians 1:17, I Corinthians 11:23 and Ephesians 4:5.

"For Christ sent me not to BAPTIZE, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of note effect."

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took Bread."

"One Lord, one faith, one BAPTISM."

When the question is asked why drop the water baptism of I Corinthians 10 and the sign-gifts of I Corinthians 12 and hold on to the Lord's Supper of I Corinthians 11, we answer first that there is no water baptism in I Corinthians 10. Dropping water baptism is explained by I Corinthians 1:17, Romans 6:3 and 4, Ephesians 4:5 and Colossians 2:11 and 12. The dropping of signs is explained by I Corinthians 13:8, I Timothy 5:23 and II Timothy 4:20. But the dropping of the Lord's Supper cannot be explained until the Lord from heaven tells us that "till He come" does not mean what it says.

In connection with Christ's statement that He would drink the cup anew in the coming kingdom with the Twelve, He told them they would sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Luke 22:29 and 30. But Christ never intended that during the "Acts" period Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was going to be seated with the Twelve. That cup and kingdom have nothing to do with the cup and "till He come" in I Corinthians 1:23 to 27.

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

We have referred to Galatians 3:19, in which verse we learn that the law was added. The law was added. There was no such law until it was added. To what was it added? It was added to the gospel which God preached to Abram. Galatians 3:8. The law was added to the promise, the covenant which God made with Abraham. Galatians 3:17.

At the time the law was added something else was added, as a part of the law: "Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." Hebrews 9:10.

The law was added till the Seed should come. Christ was that Seed. The religion was added until the time of reformation. Christ brought that time of reformation

"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross. Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days." Colossians 2:14 and 16.

The law dispensation, with its religious program, was added; and then it was taken out of the way. It had to be out of the way because no one could do anything with it but break it.

During the law dispensation Israel's prophets foretold certain things about Christ: "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 Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." I Peter 1:10 and 11.

But when Christ came in fulfillment of these prophecies, note what He said to His apostles:

Matthew 13:16 and 17:

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."

John 16:12 and 13:

"I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself: but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come."

Thus we can see how the inspired Scriptures came to man on the installment plan. Here we have a simple example of progressive revelation.

Now let us compare and contrast the messages of the twelve apostles in the Book of Acts and Paul's earlier messages, with the message of Paul recorded in Colossians 1:25 to 27. "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God; Even the mystery which HATH BEEN HID FROM AGES AND FROM GENERATIONS, but now is made manifest to His saints. To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." Colossians 1:25 to 27.

Now these words in verse 26: "which hath been hid from ages and from generations." This refers to the same truth mentioned in Ephesians 3:8: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the UNSEARCHABLE riches of Christ."

Paul, in Ephesians 3:8, is writing of the “unsearchable” riches of Christ. The word “unsearchable” is literally “untraceable.” When Paul preached in Berea (Acts 17:1 to 11) they searched the Scriptures and checked up on Paul. “They searched the Scriptures.” But what Paul preached in Ephesians 3 and Colossians 1, no one could refer to Israel’s prophecies and check up on Paul’s message, for it was not to be traced through those Scriptures. That Pauline truth was “unsearchable.”

Peter and the Eleven, in their “Acts” ministry, did not preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. A vision was necessary to authorize Peter to preach to Cornelius and cause him to say: “I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.” But, after Cornelius was saved, Peter declared that the hope and calling of Cornelius was prophesied in Amos 9:11 to 15. Acts 15:13 to 18. He said, “to this agree the words of the prophets.” But Paul in Colossians 1:24 to 27, did not say concerning “the mystery” “to this agree the words of the prophets.” He said the very contrary.

Note Peter’s message in Acts 2:16; Acts 2:30; Acts 3:24; Acts 4:25; Acts 10:43; Acts 15:13 to 18.

“This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel.” “Therefore (David) being a Prophet, spake of the resurrection of Christ.” “Yea, and all the Prophets from Samuel, etc., foretold of these days.” “Who, by the mouth of thy servant David, hath said.” “To Him give all the Prophets witness.” “And to this agree the words of the Prophets; as it is written.”

Concerning some truth, Paul preached what Israel’s prophets had foretold. We quote Paul’s statement in:

Acts 26:22 and 23:

“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. That Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.”

These were the traceable riches of Christ. But much of Paul’s messages in the Epistles to the Galatians, to the Romans, and to the Corinthians, was as much untraceable as were the messages of Ephesians and Colossians. Acts 26:22 is explained by verse 23.

But the all important lesson for us to learn, is to know the difference between the fulfillment of prophecy and the special truths given by Christ in heaven to the Apostle Paul and designated “the mystery,” “the mystery of the gospel,” “the mystery of Israel’s blindness and the fulness of the Gentiles,” “the mystery of them that shall not sleep,” “the dispensation of the mystery.” Ephesians 3:1 to 9; Colossians 1:25 to 27; Colossians 4:4; Ephesians 6:19 and 20; I Corinthians 15:51 to 54; Romans 11:25 and 26.

In connection with “the mystery,” it is true that the Scriptures declare that members of Christ’s Body were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. II Timothy 1:9; Ephesians 1:4; Titus 1:2.

But we find, in Ephesians 3:6, in the very heart of “the mystery,” these words: “That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs (joint heirs) of the same Body (joint Body) and partakers (joint sharers) of His promises in Christ by the gospel.” Therefore it cannot be proved by the Scriptures that members of the Body of Christ enjoy no blessings promised by God or included in any covenants since the world began.

One phase of “the mystery” has to do with a parenthetical period, that is, a period of grace, without religion, when God is making the New Man of Ephesians 2:15. But the Gentiles who became members of Christ’s Body, the New Man, were saved by the gospel of uncircumcision which the Scriptures foresaw when God preached to uncircumcised Abram.

Galatians 3:8. Let us bear in mind that there is just as much Scriptural authority for calling the Body of Christ “the Abrahamic Covenant Church” as for calling it “the New Covenant Church.” When we speak of “the New Covenant Church” we imply that there was an “Old Covenant Church.” The word “Church,” in the Bible, is always translated from the Greek “EKKLESIA.” In Nehemiah 13:1, in the Septuagint, the reading is, “the ekklesia of God.” The word “ekklesia” is translated “congregation” in the Old Testament Scriptures (Septuagint), but it is the same Greek word translated “Church” more than one hundred times in what we call the New Testament Scriptures. Compare Psalm 22:22 “congregation” with the fulfillment of that Scripture in Hebrews 2:12 “ Church.”

Therefore, we see that the word “ekklesia” must be defined to determine whether the meaning is general or specific, as “the Church which is His Body.” Ephesians 1:22 and 23.

The reconciliation of the Gentiles, the new creation, and the identification of believers with Christ, all one in Christ, without racial distinction, all while Israel’s kingdom is in abeyance, as revealed in II Corinthians 5; Galatians 3; Romans 6, and Romans 12:3 to 5, was not made known to the sons of men in other ages. Therefore, until revealed to and through Paul, this truth was a secret, “the mystery.”

