

UNSCRIPTURAL CATHEDRALS

MARRIED TO ANOTHER

ARE CHRISTIANS CHILDREN OF THE COVENANT?

“MARRIED TO ANOTHER” OR “UNSCRIPTURAL CATHEDRALS”

Can you see any close relation between "Married to Another" and "Unscriptural Cathedrals"? We shall endeavor to convince you that a very close relationship exists.

Is there such a thing as a Scriptural Cathedral? What is a cathedral? Here is the dictionary definition: "The church which contains the cathedra, which is the bishop's official throne or seat of authority." This word, "cathedral" is from the Greek word "kathedra."

The Church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth. I Timothy 3:15. That is, the true Church or Body of Christ, is the immovable support and pillar of the truth. The Church today recognizes but one Head and His Cathedral is in heaven. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Hebrews 9:24. And we cannot over-emphasize the statement of God's Word, "There is but one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." I Timothy 2:5. If Christ were on earth, He would not be a priest. Hebrews 8:4. For He sprang from the Tribe of Judah and priests sprang from the Tribe of Levi. Hebrews 7:14. But He is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls, I Peter 2:25. He is our forerunner, a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Truly the Cathedral of the true Bishop is at God's right hand. He has run ahead of those who shall be His at His coming and now represents them as Advocate and High Priest in the true Sanctuary. Hebrews 6:20 and 7:25.

The Church of the living God is the custodian and dispenser of the truth of God and the gospel of His grace. All of the members of this Church are to be subject one to another, but there are to be no lords or heads over God's heritage; no clergymen and laymen. I Peter 5:1 to 10 "And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father which is in heaven." "One is your Master, even Christ" Matthew 23:7 to 10. There is Almighty Divine power vested in the Church of the living God, the members of which Church are seated in the heavenlies in Christ. Ephesians 2:5 to 8. The only "kathedra" on this earth is not located in any building or held by any hierarchy or order of priests or prelates, but is in the invisible Body of the Son of God, in the weakest member as well as in the most consecrated and gifted saint. The "holy see" is anywhere and everywhere that a sinner saved by grace is functioning as an ambassador or witness of the

crucified and glorified Christ. "Nay, much more these members of the Body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary." I Corinthians 12:22.

THE KATHEDRA OF MOSES

To be sure there has been more than one Scriptural Cathedra. The Lord Jesus recognized the "Holy See" or "Kathedra" of Moses when He was in the land of the Jews nineteen centuries ago. Hear His words:

"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, Saying, The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat (kathedra) All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not after their works: for they say and do not." Matthew 23:1 to 3.

Before you continue to read this message, it would be well to read the entire twenty-third chapter of Matthew's record; for much of the chapter bears on this subject.

In that twenty-third chapter we read the Saviour's terrific denunciation of those who occupied the kathedra, whom he called blind guides, hypocrites, corrupt fools. Christ did not speak against the seat, but against those who sat in the seat. It was because of the kathedra that He told His disciples to observe and do what they were told to do by the unworthy and unclean occupants of the kathedra. This instruction was given to the twelve even after the keys of the Kingdom of the Heavens were promised to Peter. Peter and the eleven were to occupy a kathedra somewhat different from that of Moses; but not until Moses' seat was abolished at Calvary.

Does it not seem strange that the Holy One of Israel should tell the holy ones of Israel to obey the unholy Israelite leaders whom He had declared would neither enter the kingdom nor permit others to do so.

But let us bear in mind that Jesus of Nazareth was born King of the Jews, that He was a minister of the circumcision, that He was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, that He was fulfilling the Old Testament Scriptures concerning His suffering and rejection, that He was confirming the promises made unto the fathers by the prophets, and especially that He was made under the law. Galatians 4:4. Romans 15:8. Matthew 10:5 and 15:24.

Hear His words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy but to fulfill." Matthew 5:17.

After the New Covenant was established by the death and resurrection of Christ, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the law is that which was abolished or destroyed according to II Corinthians 3:13.

Christ did not come to destroy, and yet He did come to destroy and did destroy the Old Testament. He brought it to an end at Calvary, but not before. The twenty-third of Matthew covers a period prior to Calvary. The Son of God was under the law, a minister of the circumcision, with a ministry of confirmation and fulfillment. He recognized, therefore, Moses' kathedra. And because of that recognition, the disciples with Him under that Old Covenant must recognize this authority and know that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present. Hebrews 9:8. They were still in the shadow days of Israel, but God was speaking now in His Son. who was gradually revealing the fact that a different dispensation was to be ushered in and that it would not be possible to put new wine into old bottles.

No one can carefully read the Bible without recognizing that Moses had a Divine kathedra. He was divinely appointed mediator of the Old Covenant. He was Israel's God-given prophet and law-giver. He spoke ex-cathedra to them. He represented Israel's Jehovah. Through

Moses God gave to Israel those certain carnal ordinances, meats and drinks and divers washings which were imposed upon them until the time of reformation. Hebrews 9:10. There was an earthly tabernacle, there were priests and high priests, offerings and sacrifices, feast days, sabbaths, circumcision, holy places and holy things and a holy city. Judaism was the religion of the Jews. The Jehovah that gave that religion to the Jews became the Jehovah-Jew, the Word Incarnate. As a circumcised Jew, made under the Old Covenant which He Himself established with the Jews. He must surely respect His own religion and observe the ritual which properly belonged to that religion.

Jehovah and Israel mutually entered into a covenant at Sinai, but Israel failed to keep their agreement, and therefore Jehovah found fault with them and said, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Hebrews 8:8. Jeremiah 31:31. In the eighth chapter of Hebrews the Lord tells us that the Old Covenant was made with Israel when Jehovah took them by the hand and led them up out of the land of Egypt. That was about 1500 B.C. Four hundred and thirty years before that, He entered into a covenant of pure grace with their father Abraham, and confirmed it with an oath. Galatians 3:17. That Covenant of Promise was not annulled by the Law Covenant, but still remains effective. What relation then does the Law Covenant sustain to the Covenant of Promise and the present Reign of Grace? It stands in between them as a temporary and parenthetical dispensation. Here is the Word of God on the subject:

"It (the Law Covenant) was added because of transgression till the Seed (in the promise to Abraham, Christ) should come, to whom the promise was made." Galatians 3:19.

The promise of the Seed was the gospel which was preached to Abram, the uncircumcised Gentile, 430 years before Jehovah and Israel entered into their agreement. Galatians 3:8. The Gentile today who believes that God raised up Jesus Christ, who was delivered for our offenses and was raised again for our justification, is declared righteous on the same faith principle that brought to Abram—the uncircumcised—the imputed unimpeachable righteousness of the holy, perfect and righteous God. Romans 4:24. The Scripture foreseeing that we could have Divine righteousness without any obligation to the Law Covenant. God preached the gospel to Abram before the law was added because of transgression. What right then has any believing Gentile meddling with Israel's yoke of bondage, by which no flesh was ever justified in God's sight?

Even the believing Israelite during this present Reign of Grace through Christ is dead to the law that he might be married to another. CHRIST.—Romans 7:4.

The Old Covenant formed a middle-wall of partition between Israel and the Gentiles. Ephesians 2:14.

"Who are Israelites: to whom the adoption, and the glory and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service and the promises; Whose, the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen." Romans 9:4 and 5.

At this present time, "a blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." So do not classify yourself as an Israelite, which is proof that you are sharing at least some of their blindness. How vividly does the Scripture in the third chapter of Second Corinthians describe this blindness:

"For until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the Old Covenant which is done away in Christ." II Corinthians 3:14. "But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart". Nevertheless, when it (the heart) shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away." II Corinthians 3:15 and 16.

Yes, even unto this present day the poor blind Jew is hanging on to Moses with at least his finger-tips, with the vail upon his heart. But what a sad spectacle to see not only professing disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in this day of grace, but some real Christians with a firmer grip on Moses, the ten commandments, the Sabbath and Israel's covenant than even the Jews have. If they have turned to the Lord, why is the vail untaken away?

"Why tempt ye God to put a yoke on the neck of these disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?" Acts 15:10.

When the law was taken away, the blindness and vail should have been taken away; but Israel's leaders having eyes saw not. Neither do they see now; for had they believed Moses, they would believe Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Romans 10:4 and 5.

The very same Jehovah who spake all these things and who established the Old Covenant at Sinai, became flesh: was made under the Old Covenant that He might redeem them that were under the Old Covenant. After His death God raised Him up to be a Prince and a Savior unto Israel. Acts 5:31. But after several years of constant pleading, they continued in the footsteps of their fathers resisting the Holy Spirit and when they judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, Paul said, "Lo we turn to the Gentiles". Acts 13:46.

When did the rein of the Law begin and when did the reign of the Law cease? It began at Sinai, and it did not cease with the Sermon on the Mount, or with the Transfiguration of Christ. It was abolished at Calvary, where the handwriting of ordinances, which was against us an contrary to us, was taken out of the way—NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS. Colossians 2:14. Repeat those words and let them sink deep into your heart—"NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS."

It was on the cross that Christ made peace and broke down the middle-wall of partition between Israel and the Gentiles, even the law of commandments in ordinances". Ephesians 2:14. The Gentiles come to God not through Israel's ordinances, but in the same way that uncircumcised Abram came before the law was given: "justified without a cause by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood." Romans 3:24 to 27.

"By Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified through the law of Moses" Acts 13:39.

Our song of redemption is "The just shall live by faith; declared righteous without a cause by grace."

The Reign of Grace had not begun when Christ was a minister of the circumcision in the land of the Jews, preaching the Kingdom of the Heavens message to none but Jews only. He was under the law. He said to the healed leper: "Go show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Matthew 8:4.

The kathedra of Moses had a very definite beginning and a very definite ending. The kathedra of Moses did not go back to Abraham's day, or to Noah's day, or to Abel's day. It went back about 1500 B.C. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses. He who moves Moses' Cathedra this side of Calvary for the Gentile is guilty of a spiritual crime, and the New Testament saint, whose heart is turned to the Lord and yet who clings to Israel's Old Covenant, is guilty of spiritual adultery.

Ishmael, the child of the bondwoman, born after the flesh, the child of the Law, must not dwell under the same roof, with Isaac the child of the freewoman, the child of gracious promise. But never was the former more vicious in his persecution of the latter than in the Church of

Christ today. Cast out the Law child. "If by grace, then no more works; But if of works, then is it no more grace." Romans 11:6. Galatians 4:21 to 31.

What has happened to Moses' kathedra? Done away—II Corinthians 3:11—Abolished—verse 13—Done away in Christ. verse 14.

"In that He sayeth a new, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away". Hebrews 8:13.

"He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second" Hebrews 10:9.

He took it out of the way, "Nailing it to His cross." Out of the way—Abolished—Vanished—Decayed.

Bid it good-bye and look unto the Risen One at God's right hand in glory, even Jesus our forerunner, the author and finisher of our faith. Turn also away from the vain janglers who desire to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. I Timothy 1:6.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be MARRIED TO ANOTHER, to Him who is raised from the dead." Romans 7:4.

ABRAHAM'S KATHEDRA

"Thou art the Lord, the God who didst choose Abram—Nehemiah 9:7.

Abraham surely occupied a very special place in the economy of God, and this God of the living is still the God of Abraham, who was called "The friend of God". From the Almighty, this man Abraham received the two immutable things, the Covenant of promise and the supporting Oath, neither of which was annulled by the law, which could never make the promise of none effect. Galatians 3:17. Hebrews 6:13 to 19.

