

Scarlet

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Part 1

"And they shall make the ephod of gold, blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work " (Ex. 25: 6).

Looking closely at those "five words," which contain something of the glories of our Lord, we are reminded of what is said in another place, viz., that the world itself could not contain the books which might be written on such a theme. A Saviour who, on the one hand is God over all, marked by divine righteousness and glory (Gold), and on the other, by Incarnation as the Second Man out of heaven (Blue), comes necessarily before us in regal Majesty and Kingly beauty as the appointed Heir of all things (Purple), and Son of David, King of Israel, that nation's glorious King (Scarlet), while behind all, we are led in the fine twined linen to see Him as loving righteousness and hating iniquity, and exhibiting a life of unstained purity in a world of sin and death, where all had gone their own way and outraged the claims of God.

Much patience is required if we would enter into these things and watching daily at His gates. He delights to be sought after and is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him out To be admitted to the place of intimacy inside, to behold the King in His beauty, to have the heart delighted with the sight of Him as Centre of such varied glories is a favour of no ordinary degree, and recalls His own words to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear." "We beheld," says Peter, "His majesty on the holy mount." Stephen saw Him in the centre of the glory of God, and since then it is the privilege of every child of faith to look up and see Jesus, crowned with glory and honour, at the right hand of God. "For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

There are some, alas! who seem to have no taste for these things. There are, it is well-known, certain persons afflicted with a certain defect called colour blindness. Much of the sublime in nature is lost to such. The beauty of the rainbow above, or the richly decorated landscape beneath, which lends a charm to our life here, elevating the heart often above the pressure of mental and moral troubles is unknown to them. What shall be said of those who are morally blind and are content to remain in that condition. The language of repentant Israel, as recorded by the Holy Ghost is, "He hath no form or lordliness, and when we see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him." Contrast here Psalm 27: 4, "One thing have I desired of the Lord . . . to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple." How deplorably sad it must be for those who interest themselves in the things of the Lord

sufficient only to secure heaven at the end, but conform to the ways and fashions of the world and fail to catch a glimpse of the beauty of Him who is the fairest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely One.

The purple and scarlet of the above verse speak of our Lord in what is magnificent and gorgeous, and combine in Him with the moral and spiritual verities indicated by the other three things, viz., gold, blue, and fine twined linen: He is a heavenly Man in the royalty marked by divine righteousness and stainless purity, and His rule is set before us in the Word as having a two-fold bearing. The first is His place as Son of David, King of Israel, the second, that of Son of Man in universal sway in the creation, and it is generally agreed that the scarlet refers to the former glory and the purple to the latter. With the one we may connect the thought of the microscope showing the minute perfections of His grace and glory in a little nation on the earth, the people which, in grace, He stooped to link Himself with in the working out of God's ways in time (see the Psalms, particularly Ps. 2, Ps. 45, Ps. 72), and with the other, the telescope opening out the far-reaching extent of His dominions as King of kings and Lord of lords, and as swaying the whole creation of God (see Psalm 8, and its various quotations in the writings of Paul).

He it is upon whose shoulder the government of all rests. It has often been pointed out that earth's blessing supposes Israel restored and set up in millennial joy under Messiah's glorious sway, with all nations in happy accord', delighting to own their Messiah as Son of Man, their rightful King, whose beneficent sway through the people of His choice will bring contentment and satisfaction to all. This is well put by another. — "Thus the two streams of blessing will flow peacefully around the Lord Jesus, the centre as it were of two concentric circles, which will then expand to His glory and fill the world with blessing. He is the Son of David for the smaller circle and the lower of the two, He is the Son of Man for the larger, all-embracing government, which will then be established under the whole heaven and not only over-the land of Judea. The rule of the heavens in His Person will enfold all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, and so ensure righteousness and peace throughout the whole earth" (The Second Coming, W. K., page 111).

These two lines of truth often intersect each other and are continually brought together in the same context, the Spirit beginning with the place of Christ in the nation and going on to His wider glory among all nations. See for example, Psalm 2, where it is said, "Yet have I set My King on My holy hill of Zion," and then goes on to say, "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the *heathen* for Thine inheritance." Nor must we forget that there are times when the Spirit breaks through all mundane limitations and reaches out to His place of rule in the width of the creation. This comes very clearly out in Psalm 8, and its citations in the New Testament, where the Lord is portrayed at the centre of the universe and His Church associated with Him in the time of His glorious reign.