However, during the “Acts” period, there was a mixed program with God’s order “to the Jew first,” a program of signs, and sign-gifts, visions, tongues, and water baptism. During the “Acts” period Paul circumcised Timothy (part Jew) and protested against the circumcision of Titus (a Gentile). Acts 16:3; Galatians 2:1 to 4. Paul explains this in I Corinthians 9:20 and 21. During those years he became as one under the law to those under the law, agreeing with the Twelve and the Holy Spirit on one order (with religion) for Jews that believed, and another order for Gentiles that believed. Acts 15:1 to 24; Acts 21:18 to 25.

After the judgment of God pronounced by Paul, in Acts 28:25 to 28, the Book of Acts suddenly closed as a record of Paul’s activities several years before Paul died.

In Paul’s Epistles, written after Acts 28:31, he mentions “the mystery” twelve times and has much to say about the heavenly calling of the Body of Christ. Moreover there is a marked absence of any references to tongues, signs, healings, visions, water baptism, etc. Certainly after Acts 28:31, Paul would never have become as one under the law to Israel. Compare Acts 23:5 and 6 and Acts 21:24 to 27 with Philippians 3:3 to 9. God’s order was no longer, “to the Jew first,” and has not been since Acts 28:31. But remember that a new spiritual Post-Acts program does not mean a different Post-Acts Body. “Now abideth faith, hope, and love.” I Corinthians 13:13.

Some brethren teach that the hope and calling of the members of the Church during the “Acts” period was Israelitish. They seek to prove by the expression “the hope of Israel,” in Acts 28:20, that Paul had preached the hope of Israel to Gentiles during the “Acts” period and after Acts 28:31 he preached a new and different message to Gentiles, offering them, in the Name of the Lord, a new hope and calling. They quote frequently Ephesians 1:3, “blessed with all spiritual blessings,” and emphasize the word “spiritual” to show that the blessings of members of the Body of Ephesians were “spiritual” whereas Israel’s blessings were “earthly.” They seem to be oblivious of their inconsistencies in making this distinction, while at the same time they attempt to prove by Romans 15:27, that the Gentiles were enjoying Israel’s hope during the “Acts” period. We quote:

Romans 15:27:

“It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their SPIRITUAL things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.”

Note here the word “spiritual” and not “earthly.” And so their argument proves invalid, if not absurd.

But now back to progressive revelation. Presently we shall consider Paul’s statement recorded in Acts 26:16.

Acts 26:16:

“But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.”

Let us first carefully note the general orders concerning Saul’s ministry at the time he was converted.

The Lord spoke to Ananias Acts 9:15:

“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he (Saul) is a chosen vessel unto Me to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.”

This was about 34 A. D. What did Saul do?

Acts 9:20:

“And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.”

“He preached the faith which once he destroyed.” Galatians 1:23.

He destroyed what Peter, the Eleven, Stephen and Philip were preaching. This was not the gospel of the uncircumcision, the ministry of reconciliation or “the mystery.”

Then about ten years later what happened?

Acts 13:2:

“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”

About five or six years elapsed between the conversion of Saul, in Acts 9 and the salvation of Cornelius in Acts 10.

THE TWELVE AND PAUL

It should be obvious to any careful student, who observes the principle of “rightly dividing the Word of Truth,” that when the Holy Spirit suddenly ceased to record the ministry of the Twelve, having said nothing about them from the day James was killed, except as they had dealings with Paul, a radical, dispensational change took place with those words of the Holy Spirit in Acts 13:2: “separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”

After this commission the activities of the Twelve, during the “Acts” period, are no more of sufficient interest to the Holy Spirit to even give them any attention. Paul, from Acts 13:2 to Acts 28:31, is mentioned more than one hundred times in Acts, and after Acts 13:2 he wrote more than half of the Books of the New Testament Scriptures.

If the Twelve had any authority over Paul up to Acts 13:2, while he was preaching the faith which he had once destroyed, which was quite different from the gospel of the uncircumcision, they certainly lost it when they ceased to be Twelve. Up to the time of the death of James (Acts 12:2), eight or nine years after Paul was converted, there is no record that Paul preached to Gentiles. At the time Paul received that commission from the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:2)

there is not the slightest suggestion that he had received the revelation of the gospel of the uncircumcision, and certainly not the superabundance of revelations of II Corinthians 12:1 to 12.

Even Cornelius was not saved until about six years after Saul was converted.

Dispensationally, the thirteenth chapter of Acts is one of the most important in the Bible. Saul gets his new name, "Paul", from his first Gentile convert after the commission of Acts 13:2. Why did Sergius Paulus believe? Because of the unbelief and blindness of Bar-Jesus (the child of Jehovah-Saviour) Acts 13:12. Israel was the child of Jehovah-Saviour. Under the commission of Acts 13:2 Paul was to send salvation to Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy and Gentiles were to obtain mercy because of Israel's unbelief and blindness. Romans 11:11, 25 and 30. Paulus believed the gospel because of what happened to the child of Jehovah-Saviour. Saul became Paul and God began a very special ministry for the Gentiles. The Twelve, during the first ten years after the death of Christ, did not have even the slightest intimation of the mystery of Romans 11:25 and 26.

Romans 11:25 and 26:

"For I would not brethren. that ye should be ignorant of this mystery. Lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that 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."

Therefore, think of the folly of teaching that "the dispensation of the grace of God" and "the dispensation of the mystery" began on the day of Pentecost or during the recorded "Acts" ministry of the Twelve.

From Acts 1:25 to Acts 12:2, when James was put to death, there were Twelve Apostles. It was not until the number was no longer "Twelve" that the Holy Spirit said, "separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

From the time the number of the apostles was increased from eleven to Twelve when Matthias was chosen to be numbered with the Eleven. (Acts 1:26—about 33 A.D.) until James was beheaded (Acts 12:1 and 2—about 43 A.D.), the first eleven chapters of Acts are filled with the messages and acts of Peter and the Eleven, covering a period of about ten years. By carefully studying these eleven chapters you will learn that the messages of the Twelve were addressed to Israel, Acts 2:5, "devout Jews from every nation under heaven;" Acts 2:36, "all the house of Israel;" Acts 5:30, "a Prince and a Savior to give repentance to Israel"; Acts 11:19, "preaching the Word to none but Jews only." The one exception was the household of a Gentile who loved Israel and stood well with that Nation. Acts 10:2 and 22. It was unlawful in 42 A.D. for the Twelve to go to uncircumcised Gentiles. Acts 10:28.

Note the command of Jesus of Nazareth, on earth, to the Twelve (Matthew 10:5 to 8, about 31 A.D.) "go not unto the way of the Gentiles," is still the agreement of Peter, James, John and Paul (Galatians 2:9—about 50 A. D.) "Go not into the way of the Gentiles." "They would go to the circumcision." The only break that we find concerning this exclusive Israelitish ministry of the Twelve during those nineteen years, was Peter's message to the household of Cornelius. Remember Philip, in Samaria, did not preach to Gentiles. Were not the Twelve on the day of Pentecost still working under the commission of Matthew 10:5 to 8?