The heirs of promise have in these immutable things that strong consolation, which the law could not and did not offer.

"What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? Romans 4:1.

A. DECLARED RIGHTEOUS WITHOUT WORKS. Romans 4:2 and 3.

B. DECLARED RIGHTEOUS IN UNCIRCUMCISION. Romans 4:10.

C. ABRAM, THE GENTILE, DECLARED RIGHTEOUS IN UNCIRCUMCISION THAT HE MIGHT BE THE FATHER OF JUSTIFIED UNCIRCUMCISED HEATHEN. Romans 4:11.

D. HAD THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO HIM 430 YEARS BEFORE THE LAW WAS ADDED, THE SCRIPTURE FORESEEING THAT HEATHEN NOT UNDER THE LAW MIGHT BE SAVED.

E. THE PROMISE THAT ABRAHAM AND HIS SEED SHOULD BE HEIRS OF THE WORLD NOT THROUGH THE LAW.

The law was added to the gospel preached to Abraham until that Seed that was promised in that gospel, even Christ, came and was made a curse on the tree. Galatians 3:13 to 19.

The Son of God took on Himself the Seed of Abraham. Hebrews 2:16. As the Seed of Abraham He made reconciliation for sin. verse 17. He was of the Tribe of Judah.

Saul of Tarsus, the Apostle Paul, was of the Tribe of Benjamin and he too was the seed of Abraham. Romans 11:1.

The Jews, who despised and rejected the Son of God, said, we be Abraham's seed." John 8:33.

These were the kinsmen of Abraham, after the flesh, the natural seed of Abraham.

Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. The Scriptures do not speak of the Ishmaelites as the natural seed of Abraham in the same way they do of the Israelites, the seed that came through Jacob. Jacob's name was changed to Israel, and from his twelve sons sprang the twelve tribes of Israel. The word "Israel" occurs in the Bible more than twelve hundred times before we find the word "Jews" for the first time. The Jews are first spoken of in II Kings 16:6, about 740 B.C. The word Jew comes from the same Hebrew as "Judah", one of Israel's, or Jacob's sons. When the nation Israel was divided after the reign of Solomon, the ten tribes in Samaria were called Israel, and the Tribe of Benjamin with some of the Levites remained in Judea and Jerusalem with Judah. Christ came from Judah. This tribe was preserved and they perpetuated the religion given Israel. This religion was afterwards known as Judaism. The Prophetess Anna, who was worshipping in Jerusalem with the Jews at the time Christ was born, was of the Tribe of Asher. Luke 2:36. The woman at the well in Samaria spoke of Jacob as "our father". John 4:12. The people in Samaria were a mixture, but many of the descendants of the ten tribes were in Judea and Galilee when Christ was on earth. For He was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As a nation the house of Israel were called Israel, Israelites and Jews. Some say that "Israel" referred to their nationality, and, "Jews", to their religion; but "Jews" likewise referred to their nationality, and the two words are used inter-changeably and synonymously. When we read in Esther 8:17 that the Gentiles in Persia became Jews, we know this refers to the Jews' religion. Gentiles who embraced the Jews' religion were called proselytes.

Abraham's father, Terah, served other gods. Joshua 24:3. Abram was a Hebrew, but not an Israelite and not a Jew. The same is true of Isaac. Jacob's name was changed to Israel. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had circumcision, but they did not have the religion that God afterwards gave to Israel through Moses. These three men, as well as all of the sons of Jacob, had died before Moses was born. So we should bear in mind that Abraham and all of his great grandsons were dead when Jehovah and Israel entered into the Old Covenant. So strictly speaking, we would not say Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were Jews by religion. They were circumcised under the Covenant of Promise.

Even the males whom Abraham had bought were circumcised with every man child in his house. Genesis 17:13 and 23. Thus it is probable that the proselytes to the Jews' religion were likewise circumcised. Were these Gentile Jews called the seed of Abraham in the Old Testament Scriptures?

In this Church age saved Gentiles are fellow-heirs with the saved Israelites in the same Body; both baptized by one Spirit into that one Body. Ephesians 3:4 to 8. I Corinthians 12:13.

"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." Galatians 3:29.

An Israelite, saved or unsaved, is the natural seed of Abraham; but the unsaved Gentile is not the seed of Abraham. If we refer to saved Gentiles as the spiritual seed of Abraham, and speak of them as heirs, we should know that they are not to inherit the land of Canaan. The natural seed of Abraham, the Israelites, who are saved in this age, are to share the same glorious blessings that are guaranteed to the Gentile members of the Body of Christ; but how can any student of the Word of God say, that there are not to be some saved Israelites who are going to inherit earthly blessings in Canaan?

Abraham is truly called, "the father of us all." Romans 4:16. Justified Gentiles are included. The children of the promise are counted for the seed. Romans 9:8. Therefore, the Postmillennialists ask the Premillennialists, what right they have to separate father Abraham

from his spiritual children in the Body of Christ. These Postmillennialists teach that Abraham's spiritual children in the Church today are in the same Church that Moses and the children of Israel were in-under the Old Covenant which is the same Church that Abraham and his children were in before the law was given. The Premillennialists, on the other hand, believe that these different groups sustain different relations to God, because the position, calling and purpose of believers differ in different dispensations.

We call your attention to some Divine movements, which necessitate the recognition of dispensational divisions in studying them.

About 1930 B.C.

God gave the inheritance to Abraham by promise. The Covenant of Promise was given to Abraham, and confirmed by an oath. A two-fold Covenant; for Israel and Gentiles.

About 1500 B.C.

Jehovah and Israel entered into a Covenant of doing at Sinai. The Law was added to the promise. Israel's religion of meats and drinks, divers washings and ordinances was added. This Law Covenant did not annul the Covenant of Promise, given 430 years before. Galatians 3:17.

About 1042 B.C.

Jehovah made a Covenant with King David and His House, to establish his House and Kingdom forever. II Samuel 7:11 to 17. Christ was born of the House and Family of David, of the Seed of David, in the City of David, to occupy the Throne of David. Luke 1:31 to 33.

About 606 B.C.

Jehovah promised to make a New Covenant with Israel and Judah, in which Covenant He guaranteed to them national redemption, and Household salvation. Jeremiah 31:31 to 38. Hebrews 8:7 to 12.

About 30 A.D.

John the Baptist, Christ and His twelve apostles proclaimed to the lost sheep of the House of Israel "The Kingdom of the Heavens" message. Israel rejected their King, who said right before His death, "This is my blood of the New Covenant." He died, praying for Israel's forgiveness, about 33 A.D.

About 33 A.D.

Peter and the eleven began at Jerusalem preaching to Israel, calling them to repentance and to accept the resurrected Christ as the promised Seed of David raised to sit on His throne. Acts, chapters 1 to 7.

About 35 A.D.

Saul of Tarsus was saved. He went to Arabia and received by Revelation the Grace of Christ message, the message of justification by faith for heathen. He became Paul, the chosen vessel to the Gentiles, with that gospel that God gave to Abram 430 years before He established the Old Covenant with Israel. Galatians 1:8, 3:8.

There is no more interesting and important study in the Bible than the study first of the differences of these Divine movements, and second of the relations of these movements. Certainly the Children of Israel reached and entered Canaan, about 1460 B.C., because of the Abrahamic Covenant. But they dwelt in the land under a different Covenant. They entered into this Covenant about 1500 B.C. at Sinai. Exodus 19:1 to 8. They regarded not that Covenant and God abolished it at Calvary. Between Sinai and Calvary we find the Davidic Covenant 1042 B.C. and the promise of the New Covenant 606 B.C. Israel is yet to be saved, because God's gifts

and calling are without repentance; "This is my Covenant when I shall take away their sins." Romans 11:25 to 31. Surely Israel is yet to inherit and possess Canaan and live there in peace and safety, because the Abrahamic, Davidic and New Covenants are going to be fulfilled during the millennium. Peter and the eleven were apostles before the death of Christ, while He was a minister of the circumcision confirming the promises made unto the fathers, while He was under the Old Covenant, proclaiming the Kingdom of Heaven at hand. They were also apostles to Israel, after Christ took away the First and established the Second. Hebrews 10:9, 8:13. They proclaimed to the lost sheep of the House of Israel the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant, along with the promises made to them through their father Abraham. Paul continued to confirm God's message to Israel, for some years becoming a Jew to the Jews, as one under the law to them under the law; and then he turned to the Gentiles with that part of the Abrahamic Covenant that took in all the nations of the earth. Through Paul, Christ revealed the Reign of Grace for any one and everyone, and also the mysteries or secrets of the Body of Christ, making known unto us that He would defer dealings with Israel as a nation until this period of Divine favor extended to the Gentiles is brought to an end.

We have tried to picture these facts on the chart which we have prepared, showing these different covenants and dispensational changes.

Because so many Christians have failed to properly relate the Abrahamic Covenant to the other plans and purposes of God, including the Body of Christ, and because of the fact that so many have classified Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as Old Covenant characters, and because of the unspeakable confusion concerning Israel and the Church in the minds of so many earnest Christians, we are here presenting for your consideration and meditation, for your diligent study, eight questions, under two groups. If you can answer them to your complete satisfaction, then ask yourself this further question: "have I searched the Scriptures carefully, without denominational prejudice, without fearing or favoring any religious leaders or groups of people"

GROUP 1

- A. IS THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, WHICH IS HIS BODY, THE CONTINUATION OF OLD TESTAMENT ISRAEL, OR THE SAME AS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PROCLAIMED BY CHRIST BEFORE HIS DEATH?
- B. GOD MADE THE OLD COVENANT WITH ISRAEL ABOUT 1500 B.C. HE PREACHED THE GOSPEL TO ABRAM ABOUT 1930 B.C. ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB AND MANY OTHERS OF THE NATURAL SEED OF ABRAHAM AND JACOB DIED BEFORE THE LAW WAS ADDED. IF THEY LIVED BEFORE THE LAW WAS ADDED, WAS THEIR RELATION TO THE BODY OF CHRIST, WHICH IS NOT UNDER THE LAW, DIFFERENT FROM THAT OF THOSE ISRAELITES WHO LIVED UNDER THE LAW DISPENSATION? WHY DO WE CALL ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB OLD TESTAMENT CHARACTERS?
- C. IS IT NOT A FACT THAT DURING THE LAW DISPENSATION, FROM MOSES TO CHRIST, THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION WAS COVERED UP WITH ORDINANCES, MEATS AND DRINKS, HOLY DAYS AND RELIGIOUS RITES AND CEREMONIES, WHICH, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CIRCUMCISION, HAD NO PART IN ABRAHAM'S PROGRAM, AND WHICH HAVE NO PLACE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST TODAY?

- D. AS WE STUDY THE MINISTRY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS, THE MINISTER OF THE CIRCUMCISION, IN MATTHEW, MARK AND LUKE. DO WE NOT FIND THAT THE SON OF GOD, WHO WAS MADE UNDER THE LAW, DID NOT PREACH TO THE SEED OF ABRAHAM THE PURE GOSPEL OF GRACE THAT HE PREACHED TO ABRAHAM OR THE MESSAGE OF RECONCILIATION AND JUSTIFICATION, UNMIXED WITH LAW AND RELIGION. THAT HE AFTERWARD REVEALED FROM HEAVEN TO PAUL? Galatians 1:4 to 12.