It will be seen from what has been said that it will be preferable to take the scarlet as depicting the narrowest circle first, and afterwards go on to what is universal. For this, let us prayerfully seek that an entrance may be given into the chambers of His Messianic glory, that He who has the key of David will graciously give admission, and that we may enter into "Things concerning Himself," and be entranced by beholding the King in His beauty in that Temple where every whit utters glory.

Scarlet seems in some way to connect with Israel. It is mentioned in the pledge given to Rahab of her security when Israel would take the City. It is descriptive of national glory in the days of Saul, when the daughters of Israel were clothed in gold and scarlet. And the fact that our Lord is spoken of as clothed in a scarlet robe in that Gospel where He is portrayed as Son of David would seem to indicate its use in Jewish royalty. Its significant rise in the ritual, when along with cedar wood and hyssop it was

cast into the burning of the heifer, speaks of the end of all man's glory in the cross (Gal. 6). The Woman clothed in purple and scarlet (Rev. 17) indicates, as is well known the daring character of the professing system at the close, assuming the right of Christ both in Israel and among the Gentiles.

There are certain well marked allusions to the supremacy of Christ in the early chapters of Genesis, which we must pass over since they are connected more with that of which the purple speaks. The call of Abraham marks an important epoch, and although it was comparatively late in the history when that event took place, he was made the root of the olive tree of testimony and the one from whom the Nation took its origin. Hence we read in the opening verse of the New Testament, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham." Here the genealogy is not traced to Adam as in Luke, the point being, to show our Lord as the true Solomon, Heir to the throne, and the true Isaac, the risen One, who is Heir to the land. The call of Abraham is thus seen as a new departure in the ways of God, and the glorious answer to all the promises is seen in Him who became a Minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers (Romans 15).

The Kingdom reign is first mentioned in Exodus 15: 18, and we cannot fail to see in the events of that period the power that will usher it in. The deliverance from Egypt, the opening of the sea and the leaping of the hills, are grandly expressive, producing the language which celebrated Him as a Man of power. I will sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously.... The Lord is a Man of war: the Lord is His Name. Then the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Stone of Israel, Benjamin (the son of my right hand) who ravens as a wolf, all speak of Him whose name is Immanuel (Genesis 49). The Star and Sceptre spoken of by Balaam and the greater prophet, mentioned by Moses, tell us distinctly of Him whose authority none would gainsay, and in like manner the Captain of the host of the Lord, who with a drawn sword appeared to Joshua.

In all the history it may be clearly seen that God is so ordering and controlling events as to give a clear outline of the Man of His purpose, who, at the end of the ages of probation, would come forth and take up all that had broken down in men's hands in previous times and make all good for God's glory and honour. To those acquainted with the Pentateuch, we may recall that Genesis chiefly foreshadows Christ in the person of certain men. Exodus in the way of certain acts. Leviticus, the wondrous fulness connected with the sacrifice of Christ and the Priesthood for the service of God, while Numbers and Deuteronomy describe a whole system of life and relationships which finds its counterpart in Christ and the Church.

The prophetic strain given through Hannah is a bright gleam in a dark day, and brings the King before us in Person. Her faith went far beyond the mere instinct of nature, and got for its answer a Samuel (asked of God) who was raised up to supply the link between the fall of the priesthood and the establishing of the monarchy in David. In this man we come to what is permanent, for although there was breakdown in his house, as in all the rest, all hope continues to centre there because of David's greater Son. This leads to the Psalms, where we get a rich and magnificent strain of prophetic utterances concerning the beauty of the King and the glory of His reign. The prophets dwell, by the same Spirit, on the sufferings of Christ and the glories which were to follow, passing over the long gap of time during which He is on the Father's throne. Their testimony may be said to have in view, Christ upon His own throne and the full blaze of His glory, but for the present He sits upon the throne of His Father, engaged with the deeper things of eternal counsel. Keeping this in view will save *us* from much which might otherwise be confusing.