Let us compare Peter's statement of Acts 15:7 with his agreement in Galatians 2:9. This should provoke the reader to ask some "whys" and seek for the answers.

Acts 15:7:

“And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know that how a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the Word of the Gospel and believe.”

Galatians 2:9:

“And when James, Peter and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto size, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship: that we should go unto the heathen and they unto the circumcision.”

Certainly these statements cannot be reconciled unless the student of the Scriptures is taught that the Kingdom message and program of the Twelve from Acts 1 to Acts 11, described in Acts 15:13 to 18, was suddenly halted and superseded by the special commission and ministry given to Paul. The program of the Twelve with respect to Israel and the Gentiles will be inaugurated again when the gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed and the King shall return.

CIRCUMCISION GOSPEL—UNCIRCUMCISION GOSPEL

Galatians 2:7:

“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision, was committed unto me, (Paul), as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.”

Galatians 3:8:

“And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying it thee shall all nations be blessed.”

If there is no difference between what was committed unto Paul and what was committed unto Peter, language has no meaning and the Holy Spirit erred in dictating Galatians 2:7. If this interferes with your message and program, do not change the language and the meaning of the Bible to support what you teach and practice. Change your program.

The true obedient faithful child of God will believe the plain statements of God whether or not he comprehends the meaning wholly or in part. In order then that we may impress it upon the mind and heart of our reader, we want to repeat the plain statement of Galatians 2:7. Note the word with which this verse begins: “Contrariwise.” That suggests that the truth contained in the verse is contrary to what would be expected. If we were reading from the Four Gospels into the Book of Acts, and were not otherwise informed by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures, we would expect Paul to get his message, his teaching, and his authority from those who were apostles before him. But note his plain statement “added nothing to me.” (Galatians 2:6.) Also note Galatians 1:17: “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me.” Inasmuch as Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, was saved outside of the land of the Jews, and without any message from the Twelve or their associates, his experience in salvation was very unique.

Read his own statement as set forth in Acts 26:16: “But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.” Now from the language of this verse we learn that the revelations from the risen Christ to Paul were given on the installment plan. With the perfect, omnipotent, infallible Christ as his instructor, the Apostle Paul did not need to confer with flesh and blood. Galatians 1:16. He did not receive his message from man; but by revelation of Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:11 and 12. Presently we shall refer to the words in Galatians 1:18, “After three years I went up to Jerusalem”; and the words in Galatians 2:1, “Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem.” We will try to see the

signification and purpose of these two visits. But first let us read again Galatians 2:8. We quote this verse: "For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles." Here we note that the Lord wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision. In I Corinthians 9:20 Paul tells us why he became a Jew to the Jews and as a Gentile to the Gentiles. Peter never did this. He was the apostle to the circumcision people with the circumcision gospel. Peter never preached the gospel to Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy; Paul did.

We have already observed that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision with a circumcision message of confirmation. Romans 15:8. Christ never became as one without the law to those who were without the law to win the Gentiles. Hear His own words in Matthew 15:24: "Sent only to Israel."

Therefore, God's order while Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God in the midst of Israel was "to the circumcision only." Likewise, God's order, in the first nine chapters of Acts, was "to the circumcision only." Let us study the statement of Paul recorded in Acts 13:46:

"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Mark the word "first" in this statement; and then compare it with Romans 1:16.

BARNABAS AND PAUL SEPARATED

In Acts 13:2 we read: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Now let us remember that the Holy Spirit said this about ten years after Saul was saved. Some years before this time we read in Acts 9:20 that Saul "straightway preached Christ in the synagogues." And according to Galatians 1:23 immediately after he was converted he preached the faith which once he destroyed. Therefore, in Acts 13:2 the Holy Spirit is separating Saul for a new work. That new work was to go to the Jew first and also to the Gentile; or to the circumcision first and also to the uncircumcision. Note this mystery: The Gentiles were given mercy through Israel's unbelief (Romans 11:30). Paul turned to the Gentiles because Israel put it from them (Acts 13:46). God sent salvation to the Gentiles to provoke Israel to jealousy (Romans 11:11). Thus we see that God's order from Acts thirteen to Acts twenty-eight was: "to the circumcision first and also to the uncircumcision." But not so after Acts 28:31. God's order since Acts 28:31 has not been "to the Jew first."

In the circumcision message Peter, with the Eleven, preached concerning Jesus of Nazareth and what He did in the land of the Jews; and what He would do after His resurrection, if Israel would repent. Acts 2:22; Acts 10:39 to 42; Acts 5:30 to 32. Moreover, in all of the program of the Twelve, during the first nine chapters of Acts, they had a confirmation message. Hebrews 2:2 and 3. They were preaching to Israel a circumcision and kingdom program, prophesied by Israel's Old Testament prophets, and concerning the Covenant of circumcision. Acts 2:16 ; Acts 2:28 to 32; Acts 3:19; Acts 3:24 and 25; Acts 7:6; Acts 15:13 to 18. Even the superficial, casual student of the Scriptures should know that Peter never preached the gospel of the uncircumcision. And when he learned from Paul concerning the gospel of the uncircumcision Peter agreed to go with his associates, to the circumcision. Galatians 2:9.

Now concerning the gospel of the circumcision, we have already observed that Isaac, the father of Israel, was not born until Abram became Abraham at the time of his circumcision. A

careful study of the Scriptures will show that spiritual blessings received from the Lord, from Genesis 17:6 up to Acts 10:28, were on the grounds of circumcision. It was, therefore, to be expected that Paul's new revelation ministry would prove not only a stumblingblock to Israel, but revolutionary, producing not only vigorous protests but bitter opposition. Peter acknowledged that Brother Paul said some things which were hard to be understood. II Peter 3:15 and 16.

PAUL'S TWO JERUSALEM VISITS

Now for Paul's visits to Jerusalem: "After three years" and "after fourteen years." The meaning and purpose of the first visit is explained in the first chapter of Galatians. But we want to consider now his second visit to Jerusalem, recorded in the second chapter of Galatians. First we note that he went there by revelation. He went there by revelation concerning a revelation from Christ in heaven. The Holy Spirit has been very careful to mention the years after so that the student of the Bible might understand that Paul had received some very important new truth during those fourteen years. He had received by revelation truth, concerning which all of the twelve apostles and their disciples were altogether ignorant; and surely they could not have preached truth concerning which they were ignorant. We have already suggested that the student of the Word of God who would know the difference between the gospel of the circumcision and the gospel of the uncircumcision must prayerfully, spiritually, and diligently study the difference between Abram and Abraham. When we have learned this difference we shall not be so much disturbed as to whether or not members of the Body of Christ are the children or seed of Abraham.