GROUP 2

- E. WERE NOT PETER AND THE ELEVEN APOSTLES OF CHRIST BEFORE THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS GIVEN (JOHN 7:39) SENT WITH A MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE AND RESTITUTION FOR ISRAEL, UNDER THE OLD COVENANT? AND AFTERWARDS MINISTERS OF THE CIRCUMCISION (Galatians 2:7 to 9) SENT WITH THE MESSAGE TO ISRAEL CONCERNING THE KINGDOM UNDER THE NEW COVENANT, BUT STILL PREACHING A MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE AND RESTITUTION TO THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL?
- F. IS THERE NOT A MARKED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FUTURE GLORY PROMISED TO ISRAEL IN THE RESTORATION OF THEIR LAND AND KINGDOM AND THE HEAVENLY HOPE AND REWARDS SET FORTH IN THE MESSAGES OF PAUL TO THE MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST?
- G. ARE THE CHILDREN OF PARENTS WHO BELONG TO CHRIST IN THIS AGE ABRAHAM'S SEED. WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE FORMALLY AND PUBLICLY DEDICATED TO CHRIST, BY VIRTUE OF THE PROMISE. "IN THY SEED SHALL ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED"?
- H. HAVE WE SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY FOR TEACHING OR BELIEVING THAT THE SEAL OF RIGHTEOUSNESS UNDER THE NEW COVENANT IS WATER BAPTISM, WHICH HAS TAKEN THE PLACE OF CIRCUMCISION UNDER THE OLD COVENANT?

When Israel gathered in the shadow days of Judaism, for sacrifice and worship, on one of their God-appointed feast-days, their gathering might have been called a church. But Old Testament Israel was entirely different from the Body of Christ.

Then comes the question: "what meaneth the Scripture, they are not all Israel who are of Israel?" Romans 9:6. Does that not mean that the Old Testament saved Israelites and the New Testament Christians constitute the true Israel of God? Surely there were many Israelites under the Old Covenant who were not saved, and there are many professing Christians who are not saved. But God is not dealing with Christians as nations now, as He dealt with Israel as a nation under the Old Covenant. When the Lord said, "therefore, say I unto you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof," (Matthew 21:43), He was dealing with the nation and not with the saved Israelites.

In the Body of Christ there was in the first century, as there is today, an elect remnant of Israelites, that is; saved Jews. Romans 11:6. "But the rest were blinded." The individual Jew must come now, as does the individual Gentile, through the grace of Christ into His Church, which is His Body. But God is going to deal with Israel as a nation, after this dispensation has

been brought to a close. Surely the "all Israel" which are to be saved in Romans 11:25 does not refer to Gentiles who are becoming members of the Church of Christ.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, the Gentiles were strangers from the covenants of promise and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. But not so now. Ephesians 2:11. To these Gentiles God is now sending salvation, to provoke Israel to jealousy. Deuteronomy 22:21 Romans 11:11. The word "Israel" occurs more than seventy-five times in the New Testament Scriptures, and if any Gentiles are included in the "Israel of God", mentioned in Galatians 6:16, it is the exception: for every other reference is to the natural seed of Abraham.

Who are the "children of the kingdom" that are to be cast into outer darkness? Matthew 8:12. No member of the Body of Christ shall have such an experience. These members are translated into the Kingdom of the Son of God's love. Colossians 1:13. We know there is but one Body; but we must acknowledge that there are different Kingdoms in the Bible.

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He said, "many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the Kingdom of the heavens". Was Christ here foretelling that Gentiles would be baptized by One Spirit into one Body with the Jews, or was He not foretelling a condition that will prevail when the Lord shall return to establish His earthly Kingdom? If we admit that the "other sheep" which are not of this fold" refer to the Gentiles who are to be fellow-heirs in the same Body with saved Israelites, why not acknowledge that the Kingdom of Heaven referred to in Matthew 8:11 is the same as the one fold or one flock referred to in John 10:16; and that both referred to the present Church? We do find that the Kingdom of Heaven and the Body of Christ have some things in common, but we also find, when we carefully search the Scriptures, that they differ in many respects. We have Scriptural authority for referring to saved Gentiles as the spiritual seed of Abraham, and we can surely say, figuratively, that the children are sitting down in the Kingdom with the father, but it does seem in the light of the connecting chapters in Matthew that the Kingdom of the Heavens in the eighth chapter has reference to the Messianic Kingdom of Israel's King, which shall surely be established on this earth at some future time.

The first question in Matthew's record is, "where is He that is born King of the Jews." Matthew 2:2. We also have the record that Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God by signs in the midst of Israel. Acts 2:22. We also read that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made unto the fathers by the prophets. Romans 15:8. He was born as Son of David and Son of Abraham. Matthew 1:1. He was the Seed of David. Romans 1:3. The Seed of Abraham. Hebrews 2:16.

With the announcement of the birth of Christ, the angel of the Lord said: "the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:33 and 34. The human heart is not David's throne. That throne was in Jerusalem. The House of Jacob is not the Body of Christ. Christ is the Head of the Church. He is the King of Israel. When He was born, Simeon in the Jews' temple, took the Lord in His arms and spoke of Him as the Glory of God's people Israel and the Light to lighten the Gentiles. Luke 2:25 to 32. Simeon was not waiting for Christ to build His Church. Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel. When a man speaks under the power and control of the Holy Spirit, as Simeon did, he speaks God's truth.

When Christ sent out His twelve apostles to preach to none but the lost sheep of the House of Israel, saying, "the Kingdom of the Heavens is at hand," He certainly was not talking about the Church, which is His Body, made up of both Jews and Gentiles, baptized by one Spirit into the same Body. I Corinthians 12:13. Ephesians 1:22 and 23. For after it was evident that

Israel was going to reject the offer of this Kingdom, Christ said to the same apostles, "On this Rock will I build my Church." Matthew 16:18. He told the Jews that He would take the Kingdom away from them and give it to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. But the Kingdom of the Son of God's love in this dispensation is not the consolation for which Simeon and the nation Israel were waiting. The Disciples of the Lord had scriptural right to say, in the light of Old Testament prophecies, "we trusted it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." Luke 24:21.

If you had been in that company of disciples, more than 1900 years ago, when the Saviour said to His apostles, "in the regeneration (re-creation), when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28), do you not think that you would have joined in their question a little while later:

"WILT THOU AT THIS TIME RESTORE THE KINGDOM TO ISRAEL?" ACTS 1:6.

They did not ask, "wilt thou at this time begin to build a Church in which there will be both Jews and Gentiles, made one in the New Man?" Ephesians 2:14 and 15. The Body of Christ was a secret at this time, an unrevealed mystery. Ephesians 3:3 to 8.

What did Christ mean by the throne of His glory? Was He talking about His eternal heavenly throne? If so, then the "twelve tribes of Israel" means the Church. That would mean that the twelve apostles are going to reign over the Church on heavenly thrones. But this can hardly be the meaning; for Paul was not one of the twelve, and if any apostle is to have any authority over the Church in eternity, it should be that great apostle, to whom the Lord by special revelation made known Church truth for this dispensation.

No, there are several hundred prophecies in the Old Testament Scriptures such as we find in the thirty-sixth and seventh chapters of Ezekiel, the last six verses of the ninth chapter of Amos and the first four verses of the sixty-second chapter of Isaiah, that Jehovah is going to make good to Israel every promise that He made to them in the Abrahamic Covenant, in the Davidic Covenant and in the New Covenant, and bring them back to Canaan, where they shall dwell safely under King David.

Here is a secret, which should not be a secret to any child of God, "a blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in and so all Israel shall be saved." Romans 11:25 to 32. "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Luke 21:24.

"When ye see these things come to pass (at the coming again of the Son of Man), know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand." Luke 21:31. This promise has to do, neither with the building of the Church nor with the taking of the Church to glory: but the establishment of Israel's Kingdom. When Jehovah restores the Kingdom to Israel, it will not be the Body of Christ.

But our Postmillennialist friends tell us that the Premillennialists are making the same blunder which the Jews made in the first century, when they were expecting a visible, physical Kingdom and they tell us that the Lord had to rebuke them by saying, "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." The Kingdom of Heaven was in their midst. The Kingdom of God, into which one could enter by the new birth, was available, and in that sense the Church of Christ is within the Kingdom of God, but the Messianic Kingdom which the Lord will establish on earth for His ancient people, Israel, is different; though part of the same Kingdom of God.

God for the first time is now visiting the nations to take out a people for His name, before He returns to build again the Tabernacle of David. Acts 15:14 to 18. It is one thing for the Lord

to build during this dispensation the Church, which is His Body; it is quite another thing for the same Lord to return and to build again the Tabernacle of David. The Body of Christ is not the Tabernacle of David. Christ is now on His Father's throne in heaven: but surely He is yet to occupy David's throne in Jerusalem. The Scriptures so teach, and that should be sufficient for any child of God. And we are not willing to follow denominational leaders who want us to follow what they call spiritualizing, so as to make Canaan mean "heaven," the throne of David to mean the "human heart," and the House of Jacob to mean "the Church."

As we develop the Abrahamic Covenant from the twelfth chapter of Genesis to the last of the Book of Revelation, we certainly see the very clear and definite promise of an earthly natural seed, and the heavenly spiritual seed, and in the general teaching there is little reason why these two seeds should be confused. Abraham is not the father of Gentile members of the Body of Christ in the same sense in which he is the father of the Jews or Israelites. Romans 11:1. "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." Galatians 3:7. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Galatians 3:29. "Abraham is the father of us all". Romans 4:16.

When the Postmillennialist asks the Premillennialist on what ground he separates Abraham from His spiritual children in the Body of Christ, the scriptural answer certainly cannot be, "because Abraham was an Old Testament character." Let us not forget, that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel) and all of his twelve sons were dead before Jehovah and Israel entered into their Old Covenant when God took them by the hand and led them up out of the land of Egypt. Hebrews 8:8 to 10. Israel entered the promised land because of God's covenant and oath with Abraham. Genesis 15:13 and 14. Moses, Israel's intercessor, pled the Abrahamic Covenant, to keep Jehovah from smiting Israel in the wilderness. Deuteronomy 9:27. Even as Israel entered Canaan thirty-four hundred years ago, and will again enter, because of God's Covenant and Oath with Abraham, even so are Gentiles now becoming members of the Body of Christ and Abraham's (spiritual) seed, because of that part of the Covenant and Oath that refers to us, "In thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Galatians 3:8.

But when Zacharias blessed the Lord, he blessed the Lord God of Israel, "for He hath visited and redeemed His people":

Salvation in the House of His servant David;

To save Israel from enemies;

To remember His holy Covenant (with Abraham) ;

The Oath which He swore to our father Abraham. Luke 1:67 to 79.

That Israel might serve him, when delivered from enemies. This man of God was filled with the Holy Spirit when He uttered these words. He was speaking of Israel's national redemption, which is guaranteed in the Covenant and the Oath, which God gave to Abraham. We must never confuse, in God's promise to Abraham, that which belongs to Israel and that which belongs to the Body of Christ and Gentile salvation in the coming Kingdom age.

