

# Jehovah, Jesus, — Son of David and Son of God

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In reading the Holy Scriptures we should remember that they do not simply contain a rule of life and conduct, but that they are a revelation of God, so as to lead us into the knowledge of Him in Jesus Christ, and thus into life eternal. He that was "in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. "I have manifested Thy name," says the Lord, "unto the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world." They do assuredly exhibit a rule of life; and as such not a jot or tittle of them is to be disregarded (Matt. 5: 18); but if they be received merely as such, our souls will not come into contact with the great purpose of God in giving them forth. We are renewed in knowledge — knowledge of God in Christ, through the Spirit; and therefore the effort of the god of this world is to hinder the light of the gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, from shining into us; and, on the other hand, the prayer of the apostle, for the church, is that they might receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and that they might increase in the knowledge of God (Eph. 1: 17; Col. 1: 10). Oh! that all saints may find their happiest occupation in searching out the ways of their faithful God, redeeming their time from the vain pursuits of the world thus to converse with Him. Let us remember however, that it is the willing and obedient heart, and not the acute intellect, that makes safe and profitable progress in this knowledge. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him" (Ps. 25: 14). "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein" (Ps. 111: 2).

The sufferings of Christ, and the glories that should follow, form, as we are told, the great burthen of the scriptures. The Spirit in the prophets testified of these; and surely they do constitute the centre of the blessed, wondrous, and gracious purpose or plan of our God in His dealings with us.

Concerning this glory, which was thus to follow the sufferings of Christ, I desire to trace two portions or characters of it signified to us by two of His many titles —

## **Son of David; Son of God.**

And oh, for more of the mind of Christ, — more too of the sweet power of friendship with Jesus, that we all may thus be more apt to learn from Him the things which He has heard from the Father (John 15: 15)!

The purpose of God, in His election of Israel as His nation, was the assertion of His own right to all power on earth; or, in other words, for the manifestation of Christ, as the heir and holder of all earthly glory and dominion.

His dispensation, by means of Israel no doubt, was made to answer other purposes; as for instance, it answered the purpose of drawing out, in still broader and brighter lines, the evidences of man's weakness and degradation through the fall; that though favoured, as man was among the Jews, in the most special ways of providence, yet was he found to be without strength, unable to stand unrebukeable before God; and thus it gave us further to know, that God Himself must sustain us, and work in and for us. And then it answered the other purpose of witnessing that God could, in grace, thus sustain us, and thus work in and for us Himself; for it presented shadows of good things to come: the law, as well as the prophets of Israel, prophesied of Jesus (Matt. 11: 13). But the characteristic purpose of God in the dispensation of Israel, appears to have been to vindicate His own name, — the name of

Jehovah, as the only God of the whole earth, the only Lord of the lower parts of the earth. For in Israel, Christ or Jehovah was economically or virtually on the throne. A theocracy, as it is commonly admitted, was established among them; and the history of Israel was to have shown, and but for their unbelief and rebellion, would have shown, that "blessed were the people who had the Lord for their God." They were "set on high above all nations of the earth." "What nation is there," said Moses, "so great, that hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all that we call upon Him for" (Deut. 4: 7)? And so Joshua could afterwards stand before Israel, and witness, in like manner, the mercy of Jehovah to them as His nation: — "the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day" (Joshua 23: 9).

Thus was Israel established to be God's witness on earth; they were His people, politically united with Him as their King. And being thus the earthly people of God, their blessings were blessings of the earth, blessings of providence, as it is written, "all these blessings shall come upon them" (Deut. 28: 1-14).

And they should have continued thus to flourish as God's nation, "their time should have remained for ever" (Ps. 81: 15). But the children of Israel revolted from their King, they rejected Jehovah, as Christ, that He should not reign over them (1 Sam. 8: 7).