Whether or not the "fourteen years after" means fourteen years after Paul's first visit to Jerusalem, which would mean more than seventeen years after his conversion, or whether it means fourteen years after he was converted, we may not be able to say dogmatically. What we want to know is what was the revealed truth that Paul communicated unto those Jewish Christians at Jerusalem. Now specifically we want to understand what he meant by "the gospel of the uncircumcision" which he revealed to them fourteen years after. This revelation received from the risen Christ was the fact that twenty-four years before God made with Abraham and Israel the Covenant of circumcision God declared uncircumcised Abram to be a righteous man. Galatians 3:6; Romans 4:9 and 10. In this Divine act God was preaching the gospel to Abram before the law and before Abram became Abraham. In preaching that gospel to Abram Scriptures foresaw the ministry of grace which was to be committed to the Apostle to Gentiles for the Gentiles. No prophet ever dreamed that God would carry on such a program of grace without circumcision during the parenthetical period while the Nation Israel was in blindness, while Israel's promised kingdom was in abeyance. It is because of the prophets' ignorance of this uncircumcision program that the Scriptures referred to it as a "mystery" or "secret." It is also because of this that Peter wrote, as an apostle to the circumcision, his words recorded in II Peter 3:15 and 16. There are even deeper truths included in that which Paul designates "the mystery," but the fact that the Scriptures foresaw, when God preached before the gospel to uncircumcised Abram that the Gentiles of Paul's day and ours would be declared righteous without circumcision or religion, by no means prove that it was not a mystery. It certainly had to be made known by special revelation.

Now let us carefully note Paul's words in Galatians 1:17 and 18: "Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went unto Arabia, and returned again

unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.”

Here we learn where Saul (Paul) spent some of the time between the year he preached to the Jews in the Damascus synagogue that Jesus was Christ the Son of God (Acts 9:20), and the year the Holy Spirit said, “Separate unto Me Barnabas and Saul.” Acts 13:2. According to our dated Bibles Acts 13:2 was eight or nine years after Acts 9:20. Part of that time Saul spent with Barnabas at Antioch, in Syria.

Acts 11:25 and 26:

“Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him into Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.”

We are sure that Paul was witnessing and working for Christ from the time he was converted. The Christian Jews in Judea heard that Paul was preaching the faith he once destroyed. At the time Saul was converted none of the Twelve had heard of the gospel of the uncircumcision. Saul was converted at the time that the Lord was mighty in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision. Galatians 2:8. When Paul went forth preaching the faith he once destroyed, he was not preaching the gospel of the uncircumcision or the ministry of reconciliation. And surely, at that time, no servant of the Lord would have said what Paul wrote in II Corinthians 5:16: “Wherefore henceforth, know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.”

In the gospel of the circumcision, Peter preached concerning Jesus of Nazareth and His doings on earth. Acts 2:22. He preached this same message to Cornelius and his household. Acts 10:38 to 40. Paul never preached in the ministry of reconciliation for all the world, concerning “Jesus of Nazareth.” He made no reference to what he did on earth, as the minister of the circumcision, except the Lord’s Supper, which exception is one proof that Supper is for the observance of members of the Body of Christ. The reconciliation ministry took in the human race as related to Adam and not as to circumcised Abraham and his seed after the flesh. Therefore Paul, in his writings to Gentiles, never once referred to the parables, the sermon on the mount, miracles, or kingdom teaching of Jesus of Nazareth on earth. He never referred to Jesus of Nazareth in writing to Gentiles, but to the Christ Who was reconciling the world unto God by His death. The Gentiles were alienated from the life of God and the message they first required was reconciliation by the death of the last. Adam, the Second Adam. Ephesians 4:18 and 2:13.

A great blunder has been made by Postmillennial theologians, by those who follow the Premillennialism of the Plymouth Brethren, and by those who have accepted the extreme dispensationalism of Dr. E. W. Bullinger, and Mr. Chas. Welch, that is, the blunder of teaching that Paul, in preaching and writing to the Gentiles, during the “Acts” period (Corinthians, Romans and Galatians) continued with the message and program of Peter and the Eleven to Israel and Cornelius.

Peter had the keys of the kingdom of the heavens and the gospel of the circumcision. Paul had the “dispensation of the grace of God for Gentiles” and the gospel of the uncircumcision. Ephesians 3:1 and 2. In Romans 2:16 and 16:25, Paul writes of “my gospel.” Paul did confirm to many Jews the fact that Jesus was Messiah, but during the “Acts” period he preached the gospel of the uncircumcision, the gospel of the grace of God. Let us not forget that there is a difference between grace in a dispensation and “the dispensation of grace.”

It should be obvious to any student of the Scriptures that the “revelation” trip of Paul to Jerusalem “fourteen years after” would have been needless, had Paul been carrying on with Peter’s gospel and program. Galatians 2:1 to 9.

We quote Galatians 2:1 and 2:

“Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas. and took Titus with me also.”

“And I went up by revelation and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain.”

Note the “contrariwise” in Galatians 2:7 and the result of the communication: “But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.”

It may be that Peter, or some other apostle of the Twelve, preached to some Gentiles during the “Acts” period, beside Cornelius and his household, but the fact is, that the Holy Spirit has not given us the record. He has told us that the apostles remained in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1) and of the decision of Galatians 2:9, that the Twelve were to confine their testimony to the circumcision.

It may be that Paul did preach to some Gentiles before he preached to Sergius Paulus, but the Holy Spirit has not revealed it unto us. Acts 13:5 to 14. Let us remember that there was a difference between Grecians (Israelites) and Greeks (Gentiles). The first record of the salvation of Greeks is in Acts 14:1 and 2. We read of Paul’s visit to Jerusalem, as Saul, in Galatians 1:18, and his visit to Jerusalem, as Paul, in Galatians 2:1 and 2. In Acts 22:17, 18 and 21, we read of a visit to Jerusalem.

Acts 22:17, 18, and 21:

“And it came to pass when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance; “And saw Him saying unto me, Make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me.”

“And He said unto me: Depart; for I will seed thee far hence unto the Gentiles:”

In the light of Galatians 2:9 and Acts 8:10, Acts 9:15, and Acts 13:46, Colossians 1:6, I Timothy 2:5 to 7, and II Timothy 4:17, we must ask, in what sense did the Twelve go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature or “disciple all nations”?

Note Peter’s words in Acts 15:7, and Paul’s words in Romans 11:13:

“And when there had been much disputing Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.”

“For as I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:”

We have observed that Paul visited Jerusalem on a most important mission “fourteen years after.” If that visit was fourteen years after Paul’s Jerusalem visit mentioned in Galatians 1:17, that was about seventeen years after Paul was converted, or about 51 or 52 A.D. If it was fourteen years after Paul was converted, it was about 48 or 49 A.D. At any rate, it was nearly twenty years after Peter and the other apostles received the so-called great commission “disciple all nations.” Matthew 28:19 and 20. So the Lord Jesus, in 33 A.D., said to Peter and his associates, “disciple all nations,” “go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” And about 50 A.D. Peter and his associates agreed to go to the circumcision. Galatians

2:9. The decision of Galatians 2:9 was about the same time that James and Peter stood up in the council at Jerusalem.