Abel, Seth, Noah and others found grace in the sight of God and were declared righteous by faith, years before God entered into the Covenant with Abraham, and if Abraham was not an Old Covenant or Testament character, certainly they were not. Concerning the Gentiles which lived before and after Abraham's time, we read that "God gave them up":

1. To Uncleaness.
2. Unto vile affections.
3. To a reprobate mind.

Romans 1:19 to 32. In these verses the awful condition of the Gentile world is described. Out of the world God chose Abram and through him, the nation Israel, to reveal Himself and His purposes concerning the human race. The attitude of the Jews toward the Gentiles who would not accept the Jews' religion is set forth in Acts 10:28 by the words of Peter about seven years after the death of Christ. Christ had declared a few years previous, in the presence of Peter and the other apostles, that it was not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs. Matthew 15:26. Is it any wonder that after more than fifteen hundred years of God's special favor upon the Jews, the Apostle Paul asked of Israel the question: "is He the God of the Jews only?" They surely seemed to think so. But note Paul's answer: "yes, of the Gentiles also." Romans 3:29. For this answer came from Paul's pen nearly twenty years after the twelve apostles "held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. Acts 11:18. This truly was a radical change.

So far as we have any record, Abel, Seth and Noah had no religious rites mixed with their salvation. They were saved by race through faith on the basis of blood redemption. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as the Children of Israel who lived before Jehovah took them by the hand to lead them up out of the land of Egypt, had no ordinances, baptisms, meats and drinks, holy days, or religious ceremonies, except circumcision, which was for Abram the seal of the righteousness which he had, yet being uncircumcised. Romans 4:9 to 12. Let us remember that Abram was neither a Jew nor an Israelite, except as he prevailed with God, and he was declared righteous more than twenty years before he was circumcised. He was declared righteous on the basis of faith only, without circumcision or religion. All of these men of God, beginning with Abel, sought first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. There lived a man of God sometime in between Abel and Moses, by the name of Job, who said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth, and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job 19:25 and 26. Not one of these men knew anything about this parenthetical and temporary Church dispensation during which the Redeemer is making a New Man.

And whether or not we believe that they were born from above, we do know that they entered the Kingdom of God. And if we see through a glass darkly, with all the light we have in this Church age, certainly they saw and knew much less of Divine truth. Even those who lived from Moses to Christ were all their life time subject to bondage through fear of death and had in them the spirit of bondage unto fear. Hebrews 2:14. Romans 8:15.

Beginning with the call of Abram, the uncircumcised and the circumcised had to come into God's favor through the Covenant of Promise. That Covenant of Promise is in full effect today. Israel was visited in Egypt by God and delivered, because of that Covenant. Exodus 2:23 to 25. They reached the Promised Land because of that Covenant. That nation will yet be restored to national life in that Promised Land, because of that Covenant. Romans 11:25 to 31. After Israel, as a nation, has been gathered from among the Gentiles whither they are scattered and established again with the Tabernacle of David in Jerusalem, and the Gentiles come to God in the Kingdom age, it will be because of that part of the Abrahamic Covenant; "in thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:3. Isaiah 66:19 to 24. Ezekiel 37:22 to 28. Micah 4:2. Amos 9:11 to 15. Zechariah 8:20 to 23.

Christ was the promised Seed. Galatians 3:16. He was made of the Seed of Abraham to make reconciliation for sin. Hebrews 2:16. He was also the Seed of David. Romans 1:3. "Of this man's seed hath God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus." Acts 13:23.

How significant, and yet somewhat perplexing, are such statements. This Seed of David was brought forth to be Israel's Saviour. How about the Gentiles? This Jesus was raised up to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:31. His own words are these: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of Israel." Matthew 15:24. He was born to occupy David's throne. Luke 1:31. He was raised from the dead, according to the prophecy of David, to occupy David's throne in fulfillment of the promises under the Davidic Covenant. II Samuel 7:11 to 17. Acts 2:30 to 33. It does not suggest that He was born or raised from the dead to become Head of the Church, which is His Body.

Now, here is an important fact, that though Christ was the Seed promised under the Abrahamic Covenant. He was born under the Law. Galatians 4:4. He was made under the Old Covenant, and not only was He circumcised on the same day that Isaac was, but He recognized the authority of the Moses' Kathedra. Matthew 8:4. 23:1 to 3. The Old Covenant was added to the Abrahamic Covenant of Promise, and to the gospel which God preached to Abraham 430 years before the Law was added, till the Promised Seed came and took the handwriting of ordinances out of the way, nailing it to His cross. Colossians 2:14. Galatians 3:19.

When the Children of Israel through their mediator, Moses, entered into the Old Covenant with Jehovah at Sinai, not only were the ten commandments added to the gospel of justification without the deeds of the law; but also carnal ordinances, divers baptisms, meats and drinks, Levitical priests, an earthly sanctuary, holy places made with hands, feast days, new-moon days, sacrifices, offerings, lampstands and an Old Covenant Sabbath with Israel. Exodus 31:12 to 18. Jehovah met and communed with Israel from above the mercy-seat. Exodus 25:22. So let us remember that none of the Jews' religion here described existed before they left Egypt, and at the time they left that country, all of the twelve sons of Israel were dead. We must repeat this fact, because the great majority of Christian preachers speak and teach as if Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived under the Old Covenant.

Likewise, here is another most important point to observe: that although Christ actually broke down the middle-wall of partition between Israel and the Gentiles when He died on the cross, that fact was unknown or unappreciated by the twelve apostles for some years after they entered into the New Covenant dispensation. About seven years after Pentecost Peter declared, "of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons", (Acts 10:34), yet some years after that he refused to have Christian fellowship with saved Gentiles. because of his fear of the circumcision. Galatians 2:12. So far as we have any record in the Book of Acts, which covers a period of thirty years from the resurrection of Christ to the time that Paul reached Rome as a prisoner, the headquarters of the twelve was Jerusalem: ministers of the circumcision. Acts 8:1. Acts 21:18 to 25. Galatians 2:7 and 9. During that transition period the Christian Jews learned slowly and gradually that which Paul set forth in His epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians; that Christ on the cross broke down the middle-wall of partition and blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us and contrary to us. Ephesians 2:11 to 18. Colossians 2:11 to 18.

When we get into the messages that the risen Lord gave us through His apostle to the Gentiles we learn that which was unknown to many "Jews which believed" in the transition period; and that is, that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross to deliver Israel from the curse of the law; that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles; that we might receive the Holy Spirit by faith. Galatians 3:13 and 14. The blessing of Abraham for us, is to be declared righteous on the principle of faith, just as uncircumcised Abram was-without the deeds of the law-without religion or religious ceremonies. In other words, the Lord Jesus Christ died to strip

the gospel of grace of religion. But even today the Bible teacher who separates the grace of Christ from religion must be persecuted even as Hagar and Ishmael persecuted the son of the free woman, Isaac. Galatians 4:21 to 31. Read Acts 21:18 to 28 and see how the believing Jews were zealous of the law, clinging to the Old Covenant, nearly thirty years after Christ took away the first and established the second.

In our thinking we cannot but ask what will be the different positions and rewards of the different companies of saints in the eternal beyond. Moses and Elijah were on the Mount of Transfiguration together. They were saved during the same dispensation. But will Enoch, who was saved before God made His Covenant with Abraham, be with Elijah, who was saved during the Law dispensation? Will they be in the same company in the eternal ages? Will Abraham, Isaac and Jacob be in the same company with the Children of Israel who were saved during the Old Covenant period? Will the Children of Israel, saved during the Old Covenant dispensation, be in the same heavenly company with the Gentiles who are now in the Body of Christ? Many able Bible teachers tell us that the twenty-four elders seen in heaven in Revelation 4:4 represent the Old Testament saints (twelve) and the New Testament saints (twelve). They tell us they are all there together, immediately after the rapture of the Church; and yet those same teachers tell us that the Old Testament saints have no part or place in the Body of Christ. Most of these same teachers tell us that the natural seed of Abraham, that is the saved Israelites under the Old Covenant, were promised Canaan. Now, of course we desire to ask the question; are those Old Covenant Israelites really going to inherit Canaan, or are they going to be in heaven as a company of redeemed children of Abraham in a different company from the members of the Body of Christ? We have already noted that in the re-creation the twelve apostles of the Lamb are going to occupy twelve thrones, which are not in heaven, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Now here are some other Scriptures to examine carefully:

"BLESSED ARE THE MEEK: FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH." Matthew 5:5.

"DO YE NOT KNOW THAT THE SAINTS SHALL JUDGE THE WORLD? KNOW YE NOT THAT YE SHALL JUDGE ANGELS?" I Corinthians 6:2 and 3.

"AND WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH" (REDEEMED ONES). Revelation 5:10

"AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST A THOUSAND YEARS." Revelation 20:4.

"THE EARTH SHALL BE FULL OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD, AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEA." Isaiah 11:9.

NEVERTHELESS. WE ACCORDING TO HIS PROMISE. LOOK FOR NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH. WHEREIN DWELLETH RIGHTEOUSNESS." II Peter 3:13.

Thus while we cannot understand all of the glorious things that God hath prepared for them that love Him, we believe that Satan's question was well asked, "doth Job fear God for naught?" No man in any dispensation ever did or ever will.

The promise that Abraham should be heir to the world was not to him, through the Old Covenant, but through the righteousness of faith, 430 years before the Old Covenant was established. Romans 4:13. To the heirs of promise God has given a strong consolation in the Covenant and Oath given to Abraham. Hebrews 6:18. Peter writes of an unending, incorruptible inheritance that is reserved in heaven for believers. I Peter 1:4.

Surely the Scriptures teach us that Abraham sustains a different relation to the Body of Christ than does Moses or anyone saved during the Law period. Like the members of the Body

of Christ today are not under the law, but are justified freely by God's grace: even so was Abram declared righteous. We might say, that religion was added to the gospel of grace till Abraham's Seed came and lived thirty-three or four years in the midst of that religion and then nailed that religion to His cross and took it out of the way. Some years later that risen Christ revealed to His servant Paul, out in Arabia, that he was to preach the grace of Christ to heathen who were to be brought into salvation through the Abrahamic Covenant. Galatians 1:5 to 12. Galatians 3:6 to 18. He was to tell the Jews and Gentiles that God gave the inheritance to Abraham by promise 430 years before He entered into the Old Covenant. Galatians 3:16 and 17. But the true secret of the Body was not revealed until after Paul reached Rome, and said, "the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles." Acts 28:28. Then in the Colossians and Ephesian epistles the glorious, blessed position of the Body of Christ is declared.

I cannot see how any student of the Word of God can fail to note that the members of the Body of Christ, raised up and seated with Him in the heavenlies, blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Him, do have a more exalted position than the saved ones of past ages. Surely the mission, ministry and destiny of the Church of Christ in this age differs greatly from the purpose, privilege and position of Israel. It is indeed a great blunder to say that the Body of Christ is the continuation of Israel's Church. The risen Lord and Head of the Church is soon coming to take the members of His Body through the clouds to glory. I Thessalonians. Some time after that He is coming as Israel's Messiah and King, to establish again the throne and kingdom of David and to literally fulfil the New Covenant:

"THEY SHALL TEACH NO MORE EVERY MAN HIS NEIGHBOR. AND EVERY MAN HIS BROTHER, SAYING KNOW THE LORD: FOR THEY SHALL KNOW ME FROM THE LEAST OF THEM TO THE GREATEST OF THEM, SAITH THE LORD; FOR I WILL FORGIVE THEIR INIQUITY. AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SIN NO MORE." Jeremiah 31:34.