When Israel, thus with revolted heart, would have a king, after the Lord had made trial of the son of Kish (the mystical import of whose reign, though deeply interesting and instructive, I need not here consider), He gave them David to be their king, a man after His own heart. By the arms of David the enemies of God and of His Israel were all reduced; and then, full of honour and as established to the furthest limits of the promised land, the throne and kingdom of David are delivered over to his son Solomon, that he might hold them as glorious in the eyes of the nations; and thus was the throne of David constituted a second witness of God's authority and power on earth. But the house of David, like Israel before, speedily corrupted itself, and after long patience, God removed them from their place, taking power from them, and allowing it to pass over to the heathen who were not His people; and there it has been ever since, passing from one to another of the four Beasts of the prophets. And thus has the Lord been left without a due or appointed witness to His glory as Lord of the earth. But scripture very largely tells us that Israel is to revive as from their present state of death, and be established by Christ and under Christ (Who is the Faithful Witness to the glory of the Father) in the person, and with all the rights, of "Son of David:" and to His hand earthly power and glory shall be found to be securely committed, to the glory of God the Father.

I have thus anticipated what I understand from scripture to be the special characteristic glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, as "Son of David;" it presents Him to us as the restorer and holder of power on earth. This name or title appears to have its origin in the words of Nathan, the prophet of God, to David (see 2 Sam. 7: 8-16).

This word of Nathan distinctly appoints the son of David to be the head of that house and kingdom which the Lord would Himself establish in the earth for ever. Ps. 89 celebrates the same grace of God to David's seed. Now a comparative view of 2 Sam. 7: 14 with Heb. 1: 5, of Ps. 132: 11 with Acts 2: 30, and of Isa. 55: 3 with Acts 13: 34, will at once assure us that Christ, and not Solomon, is really and substantially the Son of David, both in the oracle of Nathan and in the Psalm I have referred to. And I would add just this — that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Son of David, not as Head of His mystical body the church, but as Head of the restored tribes of Israel; for the church never has been, and indeed never could be forsaken of her God as the prophet there threatens, and the psalmist there complains (Ps. 89); but Zion is now really the Forsaken, and her land the Desolate (Isa. 62: 4). Besides,

the Lord Jesus often admitted His claim to this title, and, when He stood before the Roman governor, confessed Himself to be the King of the Jews. And the Angel, announcing His birth, spake of David as His Father, and David's throne as His. In this character of the Son of David the Lord offered Himself to Israel at His first coming; but Israel cast Him out then, as they had done before in the days of Samuel. We learn this from the parable of the wicked Husbandmen. For we learn there distinctly that the mission of the Son of God to earth was designed, among its many blessed purposes, to prove whether Israel could still be continued in possession of the vineyard under the care and government of Him Who was the heir of it, for the disallowing of Whose title to which was the vineyard taken from them.

So the Lord's last solemn entry into Jerusalem was in the character of the Son of David; and therefore was He accompanied on that occasion with the suitable acclamations — Hosanna to the Son of David, God save the king. But the rulers and representatives of the people, being then offended in Him, not discerning the glory of the kingdom in the person of the lowly Jesus of Nazareth, He left them as ripe for present judgment (and which judgment they have ever since been suffering), giving them to know that they should not see Him till in the spirit of repentance and faith they had learned to welcome Him, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," (see Matt. 21 - 23). These words of welcome the Lord advisedly takes from Psalm 118, this being the song of Israel in the joyous and triumphant day, when they shall bring in Jesus as the Head Stone with shoutings of "Grace, grace," to Him; and the shout of a king, according to the prophecy, shall be eminently among them (Numbers 23: 21).