Note what they said: Acts 15:13 to 18:

“And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And to His agree the words of the prophets, as it is written, After this I will return and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, Who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world.”

If we say that God’ purpose in this age is take out from the Gentiles a people for His name, then why at the time of this declaration did Peter and James agree to limit their ministry to Israelites? If God’s purpose was for them to go to Gentiles and they agreed to go to Jews, they must have been out of the will of God. Where is the Bible record that the Twelve were discipling all nations, when in Acts 8:1, we note that they remained in Jerusalem?

UNCIRCUMCISION—RECONCILIATION THE DISPENSATION OF THE MYSTERY

First we copy from Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians.

Galatians 1:11 to 24:

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: And profited in the Jews’ religion above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers. But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord’s brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia; And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ: But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me.”

Galatians 2:1 to 4

“Then fourteen years after I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and took Titus with me also. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. But neither Titus, why was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.”

It is interesting to compare the message concerning father Abraham, in the fourth chapter of Romans and then go into the sixth chapter of Romans to study the message of the believer’s identification with Christ in death and resurrection. In the comparative study we learn something

of the difference of the Gentile believer's relation to Abram in uncircumcision and his relation to Adam and Christ in the message of reconciliation. With the message of reconciliation we find the doctrine of the new creation and identification.

The second and third chapters of Galatians should be studied with the fourth chapter of Romans. In Galatians 2:7 Paul has the gospel of uncircumcision. In Galatians 3:8 we are told what the Scriptures foresaw when Abram was declared righteous in uncircumcision. Now read;

Romans 4:9 to 11:

“Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.”

In Romans 4:17 we read that Abraham is the father of us all. But let us remember the difference between Abram and Abraham, and the difference between Abram, the father of the uncircumcision, and Abraham, the father of circumcision, and we shall not be so much disturbed about Gentile believers being the seed of Abram, which is quite different from Israel, the fleshly seed from circumcised Abraham.

Remember that the gospel of the circumcision looks back to the year Abram was circumcised and became Abraham (Genesis 17:6 to 17). The gospel of the uncircumcision looks back to Abram justified in uncircumcision twenty-four years before he became circumcised Abraham. Genesis 12:3 and Genesis 15:6 to 8.

But the reconciliation looks back to Adam, nearly 2100 years before Abram left Ur of Chaldees; and this message points to Christ on the cross. There was a difference between Christ sent only to Israel and God in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. The word “atonement” in Romans 5:11 is not the correct translation. It is “katallage” and should be translated “reconciliation.” It is the same word translated “reconciliation” in Romans 11:15.

We quote: Romans 5:10 and 11:

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

In Romans 5:10 and 11, we come for the first time to the word “katallasso,” “reconciled,” and “katallage,” “reconciliation.” “Allasso” means “change” or “adjustment.” This word is translated “change” in Acts 6:14, Galatians 4:20, Romans 1:23, I Corinthians 15:51 and 52, and Hebrews 1:12. “Katallasso” means a “combined change,” “a mutual adjustment.” In Ephesians 2:16 and Colossians 1:20 and 21, the word is “apokatallasso”—“fully mutually adjusted.”

And then what? “Wherefore” in Romans 5:12. Wherefore what The story of the first man and the Second Man, the believer's old man and his new man. Condemnation, ruin, sin and death by Adam. Justification, redemption, righteousness and eternal life by Christ, the last Adam.

Note Romans 5:12 and Romans 5:21:

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

“That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The Holy Spirit certainly places no chapter division between Romans 5:21 and the sixth chapter of Romans. We quote Romans 6:1 to 6:

Romans 6:1 to 6:

“What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

In studying the message of reconciliation, it is interesting to compare Romans 11:15 with Matthew 15:24.

Romans 11:15:

“For if the casting away of them be the RECONCILING of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”

Matthew 15:24:

“But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

In Romans 11:25 this truth is called “this mystery” or “this secret”. The casting away of Israel brought the reconciling of the world.

In Matthew 15:24 we read the words of Jesus Christ, the minister of the circumcision, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” The Gentile woman in that chapter was willing to take the crumbs which Israel let fall under the table. Well, some of the natural branches (Israel) were broken off that Gentiles might be grafted in. Romans 11:19.

But the casting away of Israel had to precede the reconciling of the world. Now the question: When did the casting away of Israel and the reconciling of the world begin?

Compare Acts 13:46, Acts 18:6 and Acts 28:25 to 28 with Romans 11:7. We quote Romans 11:7: “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”

If we say that, during the “Acts” period, Israel’s blindness was gradually coming upon them, we must acknowledge with Acts 28:25 to 28 the climax was reached and the Divine judgment was definitely pronounced, although their desolation (Luke 21:20 to 24) never came until Rome destroyed the murderers and burned up their city. Matthew 22:7.

PAUL’S SPECIAL DISPENSATION

Note Paul’s “whereunto” and the “whereof” in Colossians 1:23 and 25 ; I Timothy 2:7, and II Timothy 1:11.

Colossians 1:23, 25, 26 and 27:

“WHEREOF I Paul am made a minister.”

“WHEREOF I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the Word of God.” “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints.” “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

I Timothy 2:4 to 7:

“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and One Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. Who gave

Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. WHEREUNTO I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ and lie not); a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.”

II Timothy 1:9 to 11:

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: WHEREUNTO I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”

Romans 11:13:

“For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.”

This question has come to so many. Why Paul? If Peter had the dispensation of the grace of God committed unto him, when he preached to Cornelius, what need was there for Paul, and again, why Galatians 2:7 to 9. If Paul went on with Peter’s message without change of dispensation, why did the Lord leave the Twelve in Jerusalem, and send Paul far hence to the Gentiles?

Note the following Scriptures in which Paul emphasizes the fact that he is the teacher and preacher, the apostle and the prisoner, of Christ for Gentiles. I Timothy 2:7; II Timothy 1:11; Colossians 1:24 to 27; Romans 11:13; Romans 15:16; Acts 22:21; Ephesians 3:1 and 2; Ephesians 3:8 and 9; II Timothy 4:17.

In Colossians 1:20 to 23, we read of the reconciliation, the good news preached to every creature under heaven. “WHEREOF”—Whereof what? “I Paul am made a minister.” In Colossians 1:26, we read of the “mystery” hidden from ages and from generations (from all of Israel’s prophets and from the Twelve Apostles). “WHEREOF”—Whereof what? “I am made a minister” . . . “The mystery among the Gentiles.”

In I Timothy 2:4, God will have all men saved. The ransom of Christ for all to be testified in due time. “WHEREUNTO”—Whereunto what? “Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ and lie not); a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.” I Timothy 2:7.