A King according to God would combine every virtue with a resource that nothing can baffle. Moses who was king in Jeshuron, may illustrate both by type and contrast. He acted in that capacity

with a resource which was wonderful and in a way that draws out the words, "Faithful in all God's house." There were times, however, when the circumstances were too much for him and he had to say "Stand still, and I will hear what the Lord will command concerning you" (Numbers 9: 8). This could not possibly happen with the true King. "The Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. And His delight will be in the fear of Jehovah, and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness shall He judge the poor and reprove with equity the meek of the earth . . . and righteousness shall be the girdle of His reins and faithfulness the girdle of His loins (Isaiah 11: 2-5).

With Moses, as with all others, the divine Teacher was at work producing that which in later times He would carry out to fruition. Take that man of God for a moment along with Samuel and David, stars as we say, of the first magnitude. In their service they set forth our Lord as Lawgiver, Judge, and King. Who does not admire the beautiful traits of Christ seen in such men. Their faithfulness was the outcome of God's work in their souls, for, like ourselves, the blessed God had more to do in them than He had to do by them, and being mortal, we can see the element of weakness, and even failure, here and there. At a later day, when the prophet depicts Zion as a city of solemnities and a quiet habitation, it is because the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King, for all that the three leaders stood for is combined in Him, with the absence both of weakness and failure.

Here then, we get our knowledge of Him at first hand. No one knows the Son save the Father, and we listen with joy to His communications of Him in those old Testament days. "*Behold My Servant* whom I uphold, Mine elect in whom My soul delighteth! I will put My Spirit upon Him and He will bring forth judgment to the nations. He shall not cry nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break and smoking flax shall He not quench: He shall bring forth judgment to truth. He shall not faint nor be in haste till He have set justice in the earth, and the Isles shall wait for His law." How exceedingly precious is all this for this poor, down-trodden world, where unrighteousness and tyranny have so long flourished. But the place of Israel, as symbolised by the scarlet, must be kept in view. Therefore we get, "Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion; shout; daughter of Jerusalem! *Behold thy King* cometh to thee: He is just and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt, the foal of an ass."

But, my reader, there is more, for we are privileged to come into the sacred enclosure and listen with adoring hearts to the communications which passed between the Father and Son concerning the work of grace, the place the Son takes and the unutterable cost to carry all out. In the time of His deep sorrow we hear Him say, "Take Me not away in the midst of My days," and the answer which is given shows the Sufferer to be God over all, — "Of old hast Thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou continuest, etc." (Psalm 102 and Hebrews 1). And when the cross is seen from the side of man's hatred, the words ring out, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and for Thy possession the ends of the earth." See also Isaiah 49, and the various passages in the New Testament where the Father speaks directly to Him from the unseen world.

But such a favour must produce a corresponding result. We can, therefore, hear the language of faith in its communings with God about Him. "His glory is great in Thy salvation; majesty and splendour hast Thou laid upon Him. For Thou hast made Him to be blessings for ever; Thou hast filled Him with joy by Thy countenance" (Ps. 21). Next note faith's address to Him as seen in the Song of the King. "Thou art fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured into Thy lips: therefore God hath blessed

Thee for ever. Gird Thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty One, in Thy majesty and Thy splendour; and in Thy splendour ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness, and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things" (Psalm 45). And last of all, note the delightful outburst about Him to others, "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. His head is as the most fine gold . . . His eyes are like doves by the water-brooks with milk fitly set," and she goes on with the happy description of His features till able to go no further, she says, "Yea, He is altogether lovely" (Song of Solomon 5: 9-16).

It will readily be perceived that a mere carnal kingdom could not suit such a King, nor could He assume the government over man in his sinful condition. The reign of Christ supposes sin put away, the curse removed, the inheritance cleansed, and the whole earth full of His glory. This necessitated the cross with all its tale of woe. Hence we find, interspersed through the prophetic Scriptures and running parallel with what we have already touched, the description of His humiliation, suffering, sorrow, and death. He is described as a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, giving His back to the smiters and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, and hiding not from shame and spitting. This, too, is set forth in a concrete shape, that is to say, not merely by prophetic statement, but by type and shadow. See for example, the offering up of Isaac, the sufferings at the hands of his brethren by Joseph, the sufferings and distresses of David who, though anointed king, was hunted like a partridge on the mountains, and remember that the whole sacrificial system is an adumbration of that death by which the sin question is settled for ever.