So that beautiful prophecy contained in Isaiah 7 - 9 instructs us in the same truth. When the prophecy was delivered, Syria and Ephraim were confederated against Judah; and Isaiah was commissioned to sustain the courage of the house of David, by an assurance to it that the confederacy should not prevail; and by more than that. For the discomfiture of the then present confederacy was made a pledge of the discomfiture of all succeeding confederacies, at least so as to secure to the house of David in the end rest and glory, though for a season it might lie in ruins and dishonour; and that "a Child" in due time should be "born," and "a Son" be "given," Whose right it was, and Whose right should be asserted, on that throne of David to sit, and his kingdom and government to order and establish for ever. And how splendidly do the hopes of Israel sparkle on that page of scripture! "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace: of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice from henceforth for ever and ever."

Psalm 72 is another beautiful exhibition of the doings and glories of Christ in the character of the Son of David: and Isaiah 25 presents us, as it were, with a sample of the peaceable fruit from the reign of His sceptre of righteousness.

This title of "Son of David" was indeed the highest in which Christ was made known to the faith of the Jews, merely as Jews (see Matt. 22: 42); and therefore as we have already seen, it was as the Son of David that the multitude congratulated Him on His royal visitation to Jerusalem (Matt. 21). So we may observe that Bartimaeus manifested his faith in contrast with the ignorance of the multitude; for while Jesus was known to them merely as "Jesus of Nazareth" (being thus distinguished, just as all men are by a specified place, parentage, or other circumstance), He was known to Bartimaeus as "Son of David," and appealed to as such for mercy. And justly so; for, according to the Jews themselves, the Son of David was to bring the mercy which Bartimaeus needed (Matt. 12: 23); and also according to the prophets. For as Son of David, the restorer of the human earthly system, He is to come with a recompence, He is to come and save the people; and the eyes of the blind are to be opened, and the ears

of the deaf to be unstopped (Isaiah 35: 3, 4). In like manner the woman, who came to Jesus from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, appealed to Him for mercy, as the Son of David. Now she presents to us a sample of the faith in which the nations are to stand, in the day when the tabernacle of David, which is now in ruins, shall be set. up, and the residue of men shall seek after the Lord. For the Gentiles will then acknowledge Israel as the "children," the "natural branches," and will acquiesce in God's appointment of the "first dominion," to the daughter of Zion — in the Lord's settling of every thing in favour of the Jew first. So this woman commends her faith to the Son of David, in the same spirit, really taking a place under the children's table (Matt. 15: 28).

Now Peter's faith apprehended the person of the blessed Jesus in a character different from that of the Son of David; he was taught by the Spirit to discern in Him a glory beyond a mere Jewish or earthly glory. He made confession to Him as "the Son of the living God;" and therefore, and at once, the Lord committed to Him the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 16: 16). Because, as I believe, while Jesus as Son of David is the head of earthly power and glory, as Son of God He is head of all power in heaven, the Dispenser of those which are in the ἐπουρανίοις or heavenlies. And this leads me to consider, as I proposed to do, the second title of our blessed and adorable Saviour, "Son of God."

In a divine sense, I assuredly believe our Lord Jesus bears this title. He is called Son of God, when His full, unqualified, eternal Deity is expressed, when revealed as one with the Father and the Holy Ghost (three Persons in one God). For John says, "Therefore the Jews sought to kill Him, because He had not only broken the sabbath, but said also that God was His Father;" making Himself equal with God (John 5: 18). And again, after speaking largely of Himself as Son of God, He closes with assuming full divine glory, saying, "before Abraham was, I am" (John 8: 58). And the divine dignity of this title clearly appears from John 10: 30-39, and from 1 John 1, 2. Indeed on the truth, that there is Father and Son in the Godhead, the very life of the christian seems to depend; for this life is fellowship with God in love; which will be found to be fellowship with the Father and the Son. "Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father" (1 John 2: 23). "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God; he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

But still, in another sense, the holy scriptures speak of Him as Son of God; and this is in immediate connection in result with us as incarnate and risen, as the eldest of the family in heaven, the First-born among many brethren. Now let us look for the origin of this title, as we did before for that of "Son of David."