In II Timothy 1:9 and 10, note God’s purpose and grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, concerning members of Christ’s Body and what was accomplished by the redemptive work of Christ.

“WHEREUNTO”—Whereunto what? “Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.” II Timothy 1:11.

Note I Timothy 1:11: “According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to MY trust.”

Note in I Timothy 1:16, Paul declares himself to be a pattern for believers. “Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.”

In these statements, why did not Paul say “we” instead of “I” or “our” instead of “my”? Why did not he include the Twelve?

Note Paul’s “I” and “me” in these verses:

Romans 15:16 and 20:

“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”

“Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation.”

Ephesians 3:1 and 2:

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward.”

Ephesians 3:8 and 9:

“Unto me who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, Who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

Ephesians 5:31 and 32:

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. “

Ephesians 6:19 and 20:

“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.”

Colossians 4:3 and 4:

“Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.”

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES THE FULNESS OF THE GENTILES THE MYSTERY AMONG THE GENTILES

Now let us study together Luke 21:20 to 24 and Colossians 1:24 to 27.

Luke 21:20 to 24:

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereunto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be FULFILLED. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days, for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon the 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.”

Colossians 1:24 to 27:

“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body’s sake, which is the Church. Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to FULFILL the Word of God; Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is

made manifest to His saints, To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

The word translated “fulfil” in Colossians 1:25, could be translated “complete. “

Because Paul, in Colossians 1:25 and 26, declared that Christ chose him to fulfil (complete) the Word of God with the mystery, some brethren conclude that all of John’s Epistles, the Revelation, Peter’s Epistles, Hebrews, and other Books were written before Paul wrote Colossians. Some of these brethren have likewise concluded, because of Paul’s language in Philippians 3:11 to 14, that at the time he wrote Philippians he had not yet attained the hope and calling he enjoyed in Colossians, if indeed he had become a member of the Body of Christ at the time he wrote Philippians. Note the language of Philippians 3:11 to 14.

Philippians 3:11 to 14:

“If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Whatever Paul wanted to attain here, he was pressing for it. The word here translated “press toward” is translated “persecute” in John 5:16; John 15:20, and Romans 12:14. In all of Paul’s messages he made it plain that no sinner had to press or strive to become a member of the Body of Christ. Ephesians 2:8 to 10; Titus 3:5 to 7.

Among the brethren, sometimes called “hyperdispensationalists.” there are some who seek to prove, by II Timothy, chapter 4, that Paul’s execution was postponed and he wrote Colossians after he wrote II Timothy. They claim that II Timothy 4:1 refers to an appearing of Christ different from the appearing of Colossians 3:4. If, according to the argument advanced by these brethren, that the Lord in glory completed the Word of God and added “the mystery” after Acts 28:31, after Thessalonians, Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, Philippians, I Timothy, Hebrews, and John’s Gospel and Epistles and the Revelation were written, after the fulfillment of Israel’s Scriptures ceased, then this question: What about Luke 21:22: “for these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled”?

If it is true, that a new Body had its historic beginning after Act, 28:31, or after Paul’s statement of Philippians 3:13 and 14, and “the mystery” began with that new Body, between 64 A.D. and 66 A.D. because it could not have begun until after Old Testament prophecies had ceased to be fulfilled, “the mystery” and Body would not have begun until Jerusalem was destroyed, about 70 A. D., after Paul had died. But Ephesians 3:5 and Colossians 1:26 answer this error.

The Fulness of the Gentiles

Note again the words of Romans 11:25:

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

This fulness has to do with the Gentiles. Then we read of “The Times of the Gentiles.” And “the mystery among the Gentiles.” These Scriptures have to do with Gentile movements. The last chapters of II Kings, the last chapters of Jeremiah, and the Book of Daniel tell us

concerning “The Times of the Gentiles,” that is, as to when that period began It was about 600 B. C. Israel and Judah went under the Gentile political authority. But spiritual authority remained in the hands of Israel. Esther 8:17; John 4:22; Romans 15:27. The Lord chose twelve apostles, Barnabas and Saul, all Jews.

Now another significant Gentile movement began some time after the Holy Spirit separated Saul for the Lord’s work mentioned in Acts 13:2. Read carefully Acts 13:46; Acts 18:6; Romans 11:11, and Acts 28:28. We quote Acts 28:28: “Be it known therefore unto you (Jews) that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it.” This salvation was sent unto the Gentiles by Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, because of Israel’s blindness. Certainly Acts 28:25 to 28 marks a climax or a crisis; but it did not mark the beginning of Israel’s blindness, or the first time that Paul had preached salvation to the Gentiles because of Israel’s blindness.

Read again the interesting story of Saul, who became Paul, when the Gentile Sergius Paulus, “ (when he saw what was done), believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.” Acts 13:12. What was it that caused Paulus, the Gentile, to believe? The blindness that God sent upon Bar-Jesus. Acts 13:11. BarJesus, the Jew, was an unbeliever. We (Gentiles) have obtained mercy through Israel’s unbelief. Romans 11:30. “Bar-Jesus” means “the child of Jehovah-Saviour.” A blindness is happened unto Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles comes in. There was a radical change in God’s spiritual program after the pronouncement of Acts 28:25 to 28. But there was a radical change when Saul’s name was changed to Paul. The mystery among the Gentiles, “Christ in you the hope of glory,” began long before Colossians was written. Read II Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 2:20; Romans 5:2. The saints in the Body of Romans 12:3 to 5, were foreordained to be conformed to the image of God’s Son and they were sealed unto the very same day of redemption as were the members of the Body of Ephesians and Colossians. Romans 8:29 and 8:23; Ephesians 1:13 and 14; 4:30, and II Corinthians 1:21 and 22.

Therefore, we see that the mystery of Romans 11:25 applied both before and after Acts 28:25 to 28. But gradually spiritual authority, after Acts 28:25 to 28, passed out of the hands of the Jews into the hands of the Gentiles, as political authority had done about 600 B.C. Thus we see that the dispensation, or administration, of the truth which the risen Christ had revealed to the apostle to the Gentiles passed into the hands of Gentiles. II Timothy 2:2. Politically and spiritually we are still living in “The Times of The Gentiles”.

After Acts 28:25 to 28 all that was Israelitish or religious in God’s spiritual program passed away with water baptism, tongues, other signs and miracles. With the close of this period of special Gentile favour the Lord will usher in another Israelitish program when “The Times of the Gentiles” shall have been fulfilled. All Israel shall then be saved, that is, the remnant.

There is a great difference between “Jesus of Nazareth in the midst of Israel, a Man in Palestine” (Acts 2:22) and “Christ in the Gentile the hope of glory” Colossians 1:27.

Read the change described in II Corinthians 5:16; and compare the reconciliation of II Corinthians 5 and Colossians 1.