But some tell us that the Lord offered this to Israel when He was here and they would not accept, and therefore, God has no future plan for Israel, except as individual Israelites are saved: God declares, in this present reign of grace, that His wrath is unto the Jew first. Romans 2:9. There is much speculating and reasoning by some Bible teachers today, apart from the Word of God as to Jewish salvation. Some are teaching that all of the natural seed of Abraham through Jacob are going to be raised from the dead to inherit Canaan. Others are teaching that any orthodox Jew in this age, who is still longing with a contrite heart for the coming of the Messiah and is making sacrifices unto God, believing in Moses, but blinded concerning the Messiahship and sacrifice of Christ is saved. Others are teaching that only the Israelites who are saved during the great tribulation. such as the 144,000 in Revelation 7:4, and those believing the testimony of the two witnesses in Revelation 11:3 will receive the Kingdom blessings during the millennium. Others, as we said before, believe that the Israelites saved in the Old Covenant will share the millennium blessings with the Israelites that will be saved during the Great Tribulation. Jeremiah 30:5 to 12. Others say this would be rather impossible, for they are seen in glory with the members of Christ's Church in Revelation 4 and 5. and they will not have earthly bodies. But how about the twelve apostles sitting on the twelve thrones in the midst of the twelve tribes?

There is room for much speculation, but the Lord has not willed to reveal all of the details to us. We may be sure of this, the Church has a heavenly hope, and is not the same as the Israel of God who will inherit the Promised Land and worship David their King.

We also know that after the Church has been called to meet the Lord in the air, the Laodicean Church will go out into that time of great sorrow: that the religious tares are going to

be put into bundles to be burned; that foolish virgins will be visited with awful judgment; that Christ will visit Christendom with the vengeance of God, and that before the millennium is established, a third part of the earth will be destroyed and many other judgments will fall. I Thessalonians 1:5 to 10—2:4 to 11. Revelation 9:15. Revelation 3.

Other teachers tell us that Christ took away the first and established the second, when He came the first time, and that the same tenth chapter of Hebrews that gives us this information declares that the New Covenant is now being fulfilled. Hebrews 10:16 to 18. For this reason, many of them say that Israel is the Church and that the Church is Israel. Paul speaks of the Church of God which He purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:28. This is the blood of the New Covenant, and we are able ministers of the New Covenant. II Corinthians 3:6. Therefore some optimistic Postmillennialists say, as all are to know the Lord from the least to the greatest, and as there are to be no future covenants; therefore under this present New Covenant before the Lord comes back, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, and the glorious millennium will be ushered in through the gospel program of the Church. If this be true, then the Scriptures certainly contradict themselves in many places, for every picture that we have in the Bible of the closing days of this present dispensation, in the epistles of Paul, is a dark one.

God's program is stated in Acts 15:14 to 19. He will now build the Church, then He will save Israel, then through Israel the Gentile nations will be brought to God with the Kingdom message. This does not mean that any one will have the right to reject the gospel of grace now and then be saved after the coming of the Lord.

Then, again the question: with which redeemed company will Abraham spend eternity? If he is the father of us all, including the members of the Body of Christ, as well as the Israelites, his natural seed who are going to inherit Canaan, why should he be separated from his spiritual seed in the Church? It cannot be because he was an Old Testament saint. But we ask, why should he be separated from his natural seed? Some one asked, "why he could not be related to both?" The twelve apostles are to have a relation to Abraham's natural seed in the re-creation. John the Baptist spoke of himself as the "friend of the Bridegroom", and some teachers believe that means the Old Testament saints will be friends of the Bridegroom and that the Body of Christ is His Bride. But again, we ask the question, did Abraham and John the Baptist belong to the same dispensation?

GROUP 2

Doubtless you have heard the cry of the Modernist, "Back to Jesus". Give us the program of the Master. They seem to prefer the moral philosophy, the Sermon on the Mount, the golden rule of Jesus, the religion of the Master, to the message of Paul. In Paul's message of grace there is no glorying in wisdom, culture, in human attainments; there is no place for religion. In the true sense, religion is what man does for God to win His Divine favor. In Paul's message such efforts are altogether futile. Every man must take his place at Calvary as an ungodly sinner and be saved by grace without works. A religious man revolts against such a proposition. But as the Gospel of John demands that the sinner take the same humble position, the Modernist wants the Jesus of the synoptic records, Matthew, Mark and Luke. Of course, if you can get at the Modernist with a close examination, there is much that he does not want in these three records. But he prefers them because the message of salvation is covered up with religion and there is so much said

about the keeping of the law..... doing doing. The Modernist is the modern Cain. He prefers works and ethics to sacrifice and blood.

The message of grace and salvation can be found in Matthew, Mark and Luke, but surely you have noticed how much it is mixed up with the Jews' religion. The great internal enemies of the Christian Church are Ritualism, Modernism and Fanaticism, all of which come because men and women insist on frustrating the grace of God with Judaism. Think of borrowing from Israel's tabernacle or temple their lamp-stand (or candlesticks) when the Light of the world is the true Head of the Church. While Christ was in the land of the Jews, He was a worshipping Jew. To go back to Jesus, is to go back under the Old Covenant in the shadow days of Israel. Is it not far better to get our message of salvation in Romans, Galatians and Ephesians? Paul was once back where Jesus was, under the law, but you read carefully what he has written in Philippians 3:4 to 9. Or we find the pure gospel of grace in John's message. Matthew, Mark and Luke contain a mixture of Old Covenant truth and New Covenant truth concerning Israel, and very much for the Church of Christ, but these records are filled with Israel's sabbaths and ceremonies, the religion of the Jews, in an age when the Holy Spirit was not yet. John 7:39. During the earthly days of Jesus of Nazareth His disciples were not baptized in or with or by the Holy Spirit; neither were they in the Church, which is His Body.

Surely when the Lord yielded up the ghost on the cross. and the veil in the temple was rent from top to bottom, it was God's purpose to strip the message of grace of all religion. In the mind of the Lord, the time of reformation had come, the end of Jewish carnal ordinances, meats and drinks and divers baptisms; but most certainly the knowledge of this truth came to the "Jews which believed" including the twelve apostles, very slowly. Nearly thirty years after Christ took away the first and established the second, some of his chief disciples and apostles were practicing Old Covenant rites. Acts 21:18 to 25. Some people believe that Israel will not only rebuild their temple in Jerusalem, but that their Messiah will again lead them to some of their former ceremonies. The twelve apostles will judge them in Jerusalem. The twelve apostles remained in Jerusalem during the Book of Acts. We have no record in that book that they preached outside of their own land. There is no record that any of them preached a single message to a heathen. Peter preached to the household of Cornelius, a religious, devout, God-fearing Gentile who stood well with Israel. They were ministers to the Jews. Galatians 2:7 and 9. Read Acts 11:1 to 18.

On the day of Pentecost and thereafter in the Book of Acts, the twelve apostles were not preaching the gospel which God preached to Abraham before the law was given. "in thy Seed shall all the families be blessed." Galatians 3:8. They were preaching the New Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, the Prophecy of Joel, etc. They were presenting that part of the Abrahamic Covenant that shall be merged with the Davidic and New Covenant when the Messiah comes again and Israel shall look upon Him whom they pierced. Peter and the eleven preached to Israel the words of David, concerning the Christ who was to occupy his throne. Acts 2:30 to 33. They preached concerning the restitution of all things. Stephen saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. Peter and the eleven continued the message of John the Baptist, "Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins." Compare Luke 3:3 with Acts 2:38. It is very significant that they remained at Jerusalem. There was no apostolic succession. Matthias took the place of Judas, which is the only case of apostolic succession. When James died, no successor was appointed. Peter is the prominent apostle in the first half of the Books of Acts and then he gradually decreases as Paul increases, for he is to be the Church apostle, the chosen one

to receive from heaven a new commission, the grace of Christ and revelations concerning the great secret, the Body of Christ.

Paul, too, recognized the Jews priority rights in the early part of his ministry and he really gave his first important message to them along the same line that Peter and Stephen followed. Compare Acts 2 and 7 with Acts 13. Paul also presented to them the Davidic Covenant. Acts 13:22 and 23—34 to 36. In that chapter he begins that gradual turning to his true mission, "Lo we turn to the Gentiles". Acts 13:36. "From henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles." Acts 18:6. "The Salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles". Acts 28:28. "Apostle of the Gentiles." Romans 11:13. "The prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles". Ephesians 3:1. "That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." Ephesians 3:8. "A teacher of the Gentiles." I Timothy 2:7. "Apostle and teacher of the Gentiles". II Timothy 1:11.

Christ said to this apostle who was born out of due time: "Make haste and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem." "I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles." Acts 22:19 to 21. So never make that most serious blunder of numbering Paul with the twelve apostles. His ministry, calling and message were altogether different. He did not confer with the twelve for his message, which came to him direct from heaven, and when he had a conference with those who were apostles before him, they added nothing to him. Galatians 1:12 to 24. Galatians 2:6. He had to take such a definite stand against the "Jews which believed" that the grace of Christ might continue with the Gentiles, that he even lost his traveling companion, Barnabas, in the dissimulation; and he and Peter had a real controversy over the matter. Galatians 2.

The eleven were in a mountain in Galilee, when the resurrected Christ said to them: "Go ye therefore, and teach (disciple) all nations, baptizing them (into or unto) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; 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." Matthew 28:16 to 20. This is called, "The Great Commission".

We have already called attention to the difference between Christ's message in Matthew's record and the message which the risen Christ revealed through Paul in Romans and Galatians. Did Paul instruct the heathen to observe all that the eleven apostles were commanded in the Book of Matthew? Do you believe that Paul ever preached to the heathen; "Repent. and be baptized for the remission of sins, and yet shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?" Do you know of any case in the Book of Acts where any of the apostles baptized with water in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit?

We do know that on the day of Pentecost there were devout men from every nation on earth; but they were Jews and proselytes. But do we have any record in the Book of Acts that during the thirty years after Pentecost the twelve apostles disciplined all nations, when we know that they remained in Jerusalem? Is it not a fact that when the twelve apostles shall occupy the twelve thrones over Israel in the coming Kingdom age that all nations will come to be disciplined? Micah 4.

Luke's message from the resurrected Christ is expressed in these words: "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." Luke 24:47 and 48.

Now, my honest conviction is, that the risen Lord gave to the twelve apostles first His message, ministry and program for Israel, beginning with the day of Pentecost; and that because of Israel's unwillingness to repent the Kingdom message of restitution to Israel was gradually withdrawn, and then God changed the message, ministry and program and gave to the Apostle Paul the why, the wherefore and the what of that radical change, to declare in His epistle to the

Romans which was written about 60 A.D. I cannot understand how any student can compare the first seven chapters of the Book of Acts with the Roman Epistle and fail to notice the marked difference. The change in the program, to be sure, is stated in Acts 15:14 to 18, but the why and wherefore are to be found in the dispensational portion of Romans, chapters nine, ten and eleven. God's original plan to restore the kingdom to Israel and then disciple the Gentile nations has not been abandoned. He shall surely do this in the coming Kingdom age. But during this dispensation He is making of believing Jews and Gentiles a New Man, the Body of Christ. The message today is neither, "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand", nor, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Neither is Israel's program of signs and healings in order to-day. Read and read again—many times—the first three chapters of Galatians and read and study carefully with these three chapters, the epistle to the Romans beginning with 3:24. Can you imagine Peter and the eleven given such a message as this to Israel on the day of Pentecost: "declared righteous without a cause": "Jews and Gentiles alike"?