As our blessed Lord walked on earth, He was a circumcised man, debtor to do the whole law. He was made, as we read, "under the law," and to the utmost tittle of it was obedient to it, so that He presented a righteousness in flesh to God; as He died on the cross a Lamb without blemish. But by resurrection He entered into another condition, being then declared to be Son of God with power, having thereby proved that He, a Son of Man, had the life of God in Him, life superior to the power of death. And we must ever remember, for it is a doctrine insisted on most fully, I might say in all parts of the apostolic scriptures, that it is with the Lord in His resurrection that the saints have their union. It is as first-born from the dead, that He is the head of His body the church (Col. 1: 18), The life in His members is not, if I may call it, legal or Jewish life, life of circumcised flesh, but life through the Spirit; a circumcision made without hands, divine life, eternal life, life of the risen Head. They have become "children of God, being born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Now when Jesus left this world, He went to the Father — into the Father's house, there to prepare

a place for His brethren (John 14: 1). "He ascended to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God;" and has gained for us sinners (blessed be His name for such riches of grace, such everlasting and satisfying consolations) that we should be loved of the Father, with the same love wherewith He Himself is loved (John 17: 26).

Being thus the brethren of the ascended Jesus, Son of God, the saints having the Spirit and life of their Head, sit even now in Him in heavenly places; their citizenship is in heaven; by Him they have access to God, as a Father through the Spirit. They belong to Him that is raised from the dead, and thus bring forth fruit unto God. And being now the sons of God, the world knows them not, even as it knew not Christ; for they are not of the world, even as He was not of the world. And as He is, so are they in this world; they have in Spirit followed Him out of this world into heaven. The blessings, therefore, wherewith they are blest, are blessings not of this world, or of the earth, as we have seen the Jews' were, but "spiritual blessings in the heavenlies;" as it is written, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in the heavenlies, in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1: 3-6).

And as children, now in the Father's house, they are waiting for the inheritance of the children, for "if children, then heirs;" they are hoping for the grace which is to be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ. And as Jesus Himself is now crowned with glory, and seated at the right hand of God, as a kind of pledge of His future dominion (Ps. 110: 1, Heb. 2: 8, 9), so His brethren here, His members still suffering on earth, have received the Holy Ghost, the fruit of this His glory and exaltation to heaven, as the earnest or pledge of their inheritance with Him (2 Cor. 1: 22; 2 Cor. 5: 5; Eph. 1: 13, 14.)

Now of what are the sons of God to be the heirs? Surely of the same glory of which the First-born among them is Heir, as it is written "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ;" and again, "for our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Who shall change our vile bodies into the likeness of His glorious body;" and again, "when Christ Who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory." So that the kingdom, prepared by the Father for the Son, is to be the scene of the common glory and joy of the blessed "family in heaven," the portion of the children of whom He is the First-born: all are to be in the Father's house, and seated on the Son's throne (John 14: 2, Rev. 3: 21). Their inheritance is heavenly; "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Therein will be the glory of the celestial, which is one, inasmuch as they shall be presented in the likeness of the risen and glorified body of Jesus, and have their place manifestly there where now in Spirit they dwell, that is, the Father's house in the heavenlies, the place of the children; while the glory of the restored Israel will be here that of the terrestrial which is another, inasmuch as in bodies of flesh and blood they shall occupy the earth, the place of the servants, the footstool and not the throne, the place of subjects under Christ, and not the seat of government with Christ. And thus in the manifestation of the sons of God, in the dispensation of the fulness of times when all things in heaven and in earth shall be gathered together in one, even in Christ, He Who once descended into the lower parts of the earth, and then ascended up far above all heavens, shall, according to the decree of the everlasting covenant, fill all things, shall be brought forth in the

earthly glory of Son of David, and in the heavenly glory of the Son of God; His risen saints and restored nation having, their several associations with Him, "of Whom every family in heaven and earth is named," and "every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