His sufferings from the nation began with His ministry and ended with His death. The feelings of His heart may be traced in many passages, "Jehovah, how are they increased that trouble Me, many there be that rise up against me." And as the end drew near He has to say, "Yea, Mine own familiar friend in whom I confided, who did eat My bread, hath lifted up his heel against Me" (Psalm 41: 9). And in the Psalm of Atonement we learn what passed through His heart in the hour of deepest woe. "For dogs encompassed Me, an assembly of evildoers have surrounded Me, they pierced My hands and My feet." All closed in upon the holy Sufferer in that hour, but beyond all that evil powers could do, we have to take account of Him as forsaken of God. It was then that the whole sin question was settled for the glory of God, never to be raised again while eternity's ages roll.

One passage may engage us a moment because of how it combines the two lines of prophetic testimony glanced at above, viz., the sufferings of Christ and the glories which were to follow. In Isaiah 22, the Lord comes before us as a nail to be fastened in a sure place. Eliakim, who displaced Shebna, is the figure, and to apprehend the passage we must remember that in Jewish homes, the nail on which the ornaments hung was in a conspicuous place. "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open. And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place, and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantities from the vessels of cups even to all the vessels of flagons."

Here our adorable Lord is seen, not only as the perfect answer to all the types, shadows, promises, and prophecies which cover the pages of Holy Writ, but the radiant Centre of that glorious constellation of luminaries which shone throughout the ages, illuminating the record of man's history on the earth. Trace the whole line of honoured witnesses, that great galaxy of heavenly orbs which shone in the light of the approaching Sun from Abraham to Malachi: go through the holy Gospels and see the honourable mention of names like Moses, Joseph, Elijah, Isaiah, Daniel, etc; and last of all, visualise the King and His intimate ministers on the holy mount, and there behold the Nail and all the attendant vessels. All the vessels, not only outstanding ones, but the hidden and obscure? whose lives

were lived in relation to God. For all the vessels of small quantities, from vessels of cups to the vessels of flagons were there.

Here comes, in a ,most solemn turn in the chapter, an event which indicates that the Incarnation of the Son of God, however great, is not enough for the divine glory in a world of sin and death. " In that day, saith the Lord of hostel, shall the nail that is fastened in a sure place be removed and cut down and fall, and the burden that was upon it shall be cut off. Hence we read in another place that He was cut off out of the land of the living (See Isaiah 53: 8; Daniel 9: 26).

But why all this? Clearly because a world of sinners, where death shadows all, can never be made suitable for God. Death must come in, an event which, while proving the guilt of man, makes way for the resurrection platform where the Kingdom is established and where all that is of God rests. What a tremendous shattering of every human hope was the cross. Who can conceive what the disciples felt when Jehovah delivered up His strength to captivity and His glory into the enemy's hand. Can we wonder when one said, "I go a fishing, and others, said, We go with thee" and others in deep concern said, "We trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel" (John 21: 3; Luke 24: 21).

Part 2.

But here, as of old, it may be said, we would see Jesus. We turn then from the portrait to the Person Himself with the prayer on our lips, "Lord, show me Thy glory," and with confidence of heart contemplate those spiritually enchanting scenes set before us in the pages of the four evangelists. Here the King stands before us, giving concrete expression to the whole. Every line is filled with life, which gives substance to the shadow, completeness to the mould, and equilibrium to the whole. It has been said that Christ would not have come sooner than He did, and in the combined view of both the purposes and ways of God nothing can be more certain; the pre-christian ages being a necessity, during which the activity of the Godhead is seen working in the fallen race both in grace and government. Behind it all, however, there was the sketching out of an order of life and being which the Incarnation of the Son only could make good. In the birth of Christ all was actualised because every part of truth was perfectly combined in Him.

The divine glory and credentials are prominent in John and the human pedigree in connection with the nation in Matthew. Bethlehem, though small, is the place from which He comes, whose goings forth have been from the days of eternity. The glory of the Person is interwoven with the human details and presented in such charming simplicity as to rejoice the heart, while all fits in perfectly with what had been written before. All that Hebrews 1 predicates of Him is here seen in the Babe who is called Immanuel The control of affairs is markedly in divine hands, and the Child must be taken to Egypt. Not merely to escape the dragon's power however, but that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son." The history of the nation, which was one of failure, had begun from that place: He goes there to identify Himself with that history and put His own perfect stamp upon all.