Paul was given from heaven the "Grace of Christ" to preach to heathen. They are the poor, the maimed, the halt and the blind that the Lord's servants are to compel to come in, that His house might be filled; because He was angry with Israel. Luke 14:23 to 25. In spite of such clear teaching, there are Christians who want to make poor sinners agonize and beg God to receive them. These little dogs under the table are getting in before Israel's King rebuilds the Tabernacle of David and gives the Kingdom message to the Gentile nations. Matthew 15:24 to 28. Mark 7:28. They are getting in with the remnant of Israelites, according to the election of grace, cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and are being grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, to partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree; to provoke Israel to jealousy. Romans 11:24—1:17—11:11. Let us repeat that this message through which the Gentiles get in to become fellow-heirs with Israelites in the same Body, was not communicated to Paul by the twelve apostles, but was given to him by the risen Lord in Arabia. Ephesians 3:1 to 10. Galatians 17 to 12. 2:6. If the risen Lord had wanted Paul to work with the twelve apostles under the Great Commission and Israel's New Covenant and Davidic Covenant, why did He not permit him to go up to Jerusalem with those who were apostles before him to get his orders, as Philip and Stephen and others had to do? Paul's message to the heathen was that part of the Abrahamic Covenant that promised blessings to all the families and nations of the earth, which promise is to be literally fulfilled in a future dispensation, but which God is at present using to gather out a people for and unto the name of Christ. Galatians 3:6 to 17. Taking out a people for His name is not discipling all nations and we can easily see why a Postmillennialist would teach that the Great Commission is being fulfilled in this dispensation, but it is difficult to understand why a Premillennialist should make such a statement.

It is rather a serious mistake to confuse the Kingdom message in Acts with truth which relates directly to the Gentile members of the Body of Christ.

This of course leads us to ask this question: "Just when did the Church, which is His Body, begin?" Of course, we cannot agree with those who call John the Baptist the founder of the Church of Christ. Others say that the Church did not begin until the close of Acts. Certainly this does not seem to stand the test of Scriptures. Others believe that the Church began after Stephen was stoned in the seventh chapter of Acts. Others believe the Church began with the conversion of Cornelius in the tenth chapter of Acts. But the great majority of dispensational Bible students teach that the Church began at Pentecost. We know that the Body secret was not revealed during the Book of Acts, so far as we have any written record, but that should not be

considered evidence that the Church did not exist before that revelation. There are some who believe that the only ones who were ever baptized with the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ were the disciples on the day of Pentecost and the household of Cornelius, and it was to these two groups only that Paul referred in his first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 12 verse 13. They tell us there has never been such a thing as baptism with the Holy Spirit, to enter the Body of Christ, or for any other purpose, since Cornelius was saved. But those who teach this desire to prove that the one baptism in Ephesians 4:4 is "water" baptism.

Is it possible that the disciples of Christ during the first chapters of the Book of Acts were baptized into the Body of Christ and did not know it? We read in Acts 2:47, "The Lord added daily to the Church such as were being saved." Does this mean, to the Jewish Church organization or to the Body of Christ? One thing we may be sure of, is this; if the believing Jews and the believing Gentiles during the Book of Acts were really one in Christ, fellow-heirs in the same Body, with the same position and privileges, many of the "Jews which believed" did not realize it.

I have always believed and taught that the Church began at Pentecost, and while I know with that view there arise many questions and problems; the same is true, if we postpone the beginning of the Body of Christ to the time that Paul reached Rome. We certainly learn in such chapters as the fifteenth and twenty-first chapters of Acts, and also the second chapter of Galatians, that there was one order for the Jews which believed and another for the Gentiles which believed. Paul recognized those two orders. Where Gentiles were not concerned, he became a Jew and as one under the law of Israel. I Corinthians 9:20 to 25. Acts 16:3. Acts 21:24 to 28. Whether we begin the Church with Pentecost or after the Book of Acts, we must recognize the transition period of signs and miracles, laying-on of hands, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, as outlined in the twelfth chapter of I Corinthians, from the time the Twelve asked the question, "wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" to at least the day that Paul said, "the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles." Between these dates, God's order was certainly, "to the Jew first", and the Book of Acts, which is a record of that period, is more than eighty percent Israelitish.

We remember that Moses as leader of the twelve tribes of Israel lived in two dispensations. He lived with Israel before the curse of the law was added and after it was added. Peter as leader of the twelve apostles, messengers to the twelve tribes, lived before the curse of the law was taken away and after it was taken away. Peter and the eleven lived before the Holy Spirit was given. John 7:39. They also lived after the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost. Many so-called Bible teachers tell us that all Christians must experience the second work of grace in the baptism of the Holy Spirit because the twelve apostles did. This is as unscriptural as the teaching that there is no such thing as Holy Spirit baptism for this dispensation. The Apostle Paul could never have had the same experience as Peter, because he was saved in a different dispensation, after the Holy Spirit was given. Compare Matthew 10:3 to 7, Acts 2:38. Galatians 3:13 to 14 and Ephesians 1:13.

To the eleven, Christ said: "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16. Certainly that message was never preached by the Apostle Paul. He was saved as the Jew, Saul of Tarsus: but he never preached to heathen the order he followed at the time he was converted to Christ. One of the leading Fundamental preachers of this day, a mighty defender of the faith, preached a great sermon on Mark 16:16 and gave it as the message of the Church for today, whereas the very policy of his church is quite different. He refuses to baptize with water any one until he is sure that one is saved, and he condemns those who do. He unconsciously changes

Mark 16:16 to read: "he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized." Pray tell what right he has to thus change the Scriptures? He bitterly assails the Pentecostal preachers because they insist on water baptism for salvation and teach that the Church should follow Mark 16:16, which he himself refuses to follow. Let us be honest, and if we are going to follow today the message given to Peter and the eleven in the sixteenth of Mark, let us preach Acts 2:38 to the Gentiles and see that the signs of Mark 16:17 and 18 follow.

There are other teachers who really scoff at Christians who teach "household baptism," and insist that Mark 16:16 demands faith before baptism and because a little child cannot exercise faith, he should not be baptized. But these same teachers never follow Mark 16:16, for they demand salvation before water baptism. Moreover, these same teachers turn to the tenth chapter of First Corinthians to prove that Paul taught for the Church today water baptism by immersion: "And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." verse 3. If the examples in verse six refer to water baptism for this age, then the example is that all of the little children had the same experience as their parents. "The children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea." Exodus 14:29. "The waters covered the host of Pharaoh", verse 28. It was the host of Pharaoh who were immersed. If the experience of the children of Israel there is to be a type of Christian baptism, there can be such baptism without water.

If the "ordinances" in I Corinthians 11:2 include water baptism, why should not the children of the believing Corinthians be included, for Paul wrote to them that their children were holy. I Corinthians 7:14. But the word "ordinances" in that verse is "paradosis" which means precepts", "traditions" (II Thessalonians 2:15) or "things intrusted". Of course, any real student of the Word of God knows that if there had been any saving value in water baptism, Paul would not have said: "I thank God I baptized none of you but"—I Corinthians 1:14. He travailed in birth until Christ was formed in Gentiles. And for the salvation of Israelites he could wish himself accursed from Christ.

Among those whom Paul baptized at Corinth was "the household of Stephanas". I Corinthians 1:16. Were there any children in this household so young that they could not exercise saving faith in Christ.? Who knows? If we are to take the experience of the children of Israel in the tenth chapter of this epistle to be a type of the Christian's water baptism, then surely we must include the young children, for they had the same experience as their parents when they crossed the red sea. If we go back to Mark 16:16 to prove that faith must precede baptism, then let us prove by the same verse that baptism must precede salvation. We tremble when we think of departing from our denominational training.

Lydia and her household were baptized Acts 16:15.

The Philippian jailer and all his were baptized..... Acts 16:33.

All of the house of Cornelius were baptized Acts 11:34 and 10:48.

In the eighteenth or Acts we have the record of Paul's experience in Corinth; "And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized." Here the record is that they believed and were baptized. Some declared that they had to be baptized in order to be saved, in accordance with Mark 16:16. Others declare that they were baptized with water as an outward testimony of their salvation.

All are agreed that the Bible teaches "household baptism", but as to the individuals that make up the household there is much disagreement.

Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised. Isaac was eight days old when he was circumcised. Abraham was able to act intelligently in submitting to the rite, or rejecting it. Isaac was not. Isaac was in Abraham's household. We are not surprised then that

Christian denominations, that teach that the Church is a continuation of Israel and that water baptism has taken the place of circumcision, believe in household baptism, including infants, although they include their girl children in the baptism. They include all of their children under the covenant. Those who rebuke them for this practice, saying that the members of the Body of Christ are not included in the Abrahamic Covenant, are mistaken.

But on the other hand those who insist that water baptism under the New Covenant has taken the place of circumcision under the Old Covenant lack scriptural proof for their position. Circumcision was instituted when Abraham was ninety-nine years old. Genesis 17:6 to 27. Abram was declared righteous on the basis of the Covenant that God made with him twenty-four years before he was circumcised. The circumcision was the seal of the righteousness which Abram had yet being uncircumcised. Romans 4:10 to 13. In the case of baptizing adults, should we wait twenty-four years after they believe? If Abram was circumcised that he might be the father of the circumcision, and if he was declared righteous in uncircumcision that he might be the father of the uncircumcision, is not that proof that Gentile believers should not be baptized in this age. If water baptism has taken the place of circumcision? Abraham's circumcision was the seal of his righteousness and the sign of the Covenant. His righteousness was because he believed God. Genesis 15:6. But Isaac was unable to exercise faith when he was circumcised, at the age of eight days. Surely he was included in the Covenant, and no student of the Word would say that Isaac did not sustain a different relation to God than did the children of the unrighteous heathen in Canaan.

John the Baptist certainly did not intimate that water-baptism was to take the place of circumcision. In fact he would never have baptized any one who was not circumcised. The same is true of the twelve apostles on the day of Pentecost.

"FOR AS MANY OF YOU AS HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST HAVE PUT ON CHRIST. AND IF YE BE CHRIST'S, THEN ARE YE ABRAHAM'S SEED, AND HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE." Galatians 3:27 to 29.

Some Christian preachers tell us that little little children must be baptized with water in order to become Abraham's seed. Does a little child, too young to believe on Christ, put on Christ at the time of its baptism? Or again, we ask, is the young child of a Gentile Christian parent, baptized or unbaptized, the seed of Abraham, because the child is included in the Covenant with the parent? If the sixth chapter of Romans refers to water baptism, certainly a little child cannot be buried by baptism and be raised to walk in newness of life. In this dispensation, does the little child of Christian parents sustain a different relationship to God than does the child of the unbelieving parents? And while we are asking questions along this line, we might have several others to consider:

If only those who are born anew enter the Kingdom of God, what about the child that dies before the age of responsibility? If members of the Body of Christ are baptized by one Spirit into that one Body, when does the little child get in?

If all children are saved, are they all members of the Body of Christ?

We might multiply the number of questions, and find it more difficult to answer them than to ask them.

Let us ask one other question here: "Can a Gentile believer become the seed of Abraham without being baptized with water?" "Have only those who have been sprinkled or immersed put on Christ?" Or is it not a fact that the very moment a sinner receives Christ, he becomes the child of God, at which time he puts on Christ, at which time he is baptized into Christ, buried with him, raised and seated with him, whether he afterwards receives water baptism or not? The

Apostle Paul never includes water when presenting salvation by grace to the Gentiles in his epistles.