This, His glory, as filling all things in heaven and in earth, the Lord appears to anticipate in a very early stage of His ministry, as we read in the first chap. of John's Gospel. — When Nathaniel believed, he made a large and blessed confession to the glory of Christ, "Rabbi," says he, "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And He said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, [hereafter] ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." From this confession to Him as Son of God and King of Israel, the Lord catches, as it were, the glimpse of His then far distant glory, as the Centre, and Mediator, and Life of all things in heaven and in earth, in Whom all things are to consist, and be gathered; though they are still to be distinct as things heavenly, and things earthly.\*

\*I have not entered into the place which the nations will hold in this system of "the dispensation of the fulness of times;" nor have I at all considered what condition of things will succeed that dispensation, when the new heavens and the new earth are to be manifested and "God shall be all in all." For my only purpose is to show that, in the dispensation to which I am referring, there will be distinction between the things in heaven, and the things in earth, while all are under our blessed Lord Jesus, Son of man in His diverse glories of Son of God, and Son of David; and that this distinction is clearly intimated to us, as typified in the dispensation of God by Israel or His earthly people, and by the church or His heavenly people.

Thus then there does appear to me to be most clearly recognised in scripture a distinct purpose with God in His dispensation of Israel and of the glorified; in other words, in the manifestation of the Christ (Who is God's ordinance for all His purposes, to Whom be glory for ever!) as Son of David and as Son of God. But as I judge that a practical conclusion, on a subject interesting to us all who desire to know and do the will of our gracious God and Saviour, very much rests on a just apprehension of this distinction, I desire to add a little more upon it. And I do it in much subjection to my brethren in the Lord, knowing indeed but in small part, and therefore able to speak but as so knowing. However, I speak according to clear conclusions of my own mind.

In the Jewish dispensation, Christ spake on earth, but now He is speaking from heaven (Heb. 12: 25). The position of the Head being thus changed, the position of His elect, as those who are gathered to Him, and who are to witness to Him, must be also changed. And so I judge, we shall find from the word of God that it has changed. As for instance, Israel was to go forth, as on earth, with "a two-edged sword in their hand," utterly to destroy city after city; the church, "with power from on high" to subdue sinners to the God of the spirits of all flesh. The characteristic action of Israel may be read in such a passage as this — "So Joshua smote all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs, and all their kings, he left none remaining but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel commanded," Israel being made the witness of God's glory among the nations, and the rod of His anger. But the characteristic action of the church or saints, on the contrary, may be read in these words — "Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil; for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places." Their conflict is with a world that lies in the wicked one, with him that has the power of death; and their strength lies only through the Spirit in the name of the Lord, in the name of Him Who is not now on earth as He was

when, in the ark of Israel, He arose and His enemies were scattered, and they who hated Him fled before Him; or as when He headed the Lord's host as their Captain before the walls of Jericho.

So the characteristic confession of Israel before God was this, "a Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation great, mighty, and populous; and the Egyptians evil-entreated us and afflicted us, and laid upon us hard bondage; and when we cried unto the Lord God of our fathers, the Lord heard our voice and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression; and the Lord brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness." This was a confession that they, who were bondslaves in a strange land, had been blessed with the fulness of all earthly good. But the confession of the saints is expressed by the cry "Abba Father;" a confession that they, who had been alienated from the life of God, are now brought nigh, and made sons, and have the life and Spirit of sons sent forth into their hearts.

So the characteristic glory of Israel may be seen in such a chapter as 2 Chr. 9; where king Solomon is admired in the eyes of all the nations, passing all the kings of the earth, as he then did, in riches and wisdom, all of them seeking his presence, and bringing him offerings, while that of the church may be seen (far, far different) in the description thus given of the early saints at Jerusalem. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things that he possessed was his own, but they had all things common; and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all."