Every member of the Body of Christ, who is not making others to see what is the fellowship (dispensation) of the mystery, in accordance with Ephesians 3:9, is a disobedient child of God. We must still pray that God will open doors and open mouths for the proclamation of this blessed truth. Colossians 4:3 and 4. Ephesians 6:19 and 20. Also that God will give to believers the spirit of wisdom and revelation to understand this message which was God’s own secret until Christ in glory revealed it to the apostle Paul. Ephesians 1:17 to 23.

We have dealt more in detail in another book “MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING.”

WATER-BAPTISM VERSES

We are presenting every verse of Scripture, from Matthew to Revelation, that mentions “baptism.” If you believe in water baptism, before you examine the Scriptures we are printing hereunder, please tell yourself which of the following significations you give to this water ceremony. Mark the number below.

1. Sprinkling: A seal of the New Covenant which supersedes circumcision, the seal of the Old Covenant.
2. A door of entrance into the visible church.
3. Baptismal regeneration or baptism in water to wash away sin; “born of water.”
4. The outward symbol of an inward work of grace.
5. Household baptism by immersion.
6. Baptism as a witness to the world.
7. To witness that you have begun put to death with Christ, buried with Him, raised to walk in newness of life, and to indicate that you are seated with Him in the heavenlies.

Now before we go any further, which of these seven significations do you give to water baptism?

Next mark all of the following Scriptures which do not agree with your selected signification or interpretation. Then mark those that do agree. How many marks have you against? How many for?

John the Baptist baptized with water that Christ might be made manifest to Israel. John 1:31. This does not agree with any of the interpretations. Did you note that when Christ told His disciples of His death baptism (Luke 12:50) He told His disciples not to tell Israel that He was Christ (Matthew 16:20)? Between Luke 12 and Luke 24 and between Matthew 16 and Matthew 28, there is not a single record of water baptism.

In Acts 2:36 the apostle again witnessed to all Israel that Jesus was Christ and then what? Acts 2:38:

“Then Peter said unto them, ‘Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ “

Now do you believe that John the Baptist’s message of baptism of repentance for remission of sins (Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3), or the same message of Peter on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38), has any place in Paul’s dispensation of grace for Gentiles? (Ephesians 3:1 and 2). Is it not true that the Twelve did not receive so-called Christian baptism after the resurrection of Christ?

Now compare “all the world” in Mark 16:15 and 16 with Acts 10:28 and Galatians 2:9. In Galatians 2:9 the Twelve agreed to go to the Jews and not to the Gentiles. Why?

Have you noticed that in nearly every chapter where baptism is mentioned we find the record of supernatural demonstrations, or visitations, angels, signs, healings, tongues, sabbaths and visions?

Do you believe in the order of Acts 8:5 to 16 or Acts 19:2 to 6: faith—water baptism—Holy Spirit baptism—tongues and signs? This is the same as the order of Mark 16:14 to 18.

Do you think the eunuch in the desert was baptized to become a member of the visible church or that he was in the desert witnessing to the world? Acts 8:18 to 28.

Do you not believe that all saved, sprinkled Presbyterians, “Reformedists” Lutherans and Methodists have been baptized into Christ, into His death, burial and resurrection and therefore that this is fully accomplished without immersion in water?

Do you believe that by water baptism any believer can receive the benefit of Colossians 2:12: “Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead”?

Matthew 3:1 to 17:

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel’s hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were BAPTIZED of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his BAPTISM, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. I indeed BAPTIZE you with water unto repentance: but 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: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be BAPTIZED of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be BAPTIZED of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was BAPTIZED, went up straightway out of the water: and, 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.”

Matthew 21:24 AND 25:

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The BAPTISM of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not believe Him?”

Matthew 20:20 to 23:

“Then came to him the mother of Zebedee’s children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be BAPTIZED with the BAPTISM that I am BAPTIZED with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be BAPTIZED with the BAPTISM that I am BAPTIZED with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

THE GREAT COMMISSION Matthew 28:16 to 20:

“Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus

came and spoke unto them, saying, All power 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: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Mark 1:1 to 11:

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did BAPTIZE in the wilderness, and preach the BAPTISM of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all BAPTIZED of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins. And John was clothed with camel’s hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey; And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have BAPTIZED you with water: but he shall BAPTIZE you with the Holy Ghost. And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was BAPTIZED of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Mark 10:38 to 40:

“But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be BAPTIZED with the BAPTISM that I am BAPTIZED with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the BAPTISM that I am BAPTIZED withal shall ye be BAPTIZED: But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.”

Mark 11:30 to 32:

“The BAPTISM of John, was it from heaven, or of men?, answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.”

Mark 16:14 to 20:

“Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature He that believeth and is BAPTIZED shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.”

Note the order in verse 16—“Believeth”—“BAPTIZE”—“Saved” It does not say “Believeth”—“Saved”—“BAPTIZED”.

Luke 3:1 to 22:

“Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the

region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the BAPTISM of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be BAPTIZED of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you. That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be BAPTIZE, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John ANSWERED, SAYING UNTO THEM ALL, I INDEED BAPTIZE YOU WITH WATER; BUT ONE MIGHTIER THAN I COMETH, THE LATCHET OF WHOSE SHOES I AM NOT WORTHY TO UNLOOSE: HE SHALL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND WITH FIRE: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people. But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison. Now when all the people were BAPTIZED it came to pass, that Jesus also being BAPTIZED, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

Luke 7:28 to 30:

"For I say unto you, Among these that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he. And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being BAPTIZED with the BAPTISM of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not BAPTIZED of him."

Luke 12:49 to 53:

"I come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a BAPTISM to be BAPTIZED with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law, against her mother in law."

Luke 20:4 to 7:

“The BAPTISM of John, was it from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not? But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was.”

John 1:19 to 34:

“And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who are thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that Prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why BAPTIZED thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that Prophet? John answered them, saying, I BAPTIZE with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe’s latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was BAPTIZING. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me. AND I KNEW HIM NOT: BUT THAT HE SHOULD BE MADE MANIFEST TO ISRAEL, THEREFORE AM I COME BAPTIZING WITH WATER. And John bare record, 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. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”

John 3:22 to 28:

“After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and BAPTIZED. And John also was BAPTIZING in Enon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were BAPTIZED. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John’s disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same BAPTIZETH, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.”

John 4:1 to 4:

“When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and BAPTIZED more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself BAPTIZED not, but his disciples,) He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria.”

John 10:40 to 42:

“And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first BAPTIZED; and there he abode. And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.”

Acts 1:4 to 8:

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, 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. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou

at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, it is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

Acts 1:22:

“Beginning from the BAPTISM of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.”

Acts 2:36 to 47:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and 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 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 the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were BAPTIZED: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

Acts 8:9 to 17:

“But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were BAPTIZED, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was BAPTIZED, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were BAPTIZED in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.”

Acts 8:25 to 40:

“And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans. And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said,

Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. The place of the Scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be BAPTIZED? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he BAPTIZED him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Cesarea.”