Whatever "baptisms" may have been included in Hebrews 6:2; whether they refer to the ceremonial washings of Israel under the Old Covenant or the different baptisms as set forth in Acts 19:4 to 10—we do know that the baptisms or washings mentioned in Hebrews 9:10 refer to the sprinklings, anointing and pourings of Judaism, and that there is no scriptural proof that "baptizo" means dip or plunge or immerse. But in the study of water baptism in the New Testament Scriptures, we begin with the ministry and message of John the Baptist.

John the Baptist was born to turn the children of Israel to the Lord God. Luke 1:16. His shewing was unto Israel. Luke 1:80. His message was "the baptism of repentance to Israel" before Christ began His public ministry. Acts 13:24. Acts 19:4.

"He came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Luke 3:3.

Any intelligent student of the Word of God acknowledges that this is not the message that the risen Lord gave to Paul for the heathen, and therefore, it is not the message for today. Therefore, we acknowledge that a change has taken place. When did it take place?

For what purpose and for what nation or people was this water baptism introduced? Hear the plain words of John the Baptist:

"That He (Christ) should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." John 1:31.

Now, we are told by some that water baptism afterwards had a different significance, such as a testimony to the world, or a symbol of burial with Christ in death, or an outward symbol of an inward work of grace. But when it was introduced by John the Baptist, it was for Israel, to make Christ manifest to Israel, the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins for Israel.

Only those disciples of Jesus who began with the baptism of John could be numbered with the twelve apostles. Acts 1:22. Therefore, the twelve apostles received water baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins. Such a water baptism was not for aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. Long after the twelve received their water baptism they knew not what the rising of the dead meant: they knew not the scriptures that Christ must rise from the dead, therefore, if they were buried by baptism into the death of Christ before He died and when they were expecting the establishment of an earthly kingdom, they did not know it. Mark 9:32. Luke 9:45. John 20:9. If their water baptism was a symbol of the inward work of the Holy Spirit, they received the symbol before the work. John 7:39. Cornelius received the symbol after the work, if the water was a symbol. Acts 10:47 and 48. A decided change. Between the baptism of the twelve and the baptism of the household of Cornelius, we find the twelve preaching on the day of Pentecost to Jews only, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38. No intelligent student of the Word of God would preach this message for today, but when that student gives the scriptural reason for not doing so, he should follow the Scriptures until the water baptism disappears. Both circumcision and water baptism were given to Israel. And as there was an overlapping of Israel's Kingdom message into the Book of Acts there was also the overlapping of their water baptism.

From Luke 3:3, to Luke 12:50, to Acts 2:38, to Acts 10:48 we have the steps in the fulfilling of the promise of John the Baptist, "I indeed have baptized you with water; but He (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit," up to the One Lord, One Spirit and One Baptism in the fourth chapter of Ephesians. Mark 1:8—Acts 1:5—Ephesians 4:4 and 5. The Gentiles

received the Holy Spirit, not by being baptized for the remission of sins, but by the hearing of faith, because through the death of Christ the blessing of Abraham came to the Gentiles. Galatians 3:2 and 3:14. And yet there are teachers today who tell us we must have the water baptism by man, but not the Holy Spirit baptism by Christ.

As we pass on through the transitional "sign" age, through the Book of Acts, while the Jews have priority rights, we discover miraculous healings, jail deliverances, supernatural demonstrations and visitations, the gifts of prophecy, raising the dead, speaking with tongues, the interpretation of tongues, circumcision and water baptism. The last Scriptural record of water baptism is in Acts 19:5 and 6. and in that same record the baptized ones spake with tongues. We do not know how long tongues or water baptism continued after that for Jews, but we do know that a new order prevailed after Paul reached Rome, declaring that the salvation of God was sent unto the Gentiles. He had already said, Christ sent me baptize but to preach the gospel." I Corinthians 1:17. But now he writes of Spirit circumcision and Spirit baptism. Colossians 2:11 and 12. How inconsistent of some, to prove by verse eleven that physical circumcision has ceased and by verse twelve that water baptism remains. Surely the Bible plainly declares that for the church today, there is one baptism. One baptism could never mean Holy Spirit and Water baptism. One baptism is one baptism. The all important baptism is to put on Christ and to be baptized into His Body. No man could ever be baptized into the death or Body of Christ by water. And so far as receiving water baptism as a testimony to the world is concerned, 99.9% of the people of the world to whom we testify were not present when we were baptized. One of God's outstanding faithful preachers of the grace of Christ, who has been ministering in the Church of Christ for nearly forty years, was recently urged by an immersionist to be immersed as a testimony to the world. Why should a living man be buried in water? Christ was buried between His death and resurrection, but there is no period of three days between the time the believer receives Christ and the time he receives spiritual resurrection. He is instantly identified with Christ in death, burial and resurrection, the very moment he is saved.

Why are there ten or eleven different interpretations of the mode and significance of water baptism among truly saved people? There must be something wrong. Why is it that several groups of immersionists insist that Acts 2:38 is the order for the Church today, and refuse to have fellowship with other groups of immersionists who insist that the Church must advance to Acts 10:44 to 48 for the present Church order? If the Church began at Pentecost, why not follow Peter's message today? Or, if we advance to Acts 10:44 to 48, why not give an intelligent reason for so doing, and why not advance to Ephesians 4:4 and 5?

Most assuredly the risen Lord communicated to Paul from heaven and gave him His message for Gentiles in this dispensation, the grace of Christ, justification by faith, the message contained in the Abrahamic Covenant. There were not several apostles or Christians who received this revelation from heaven; but Paul alone. Timothy's gift came through the fellowship of the presbytery. Timothy received his instructions from Paul. Paul called the message which he received from the risen Christ, "my gospel", several times. Paul received his message from Christ, not from other men. Paul was the Lord's chosen vessel to preach to the heathen that part of the Abrahamic Covenant that had to do with all nations. Paul was the Lord's chosen ambassador to beseech Gentiles, who had no claim on God through Israel's Old Covenant, Israel's Davidic Covenant, or at that time through Israel's New Covenant, to be reconciled to God. Compel them to come in that my house might be filled. Paul was the Apostle to declare Church truth, Body secrets. The gospel of the grace of God is set forth in all of Paul's epistles, but in his last seven epistles it is unmingled with religion and physical signs, miracles.

Circumcision and water baptism have disappeared. How difficult it is to get Christians to believe that the Son of God lived in the midst of religion, as the minister of the circumcision, but that He died to do away with religion and bring eternal life to believers.

Then, if Christ sent Paul not to baptize, but to preach that gospel contained in the Abrahamic Covenant, that should convince any student of the Word of God that water baptism did not take the place of circumcision. We sympathize with those who find it so difficult to give up this water baptism, and they may say that the arguments contained in this message are not sufficiently convincing to cause them to do so, but they will not say honestly that they are not filled with prejudice and fear, neither will they attempt to explain why ten of the leading Fundamental teachers of this country, immersionists, disagree in their teaching concerning water baptism. We have all no doubt come to the conclusion that water baptism is one of the deepest studies in the Bible.

THE PRESENT DIVINE KATHEDRA

We have learned that God will yet faithfully perform all that He has guaranteed to Israel in the Abrahamic, Davidic and New Covenants.

"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies shall I gather thee— For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my peace be removed." Isaiah 54:5 to 10. Read also Jeremiah 32:36 to 40 and 33:20.

We also know that under the New Covenant with Israel and Judah that God says: "All shall know me from the least to the greatest." Hebrews 8:12.

But we have learned that this is not the promise of universal Gentile salvation in this dispensation, but refers to the coming Kingdom age. We Gentiles, have been promised that we should dwell in the tents of Shem. Genesis 9:26 to 28. We know that salvation is of the Jews, and that we are getting the crumbs from the children's table; but we also know that our inheritance in Abraham's Seed is far more glorious than will be that of Israel when they shall be called Hephzibah and their land shall be called Beulah under the New Covenant. Isaiah 62:1 to 4.

We have learned that Peter and the apostles associated with him were ministers to the circumcision. Galatians 2:7. We are quite sure that Peter was not known as the Very Right Reverend Simon Peter, D. D. Bishop of Rome. He would have felt worse than David in Saul's armour. We have not one instance in the Scripture where any of these apostles acted as a priest, either in the matter of forgiving sins, or in conducting religious services in a cathedral. They were put out of the Jews' cathedral several times, but so far the Church of Christ is concerned, there is no scriptural authority for any building containing the kathedra or throne of the bishop. Certainly Divine authority was vested in these apostles, for the Lord said, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matthew 16:19. "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained. John 20:23.

One of these apostles wrote to Jews, the Twelve Tribes, and said, "Confess your faults one to another." James 5:16. Another one of them, Peter, wrote, "Yea, all be subject one to another." I Peter 5:5. But in that same verse he confirmed the instructions and principle that is given all through the Bible, God's principle for spiritual government: "Ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder." "We are labourers together with God." I Corinthians 3:9. Here was

God's principle for ministering in the early Church, "Dividing to every man severally as He will." I Corinthians 12:11.

The twelve apostles had Divine prerogatives and authority above other disciples of Christ, but how did they loose on earth and remit sins? Here are the words of Peter: "To Him (Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through His Name, whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43. Where is the humblest and weakest member of the Body of Christ today, who can not offer the forgiveness of sins in the name of Christ in this message? Read in Acts 13:38 how Paul forgave sins. Can we suppose for one moment that Peter would have permitted one man to call him Father Peter, when he had heard the Lord say, "Call no man on earth your father." Matthew 23:9. Did not Peter know that no one could be an earthly priest to the circumcision except those who belonged to the house of Levi? The death penalty was attached to this commandment. Numbers 18:7. When Cornelius wanted to worship Peter, see how he forbade it. Acts 10:25 and 26. The Church of Christ is not built upon Peter, but upon Christ Himself. I Peter 2:6. Ephesians 2:19 to 22. There were no cardinals, archbishops or popes in the Church of Christ. No apostolic succession, except in the case of Matthias, who succeeded Judas.

Paul succeeded Peter in the development of Church truth, for it was Paul whom God chose for the very special ministry of presenting unmixed Church truth, and the grace of Christ unmixed with the Jews' religion.

There were Jews from Rome visiting Jerusalem when Peter and the eleven were preaching on the day of Pentecost; but when Paul indoctrinated the Church at Rome twenty years later, he did not preach to them the message that Peter had preached to the Roman Jews, visiting Jerusalem. It is extremely doubtful if Peter ever visited Rome, but surely he was never Bishop of Rome, and it is so strange that the present Roman Catholic Church knows so little about the epistle written by Paul to the first Christian Church of Rome: "Justified without works, without a cause by grace....without the deeds of the law."

We know that Peter and Paul are not responsible for the cathedrals called by their names and if they could they would today condemn those who call their holy things and places by their names. We likewise know that no building made with human hands contains the "Kathedra" of the Lord today. There is no earthly throne for a bishop of the Church on earth. The Apostle wrote to the Church of God, these words: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God." I Corinthians 3:16. He also wrote of the Church as the "household of God"

"In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Ephesians 2:19 to 22.

This is the only Church building that the Lord recognizes for the Body of Christ. This building is the Body of Christ, made up of every sinner saved by grace. We know that no ecclesiastical ruler has any scriptural right to a Divine cathedra in this dispensation. The pope claims to be occupying the cathedra of Peter. If he believes this, he should be preaching to the Jews, but should not take them back to the robes, the incense, the candlesticks and the ceremonies of Israel and the law of Moses, after reading II Corinthians 3:14 and Hebrews 10:1 to 14. In reality the pope has more usurped the cathedra of Moses than that of Peter. The Roman system of priesthood is semi-Judaism, but the other half is not Christianity.