I do confess that this view of the divers glories of our Lord Jesus Christ, as Son of David and Son of God, thus distinguishing the proper characteristic purpose of each dispensation, Jewish and Christian, leads me very distinctly to the conclusion, that the church of the New Testament saints is not to concern itself with the regulation of the earth; that it comes down from its only due position, as ascended into heaven in its Head, when it links itself with the powers and authorities of the world for the purpose of managing the world's interests, or preserving its good order. For her Head, to Whom and to Whose position she is to witness, we must still repeat it, is not on earth, but in heaven; and is not directly undertaking, for the present, the management of a kingdom which is of this world. Nor will He, until He regain dominion in Israel, and be seated on the throne of David, His only recognised organ of earthly power and rule. But He is not in this position yet; "now is my kingdom not from hence." "He came to His own but His own received Him not." He was offered to Israel as their King; for that word of the prophet was fulfilled, "tell ye the daughter of Zion, behold thy King cometh unto thee." But Israel cast the heir of the vineyard out, saying, "come let us kill Him." Then did God the Father exalt this rejected Stone, taking Him up far above all heavens. Jesus, by the Jewish enmity was chased, as it were, from earth to heaven; but the Father has made this wrath of man to praise Him, and has by occasion of it, constituted Jesus the Head of all things in heaven; for now the rejected stone, the descended and ascended Saviour, shall in due time be manifested as the head of the corner, the filler of all things in heaven as well as on earth. Israel gave up their testimony to their head on earth, by losing their separate place as God's nation, acknowledging other lords than Jehovah, and selling themselves to the kingdoms of the Gentile's. The church gives up her testimony to her Head in heaven, by settling herself down in the earth, and combining with the powers and principles of the world, too ungraciously forgetful that her blessed suffering Lord was cast out by the world, and given no place on earth.

Many, "beloved in the Lord," are found in a system which professedly makes the church the minister of civil order; the state, in return, the patron of the church. This is clearly, in my judgment, an unwarranted condition for the church to be found in; and thus, as far as the influence of this judgment

extends, I am necessarily separated from them. I might speak of much in the details of the same system, from which I feel constrained to withdraw myself, being, as I judge, anti-scriptural, and not merely non-scriptural; such as the church requiring her ministers to recognise all her baptized children as dying equally in the true hope of eternal life; but it is not my wish or purpose to go into any such details, but to state simply this one foundation principle. But then how am I to view this separation? how am I to be affected by it? When I say, as unfeignedly I do, that in many things they honour their Lord and love Him with a constant and fervent love, how dare I view it, or how can I be affected by it, but as a cause of much humiliation before our common Lord and Master, and with great sorrow of heart? With many of them, if they will let me thus claim with them sympathy in Jesus, I take constant and most sweet counsel, and do confess that their christian spirit and deportment will at times make me pause and ask myself, Could I be right in formally withdrawing from public recognised communion with such saints of God? But then the scripture of truth, which is to be the rule rather than the suggestions of our affections, never brings me to this pause, nor awakens a doubt of the untenableness of their position; and therefore, though we have many brethren to love, we have but one Lord to obey.

I grant we have to listen to the church, as a brother has lately, I think well, insisted on.\* I do not deny the discretionary power which he has in a very interesting and instructive manner advocated, but the church's discretion must ever be regulated by the written mind of her great Head (the wife is subject to the law of her husband); and the establishment, not to speak here of many of her ordinances, which clearly appear to me to be much more than merely non-scriptural, as I have submitted, takes a position not only unwarranted by the scriptures, but plainly opposed to the views which they present of the church of Christ. But if I do thus honour these brethren, who are still in the establishment, as among the Lord's dearest and most honoured servants in this day of ours, can I allow myself in any thing that may appear to be a rejoicing in, or exulting because of, this separation? Can I say of any given communion, to the exclusion of these brethren, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these?" Assuredly I could not do so. I could not adopt any judgment that would thus have them on the outside.

\*See Letter by the Rev. J. C. Crosthwaite. Tims, Dublin. Mr. C. seems to think, that if he can establish the church's title to a discretion in instituting ordinances which are merely non-scriptural, he thereby has settled the question between the church of England and Dissenters; but I feel that the question is left as open as ever.