As soon as He is announced by His forerunner and before beginning His public ministry, another king — one who had had long practice on man — comes upon the scene to challenge His royal rights and attempt to allure Him from the path of His moral glory. The one temptation relative to our present theme is that given second by Matthew, and alludes to the holy city and the temple. connecting with His place in Israel both politically and ecclesiastically. But the King, whose right it is to command, knows perfectly how to obey and the evil one is defeated by the Word of God.

Having defeated the strong man He goes forth to spoil his goods. He enters the strong man's palace where he kept his goods in peace, where he had his armour and much spoil, to dispossess and cast him out. That one had early raised up bulwarks between the creature and God, but the Deliverer had come. The King is here in the sphere of man's need on the line of mercy, but it never can be possible to think of mercy toward the spiritual forces of evil. The crushing of Satan meant the deliverance of man in so far as he was prepared to submit himself to the King. For there could be no truce in that conflict nor compromise, since mercy were lost on that which is irreconcilable.

Satan left Him for a season to come back at the end with his last and strongest weapon; Indirectly, however, his murderous opposition is kept up all through the time of the Lord's ministry. The ingenuity of his tactics is seen in a multitude of ways, for not only are evil spirits seen at work, but the very people that the King had come to bless are made the instrument of his attack. When we reflect that the very elements are stirred up by him to frustrate the work of the King, as in the storm on the lake of Galilee, we get some idea of the determiner! opposition of the evil one.

Demons were commanded to be silent, and on being cast out were found pleading with Him not to be sent into the abyss (Mark 1: 34; Mark 3: 11; Luke 8: 31). Here we have the saddest of all truths, that though Satan may delude man into the foolish device of scepticism it is beyond his power to do that with evil spirits. "The demons even believe and tremble" (James 2: 19). The majesty and resource of the King is seen not only in the exposure of every device of Satan, but that all is made to work out for his disgrace and defeat. This is seen all through the history, but nowhere more conspicuous than at the cross, where his last, worst. and vilest attack brings about his downfall for eternity.

As we behold the moral scenery of the Gospels the plenitude of His glory shines before us in such a way and in such variety that we feel the difficulty of keeping to the Scarlet. There everything utters glory and blends together, combining what is Personal, Moral, Official, and Creatorial, with the cross at the end, where the glory of Redemption (the door of entrance for us, whereby we may enter in and contemplate them all), shines in full meridian splendour. The unity, variety, and symmetry of what belongs to God and man may be traced in such a way as to anticipate God's eternal day, when He shall dwell with man in a condition of things into which disorder can never come. There, if we may be allowed the expression with all reverence, we see God at His best because He is dispensing grace and mercy in a world of need, and there, too, we see Manhood for the delight of the heart of God, a Sight for all intelligences to behold. Thousands have drawn near to the Ark of the covenant in that holy place, getting their tiny vessels filled and thousands more will follow, but it must ever remain in its own eternal fulness the richest of the rich, the grandest of the grand, the most wonderful of all the wonders of God.

We make no apology then, dear reader, for asking the favour of your company that we may together go by the footsteps of the flock, and enter into the inner chambers of the King, saying to Him, "We will be glad and rejoice in Thee, We will remember Thy love more than wine" (Song of Solomon 1: 7). "Where the word of a King is there is power, and who may say unto Him what doest Thou?" Such words could only be used in an absolute sense of our Lord and point forward to His public reign. But the One who is to rule in a scene of righteousness must first rule in grace, and we may well ask as we look forward in the light of the past and present which is most profound. "The shout of a King is among them," was as true in John 7: 37, as it will be in the time to come, and of this we have living proof in those who have heard the mighty voice of the Son of God and been made to live. Power is there, but controlled by love, in the sphere of good and evil and on behalf of the creature who had long groaned under the power of the tyrant.