It is next to impossible to convince Christians that the Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross to do away with religion.

No Christian wants all of the Jew's program under the Old Covenant, but most of them must hold on to sufficient of it to frustrate the grace of God. Those who are members of the Body of Christ have something far better than religion; they have eternal life and salvation. They have Christ. The Church is not the door to Christ. Christ is the door to the Church. Who has the right, in His name, to obstruct that door with a religious barricade and then expect the poor sinner to climb over it for salvation?

When the Lord ascended far above all heavens, "He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers: for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, till we all come. Etc.—Ephesians 4:10 to 13.

No popes, no cardinals, no archbishops are found in the list. Apostles ceased when John died. No foretellers are needed today, except as any Christian quotes the more sure Word of prophecy. As far as evangelists are concerned, the Spirit and the Bride say come, and whosoever will may come and take the water of life freely. There are some men who have the special gift of presenting the evangel, but every Christian should be an evangelist to some extent. Pastors and teachers remain and are much needed, although every Christian has the best teacher, the Holy Spirit. I John 2:27.

So far as Church-organization or Church-government is concerned, the Scriptures are very vague. But we do know that all of the leading Christian denominations have gone far beyond the limits of Scriptural Church truth in their organizations and governments. On the other hand other denominations have made the other mistake of not having sufficient organization and government to guard their work against spiritual disorder and often disaster.

Every form of organization and government has been experimented with and in many cases, the success has depended upon the spiritual judgment of the men in authority. Every assembly of saints should have some form of organization, with spiritual overseers in authority, but not as lords over God's heritage. There are no Scriptural grounds for clergymen or reverends or doctors of divinity in the Church of Christ. It should be needless to say that Christendom is not the Church of Christ.

"Episkopeo", means to oversee. "Episkope", is an overseer. "Presbuteros", is an elder, translated in Acts 2:17 and Luke 1:18 "old man". "Presbuterion", the order or company of elders or older ones. In addition to the papacy, we have other forms of church government in Christendom, such as "episcopacies", governed by bishops; "prebyteries", governed by elders. Then we have "Congregationalists", governed by the people. We are sure that the last form of government is not God's way. In the early Apostolic Church, the apostles had governing rights that ceased when God's written revelation was complete.

Paul instructed Titus to ordain elders in every city. They were appointed; and not elected by the people. Titus 1:5. They are to do the work of bishops or overseers. Verse 7. Their qualifications are there set forth. "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" I Timothy 3:1. The Holy Spirit made certain men overseers over flocks in the Church of God. Acts 20:28. "Likewise must the deacons be grave—and use the office well." I Timothy 3:8 to 13. They should rule with diligence. Romans 12:8. I Timothy 5:17. We have no one in the Church today with the authority of Paul to give orders to others, as he did to Timothy. But the older spiritual men should be able and willing to commit to younger, the things of God, that they may pass them on. II Timothy 2:2. However we must not forget, that our position is altogether different today, for we have the complete written will of God. What Paul and others received by inspiration and revelation on the installment plan we have in printed book form.

We are reminded of the fact that 85 % of the people of the world would starve unless they were under the control of an overseer, and likewise, if there were not strong Church organizations and governments to hold the people in check there would have long since been a state of chaos that would have wrecked the Christian Church. We do know that God has always governed the people, through human leaders, whether in civil, religious or spiritual affairs, and His religious government has always been through elders. But in this particular age, when every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth given to guide the individual into all truth, members of the Body of Christ should not permit others to do their spiritual thinking for them. Neither will they be excused for following erring leaders into false doctrines, with an open Bible before them and the Holy Spirit to guide and teach them.

Satan never ceases in his efforts to wreck the Church of Christ. If he fails to corrupt the message, he will concentrate on the messenger or corrupt the method.

Just how much or how little Church organization is necessary is not an easy question to answer, as we may well know by the attempts and failures down through the ages as well as by careful observation of the many different forms of government in operation today. Many of these groups, though differing much or little in their policies, have tried to be conscientious in following the Scriptures in Church-organization, though few, if any, are entirely free from the influence of Church history through the dark ages.

We know that Peter and John, being let go, went to their own company. Acts 4:23. We know that we should not forsake the assembling of ourselves together. Hebrews 10:25. The disciples of the Lord should come together in His name. We also know that there should be no schism in the Body. I Corinthians 12:25. It is too late to heal this, until the Lord comes, when all shall be one in Him. Christ gave Himself for the Church, "that He might present her to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that she should be holy and without blemish." Ephesians 5:25.

If we happen to miss the right organization here on earth, the blunder will not be near as serious as should we fail to enter the true Church, the invisible organism, which is His Body and miss heaven. So whatever may be the visible expression of that true Church, let us not forget that we are espoused to just one husband, so that we may be presented to Christ a chaste virgin. II Corinthians 11:2.

So we recognize no human head, no earthly cathedral. Christ is our Head. He has not entered the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, there to appear in the presence of God for us. His Cathedral is in heaven. Our citizenship is there and when he comes these bodies of humiliation will be changed and fashioned like unto His own glorious body. Philippians 3:21.

We are linked up by the Holy Spirit in an inseparable eternal union, with the Man at God's right hand, and whatever our differences on earth may be, when we get to glory and see Him, not one member of the true Church will be missing and all of our differences will soon be forgotten.

"And so shall we ever be with the Lord." "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Christ is our righteousness, our redemption, our sanctification, our peace, our hope, our life, our resurrection. He is our Saviour and Lord.

Surely we do not want to go back to the land of the Jews for the message of John the Baptist or to Pentecost for Israel's kingdom promises and message. And certainly we shall not again be guilty of misappropriating any of Israel's Old Testament religion since remembering, "Dead to the law by the body of Christ that ye should be MARRIED TO ANOTHER."

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Surely we should rejoice because we live in a land where each individual is granted the right to worship and serve God according to his own conscience and will. We speak of this as religious liberty. But if you will accept my appeal to the Bible. I think I can convince you that there is no such thing as religious liberty. I think I can prove to you that "religious liberty" is a paradoxical expression. An individual may have religion or liberty: but not religion and liberty.

Now, of course the liberty to which we refer is spiritual liberty. What is spiritual liberty? Here is the Bible answer: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." II Corinthians 3:17. No where else in the universe of God can spiritual liberty be found. The Spirit of the Lord is not in Mohammedism. That is the spirit of Mohammed. The Spirit of the Lord is not in Confucianism: not in Buddhism; not in any of the pagan religions, in which the Holy Spirit is unknown; because the Son of God has no part in them. We can find spiritual liberty in one place only, and that is where the Spirit of the Lord is.

There is such a thing as religious bondage, which is the very opposite of spiritual liberty. In the Old Testament the Jews had religion, and with their religion, they had religious bondage. Those Israelites, we are told, "through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Hebrews 2:15. If their religion did not deliver them from the fear of death, there was not much spiritual liberty to be enjoyed. They were subject to bondage; not to liberty. They received, with their religion, the spirit of bondage to fear. Romans 8:15. The Apostle Paul confesses for the Jews in this language: "we were in bondage." Galatians 4:3. "We were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." Galatians 3:23. God gave religion to Israel at Mt. Sinai, "which gendereth to bondage." Galatians 4:24. The Jews in the Old Testament did not enjoy religious liberty. They endured religious bondage.

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, to redeem them that were under the law." The Lord Jesus Christ had to come from heaven to redeem the Jews from religion. That religion was given to be their schoolmaster to bring them to Christ for righteousness. That schoolmaster was a tyrant. Before the schoolmaster was added, because of sin. Abraham, the father of the Jews, was declared righteous by faith. Abraham had righteousness; but not religion. Israel's religion was added to that glorious message of justification by faith to convince that people that religion could never make a man righteous.

But very few of them learned their lesson. "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for. The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Romans 11:7. Israel was blinded by religion. "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart." II Corinthians 3:15. "Nevertheless when it shall turn unto the Lord, the vail shall be taken away." verse 16. Religion is the vail that keeps the Jew today in darkness and bondage. Satan uses religion to blind many people and keep them from salvation.

The greatest Christian who ever lived was the Apostle Paul. Before he received eternal life through Christ he was a very religious Jew. He said: "after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." Acts 26:5. "Profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation." Galatians 1:14. "Touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless." Philippians 3:6.

"But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." Philippians 3:7. Saul gave up his religion for Christ. Then he said: "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Philippians 1:21. "Christ liveth in me." Galatians 2:20. He declared that Christ is the end of the

law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Romans 10:5. Christ died on the cross to put an end to the only religion that was ever given to any people by the true God.

God's only begotten Son was born of a very religious Jewish woman. He grew up as a very religious Jew in the religion of the Jews. He was a Jew inwardly, as well as outwardly, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Romans 2:29. A pagan ruler wanted to grant Him his freedom; but the religious Jews put Him to death. It was religion that put Christ to death. It was for religion that He died. The Son of God died that sinners might have eternal life, instead of religion. But the sad fact is, that many religious people do not want Christ and eternal life. They do not want God's righteousness. They prefer religion and self-righteousness. The majority of people who go by the name "Christian" have religion instead of Christ. Some have a mixture of religion and Christ. Such a mixture frustrates the grace of God. "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:2. Before any one can enjoy spiritual liberty, that one must have the Spirit of the Lord. The Spirit of the Lord comes through the hearing of faith; and not by being religious.

Religion is referred to as "the yoke of bondage." The individual who has Christ has liberty. He must not mix religion with the grace of Christ which has set him at liberty. Galatians 5:1. There is no such thing as religious liberty. There is Christ liberty for believers. Christ is the believers righteousness, sanctification and redemption. I Corinthians 1:30. Sinners need to be redeemed from religion as well as from sin. Christ is the only power that can free a man from sin or religion. He said to the most religious people who ever lived on this earth: the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Matthew 21:31. Religion was the great enemy of Christ when he was here on earth. Religion caused the Apostle Paul most of his grief and persecutions. Religion is the greatest enemy of the gospel of Christ, the grace of God, today.

Christianity is not a Bible expression. Present-day Christianity might well be called, "the Christian religion." The grace of Christ delivers the believer from religion. Romans 7:6. The grace of Christ and religion is an unholy mixture. Religion was given to Israel by Jehovah at the time they left Egypt. Religion was done away with at Calvary. Which will you have religion or righteousness?

I have just read an article entitled, "God Without Religion", it was a reply to an article in another magazine, entitled, "Religion without God." Both articles were written by very religious men. There are millions who have religion without God. If you have God, you must have Christ—Christ without religion.

In the religion that God gave to men, there were divers washings, meats and drinks, and carnal ordinances. But since Christ died to do away with religion and bring life and incorruptibility to light through the gospel, "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Romans 14:17.

The Kingdom of God is not religion today. It is Christ. The believer receives life through Christ eternal life. The Christian has not religion. He has Christ. He has righteousness. He has eternal life. God does not want the Christian to be religious. He wants him to be righteous. Christ sets the believer free from religion. Stand fast in that liberty. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36.

So many have Christian religion today because they insist on going back to Jesus' program for the Jews, when He was under the Old Covenant with His people in their land, instead of abiding in the grace of Christ, under the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, revealed from heaven through Paul, the Church apostle.

Christ is our life, believers. We have a Person and not religion.