But I must at the same time say, that I do not feel indebted to the system with which these brethren are connected for the christian zeal and temper which grace them. I am very far from being able to see, as is commonly observed among us, and urged too as a strong persuasive for continuing in the establishment, that the Lord is thus marking it with His approbation, and honoring it by having such servants of His in it. Were this so, we should naturally look for the brightest exhibitions of christian zeal and temper in those who were most subject to the system, if by the system itself the Lord were working among us, and putting honor upon it as His own ordinance. But the contrary is glaringly the fact. It is in those who are, every day, in various ways, asserting a measure of independency, and working out of the recognised rule, that the energy of the Spirit chiefly manifests itself; while much of mere formality, and the substitution of respectability among men for the patience of Jesus, will be found there, where the system is most exactly enforced. I think I am conscious that I do not desire to be a judge, but some things are too plain not to be read by even those who run.

And while I thus clearly and thankfully acknowledge what is of the Lord's spirit in these brethren, I will also acknowledge, that, because the world, in its spirit and practice, has been so much retained, while separation from it, in its religious services, has been so formally adopted, little of the blessing

and power of God does now rest on those who are now called Dissenters. We are all weak, by reason of much unfaithfulness — much individual personal unfaithfulness from all of us, more or less, "seeking our own, and not the things that are Jesus Christ's." And oh! will not these things, in the judgment of the Lord, outweigh correct ideas or clear views, as they are too often boasted to be, of the nature and government of a christian church? What are correct ideas and clear views, "being alone?" There is such a thing as, by letter and circumcision, transgressing the law. What spirit can God recognise with His blessing in such a state of things as the present, of weakness as respects the saints individually, and of distraction as respects them together, but that of sighing and crying, that of sympathy with Jesus weeping over Jerusalem? Was it not comely in David to mourn for Saul, and to slay the Amalekite who brought him tidings of his death, thinking in the pride and naughtiness of his heart, that he should be rewarded for his mis-placed zeal? And shall we, instead of this mourning, glory in that which is enough, even more than the death of king Saul, to make the enemies of God to rejoice, the daughters of the uncircumcised to triumph? For surely the beauty of our Israel is departed, and brethren, such as David and Jonathan, are kept asunder by the false and apostate principles that are corrupting us throughout. Let us judge the systems of the day to be as bad as they can be: the worse they are, the less proper objects are they for our exulting over. Oh! let us not lie against the truth; such zeal comes not from above. Let us rather strengthen the things that remain among us by humbleness of mind and confession before our God, knowing that our present distractions arise rather by reason of the worldliness and unbelief that are in the hearts of us, the professed servants of God, than from any external causes. Let us learn our individual responsibility to do what we can for a speedy recovery of some of that goodness which has been lost to us; or, at least, that the little that remains perish not.

Let us embrace all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, lest we be keeping ourselves out of the scope and range of the fulness of the blessing of the gospel, for peace is pronounced on all such. Let us cease from judging one another, and rather set ourselves to exhort one another to love and to good works, reminding one another that, if we sow bountifully, we shall also reap bountifully. Let our hope enter into that within the veil, let us cast out our anchor there, and wish for the day, the day of the Lord, remembering that "unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." And therefore let each ask himself, Am I ever in spirit saying, "Come, Lord Jesus," as a faithful soul that has given itself to the Lord? Am I looking for His return with those longing desires, "make haste my beloved, be thou like to a roe or to a young hart on the mountains of spices?"