His word carries authority, and from the moment He comes upon the scene the axe is laid to the root of the trees ready to cut them down. His being a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief is in relation to the conditions which prevail among men, this being a mark of divine grace towards the race in which His purpose centred, could in no wise affect His dealings with all other parts except that all should be in happy harmony with Himself in His work of grace. Where this was not true the very opposition, because of who He was, was bound to work for its own destruction. All is at His command. The physical, the animal, the spiritual, and the moral. The winds and waves obey, the tree withers away, the unbroken colt carries Him, the fish obey His voice as the sea yields her treasures, the demons quake before Him, and death itself, the king of terrors, surrenders to Him his spoil. No King like this. In Psalm 24, the question is asked, Who is He? "Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." His word controls the seen and unseen, heaven, earth, and hell, and destruction and death say we have heard the fame thereof with our ears. But see the effect of that word in human hearts. Distressed ones are filled with joy as they behold their loved ones relieved from both disease and death. The nobleman's son (John 4), the distressed sisters of Bethany (John 11), and the widow of Luke 8, show the gladdening rays of the Sun of Righteousness streaming in on sorrowful hearts in anticipation of the day when all tears shall be wiped away. "I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof," said the centurion, "but *speak the word only* and my servant shall be healed." And the soldiers sent to apprehend Him have to say, "Never man spake like this Man." Some would say, "What doest Thou" to their shame, and even a disciple might unwisely intrude to meet with stern rebuke. Other kings hold their subjects under command either by fear or affection. He is Lord of all, and holds the mind and heart of each under His control.

There were those again whose delight it was to bow before Him, owning His sovereignty and drinking in His word. "In the light of the King's countenance there is life and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain (Prov 16: 15). The woman of Luke 7, found His words to be like drops of water to a thirsty soul, and the grace of heaven dispensed by Him made her heart like a watered garden. If she learned the grace of forgiveness the woman of Luke 10, tasted His complacency in the joy of communion. Surely the Person and the communications of the King commanded her whole being and made her oblivious of all else. She knew the light of His countenance, and her faith rejoiced His heart by penetrating into His thoughts and His excellency to such an extent as to anoint Him in view of both the sepulchre and the throne (Matthew 26 and John 12).

Take again the words: — "Take away the wicked from before the King" (Proverbs 25: 5). Perhaps the most solemn illustration of this is seen in the going out of Judas into the dark of that, for him, morally dark night. The case, too, of those who brought the sinful woman for Him to condemn. The answer of His lips so exposed them that they were shamed out of His presence and all slink away. In Matthew 12, the King is seen on the line of mercy, the expression of which arouses the animus of the leaders to such an extent as to seek to destroy Him. Silenced by His word and baffled by the work of His goodness they go out and hold a council to put Him to death. While they are on the line of murder He goes on in His work of mercy taking. so to speak, no notice till He bring forth judgment unto victory. The moment is at hand, however, when He will turn His attention to these, when "the Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war, He shall cry, yea, roar: He shall prevail against His enemies." Then shall He say, "I have a long time holden My peace, I have been still and refrained, now will I cry like a travailing woman, I will destroy and devour at once" (Isaiah 42). In the language of another prophet it shall then be said, "The lion hath roared, who will not fear?" (Amos 3: 8).

Judah is the royal tribe whose ensign was a lion, and from him Messiah sprang. And when we

reflect that lions are emblematical of the majesty and dignity of Israel's throne, we get some sense of the true dignity of the nation as linked up with the Son of David. Judah is a young lion. "From the prey, my son, thou art gone up," says Jacob. "He stoopeth, he layeth himself down as a lion, and as a lioness who will rouse him up." We who live in the light of accomplished redemption with the power of Satan broken at the cross, can see how having spoiled principalities and powers, triumphing over them, He has gone up. Yes, He that descended into the lower parts of the earth has ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill all things (Ephesians 4). "But who shall rouse Him up?" That shall be the day of the vengeance of our God (Isaiah 60), when He shall say, "I have sharpened my gleaming sword and my hand shall take hold of judgment, for a fire is kindled in Mine anger that shall burn unto the lowest sheol" (Deut. 32: 22, 41).

Is there nothing akin to this, it may be asked, in the day of His ministry? Can we not see something of this when His disciples remembered that it had been written of Him, "The zeal of thine house devours Me"? He found in the temple the sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers sitting, and having made a scourge of small cords He cast them all out of the temple and said . . . "take these things hence: make not My Father's house a house of merchandise." This second cleansing of the temple, it will be recalled, took place within a few days of His death, and at no time in the history does His supremacy so shine out. If the doings of the last week be carefully studied it will be seen that He is indeed a King against whom there is no rising. "The voice of Jehovah is powerful, the voice of Jehovah is full of majesty, the voice of Jehovah breaketh the cedars" (Psalm 29: 4, 5).