Acts 9:10 to 20:

“And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in a vision a man names Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeased unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was BAPTIZED. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.”

Acts 22:10 to 21:

:And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. **AND NOW WHY TARRIEST THOU? ARISE, AND BE BAPTIZED, AND WASH AWAY THY SINS, CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD.** And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance: and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in

every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.”

Acts 10:34 to 48:

“Then Peter opened his month, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea and began from Galilee, after the BAPTISM which John preached; How 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. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter let spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with, Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be BAPTIZED, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? and he commanded them to be BAPTIZED in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain says.”

Acts 11:7 to 18:

“And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise Peter; slay and eat. But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth. But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man’s I house: And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed BAPTIZED with water; but ye shall be BAPTIZED with the Holy Ghost. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God? When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”

Acts 13:23 to 25:

“Of this man’s seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus: WHEN JOHN HAD FIRST PREACHED BEFORE HIS COMING THE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL. And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But, behold, there cometh one after me whose shoes of his feet I am not worthy to loose.”

Acts 16:14 AND 15:

“And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of the purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was BAPTIZED, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.”

Acts 16:23 to 33:

“And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailer to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were looses. And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes; and was BAPTIZED, he and all his, straightway.”

Acts 18:5 to 9:

“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man’s house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. AND CRISPUS, THE CHIEF RULER OF THE SYNAGOGUE, BELIEVED ON THE LORD WITH ALL HIS HOUSE; AND MANY OF THE CORINTHIANS HEARING BELIEVED, AND WERE BAPTIZED. Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace:”

Acts 18:24 to 26:

“And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the BAPTISM of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.”

Acts 19:1 to 10:

“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus; and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye BAPTIZED? And they said, Unto John’s BAPTISM. Then said Paul, John verily BAPTIZED with the BAPTISM of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. And all the

men were about twelve. And he went into the synagogue, and spoke boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannns. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.”

In this nineteenth chapter of Acts we have the last Bible record where a believer was BAPTIZED with water. Carefully note the order, “Water BAPTISM”, “Imposition of hands”, “Holy Spirit BAPTISM”, “tongues”.

Is this our order for today? How does this agree with the one BAPTISM of Ephesians 4:5?

ROMANS 6:1 to 7:

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? KNOW YE NOT, THAT SO MANY OF US AS WERE BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST WERE BAPTIZED INTO HIS DEATH? THEREFORE WE ARE BURIED WITH HIM BY BAPTISM INTO DEATH: THAT LIKE AS CHRIST WAS RAISED UP FROM THE DEAD BY THE GLORY OF THE FATHER, EVEN SO WE ALSO SHOULD WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

I Corinthians 1:12 to 17:

“Now this I say, that every one of you saith I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye BAPTIZED in the name of Paul? I thank God that I BAPTIZED none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had BAPTIZED in mine own name. And I BAPTIZED also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I BAPTIZED any other. FOR CHRIST SENT ME NOT TO BAPTIZE, BUT TO PREACH THE GOSPEL: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.”

I Corinthians 10:1 to 4:

“Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all BAPTIZED unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.”

I Corinthians 12:12 to 14:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all BAPTIZED into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.”

I Corinthians 15:29 to 32:

“Else what shall they do which are, BAPTIZED for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then BAPTIZED for the dead? And why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?”

Galatians 3:26 to 29:

“For 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.”

Ephesians 4:1 to 7:

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.”

Colossians 2:9 to 14:

“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in BAPTISM, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.”

Hebrews 6:1 to 9:

“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on onto perfection: not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of BAPTISMS, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this will we do, if God permit. For it is impossible for these who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned. But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.”

Hebrews 9:10:

“Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, (BAPTISMS) and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”

I Peter 3:20 AND 21:

“Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even BAPTISM doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

Now a few words concerning the so-called Great Commission. Note the language of the Great Commission, recorded in Matthew 28:19 and 20:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

As we leave the Great Commission and go to Acts Two, we learn that the twelve apostles preached on the day of Pentecost, to devout Jews, out of every nation under heaven. In Acts 5:29 to 31, they preached that Christ was raised from the dead to give repentance to Israel. We read in Acts 10:28, that it was unlawful for the Twelve to go to the Gentiles, about seven years after the Great Commission was given. We learn in Romans 11:11, Romans 11:30 and Acts 13:46 that Paul went to the Gentiles because of Israel’s blindness, Israel’s unbelief, and Israel’s unwillingness to believe the Gospel. We learn in Galatians 1:11 to 18, that Paul preached the Gospel to the Gentiles under the Commission received from Christ in heaven. We learn in Galatians 2:9, that Peter and his associates agreed to go to the circumcision rather than to disciple all nations. We learn in Acts 8:1, that the twelve apostles remained in Jerusalem. We learn in Colossians, and Romans, and II Timothy that it was Paul who went into all the world and preached to nations.

And then we ask the question: In what sense did the twelve apostles disciple all nations?

Another question: As we compare Matthew with Galatians, can we say that Paul taught the Gentiles, in Galatia, to observe the kingdom program, in Matthew, in accordance with the statement in the Great Commission, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you?”

I am sure we are all agreed that any child of God, any member of the Body of Christ, of any age, male or female, has a right at any time to preach the gospel to sinners. If every Christian, boy or girl, man or woman, giving his or her testimony to any sinner concerning the message of salvation, is doing so under the orders given in Matthew 28:19 and 20, then, that same Christian should likewise do the baptizing if the baptizing in the Great Commission is water.

From back cover.

The God of All Grace

“The God of all grace” is a wonderful name
What a privilege it is, His grace to proclaim;
To tell forth the gospel at home and abroad,
To teach guilty sinners the great love of God.

How He planned it in heaven, to send from above
His bosom Companion, the Son of His love,
To live among sinners, to die on the tree,
To receive Divine judgment for you and for me.

What love and what mercy! What infinite grace!
Christ Jesus was willing to die in our place.
Then God sent the Spirit to convict us of sin,
To make us new creatures and abide then within.

Grace excludes boasting, religion, or deeds;
Provides for the sinner all that he needs.
In Christ we're accepted, complete in God's Son;
Saved without doing, by the work He has done.

Not by man's wisdom, endeavor or plan;
How utterly futile the best work of man!
Because Christ was sinless God can be just
And justify freely all who will trust.

And all who trust Jesus of glory are sure,
Preserved by God's power, forever secure.
For Christ, in God's presence, appears for His own
And makes intercession as He sits on God's throne.

And sealed by the Spirit who abides all the way,
The believer is waiting for that glorious day;
When the blessed Lord Jesus shall in glory appear;
The day of redemption! We wonder how near!

Then all that is mortal no longer shall be
In glorified bodies our Lord we shall see.
And if we are faithful, with Him we shall reign
For our labours in Jesus shall not be in vain.

With such grace abounding, such power Divine!
Why do we falter, doubt or repine?
And why do lost sinners remain in their state
Condemned now already and hereafter such fate?