I would desire, with one heart and voice, to join my beloved brethren in the establishment, and say "Almighty God, may it please Thee of thy gracious goodness shortly to accomplish the number of Thine elect, and to hasten Thy kingdom; that we, with all those who are departed in the true faith of Thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in Thine eternal and everlasting glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

### **Appendix.**

The restoration of the kingdom of Israel, under the Son of David, is the special fruit of the resurrection of Jesus; the ascension serves the uses of this present dispensation (Eph. 4: 8). Accordingly St. Peter makes a distinction between these things, telling us that the resurrection was required because of the promises made to David's throne, and that the ascension was required because of the promise of the Holy Ghost to the church (Acts 2). The prophets, in accordance with this, commonly present the hopes and revival of Israel under the figure of resurrection (Isa. 26: 19, Ezek. 37, Hosea 6: 2); and it appears that the Jews regarded the Messiah, the resurrection, and the kingdom, as substantially one and the same thing (see John 11: 25-27. Luke 23: 42).

Resurrection, in these observations, I advisedly distinguish from ascension. In many senses I know they are treated in scripture as the same. But here, by resurrection, I mean our blessed Lord's return from the grave to the earth; and, by ascension, His return from earth to heaven. It would have served the purposes of this dispensation had the Lord at once gone from the grave to heaven; for it is in Him, as in heaven, that the church finds her direct and immediate interest (Rom. 5: 10, 2 Cor. 4: 10, Eph. 4: 8, Col. 3: 1, Heb. 3: 1, Heb. 4: 14. Heb. 7: 25, Heb. 10: 12, 1 John 2: 1). She is maintained and is to come to her full stature by the virtues of the ascended Jesus; for as such He is the head of life, and dispenser of the Spirit to His members; but it is the kingdom of Israel which is to manifest the direct fruit of the resurrection, inasmuch as it is to witness Christ on earth again, the head of the nations, the restorer of the earthly human system — Son of David.

Our Lord Jesus clearly recognised Himself as Son of David, for He answered every appeal made to Him in that character. But He was more than David's Son, He was also David's Lord. Into this condition, however, He did not formally enter as to dispensation, till He ascended and was glorified at the right hand of God (Matt. 22). But then He did; and the saints, having association with Him as thus ascended, sit with Him in His glory as David's Lord; and will therefore judge the world, and the tribes of Israel.

There is such a proceeding of God as the profanation of His own ordinance. This is a judicial visitation upon His unfaithful stewards. Thus the throne of David, which was God's ordinance of earthly government, was profaned. The Lord was wroth with His anointed, He made void the covenant of His servant, He profaned His crown by casting it to the ground (Ps. 89: 38, 39). So, admitting that an apostolically appointed body is the Lord's ordinance for witnessing the truth and ministering the Spirit, yet it may in like manner be profaned. The way of doing this in the two cases must differ, because the purposes of the ordinances themselves differ. Thus God profaned the throne of David when He took earthly dominion from it, allowing it to pass over into Gentile hands; for that throne was to be the holder of earthly dominion. But He profanes the apostolically appointed body (ordained, as we admit, for the ministry of the Spirit,) by withdrawing this grace from it, and allowing the fulness that is in the blessed glorified Head, to pass through a new channel. Has He done so? or has He continued to dispense His truth and grace through the Romish and established clergy of these lands, were they an apostolically appointed body, to the denial or rejection of every other agency? The truth and life of God are (as I have granted and do thankfully acknowledge) in multitudes both of men and women in the established church; but this is a very different thing from that which I am considering. For I will repeat it that, where the rules of these "apostolically appointed" bodies are most rigidly enforced, there the energy of the Spirit is not found, as he that runs may read. And are we to be moved, though a voice break from a pile of ruins, dead not living stones, crying "The temple of the Lord are these?"

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We have in fact the blood on the mercy-seat, and the scapegoat, in Rom. 3, 4. Only the Lord's lot is set out in testimony for us as guilty to come, an ἱλαστήριον (mercy-seat) through faith in His blood. The scape-goat is as delivered for our offences (if not raised again for our justification). And propitiation, though in view of God's glory ("among whom I dwell"), still is for sins, as 1 John 2. The Lord's lot was a sin-offering, but in general for God Who was there.