But there is another side to His character which is of great importance for us to look at. He is the Lamb as well as the Lion, and it is worthy of note that both these titles come out in the first and last books of Holy Writ. This double presentation of our Lord presents Him either at the top or at the bottom, and while the Lamb is used as typifying His death, it is never so with the Lion, for no wild animal could be used in sacrifice. See Him in John 5, whose power will sweep the whole domain of death and whose mighty voice commands the tomb, and almost in the same breath hear Him say, "I can of mine self do nothing." If the exigency of the moment demanded stern righteousness He is there, "Jesus Christ the righteous," and if need or suffering, He is there to bind up the broken heart. "I beseech you," says the apostle, "by the meekness of Christ," and His own words were, "Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart and ye shall find rest to your souls."

The two things come together at His arrest. At one word from Him they all go backward and fall to the ground. and immediately afterwards He submits to all. There is no distraction in that moment, and although Peter's zeal created a scene, He is there to bind up and bring all to order. See Him before the council, spat upon and buffeted, then in Gentile hands mocked and crowned with thorns, and follow on to see Him led as a Lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb. It is this combination of divine power and glory with lowly grace, that submits to all manner of abasement, that entrances the soul; an inscrutable mystery which fills us with speechless amazement and richest adoration.

"There see the Godhead glory shine through that human vail,
And willing hear the story of love that's come to heal.
My soul in secret follows the footsteps of His love;
I trace the Man of sorrows His boundless grace to prove."

While beholding these two features shining out the difference between them is pressed upon us. The working of miracles in one very obvious sense could be nothing wonderful for Him, nor indeed the

checking of evil and deliverance of the creature from sin, disease, and Satan's power. All these things He had been doing in different degrees all along the line. He Himself is to us the greatest miracle of all, and the marvel would be if He did not do such things. But the most wonderful thing of all, and that which is bound to touch the heart most deeply is, that such a Person should be found going through the circumstances of this life patiently and calmly committing Himself to God and doing everything in a way that was well-pleasing to Him. Here, beloved reader, let us ponder as we behold this sight which is surpassingly lovely; to see such an One commanding the storm or walking on the water produces wonder indeed, because it was done in Manhood's lowly guise, but to see Him smitten, stricken, and afflicted, mocked, and spat upon, surpasses all that creatures can conceive. What could bow the soul in holy and adoring worship like that? It is that which has been called His moral glory, and in which He is seen as the most gracious and accessible of all men. One who never turned any away, whether old or young, but made Himself the servant of all.

Part 3.

Here we must trace, though in the fewest possible words on account of want of space, the history of His rejection by the people and its connection with that already touched. The first four chapters of Matthew we have seen give the birth, baptism, proclamation, and testing of the King. Next follows the Sermon on the Mount, a discourse incomparable for beauty, simplicity, and grandeur. A King like this must have a kingdom altogether different from anything which had ever been before. It is therefore a description of the *character* of His kingdom. Those things which are necessary for a nation and kingdom among men, such as wealth, education, and distinction of rank and a standing army are conspicuous by their absence, the reason being that all the requirements of His are stored up in Himself. The Beatitudes of Matthew 5: 1-7, are a description of Himself to be produced in His subjects by faith and on the principle of reflection; the whole discourse being a searching exposure of the accredited leaders of religion at that time.

The two following chapters (Matt. 8 and Matt. 9) give His service, and there we may see the display of the *power* of the kingdom in such a way as to demonstrate the truth that the King and the kingdom are bound up together and all its requirements are stored up in Himself. He is refused at the end of Matthew 9, and His mighty works which could not be denied are imputed to evil power. Before He accepts their decision He tries them in another way by sending forth the twelve disciples, for what could have been done more for that people than what He has done. They go forth as the ministers of His bounty, equipped by Him to meet every emergency and to demonstrate the power and resource of the King. What a day that must have been and what joy and gladness came into many hearts who, like ourselves, were sharers in the common heritage of woe which sin had brought in. All that was necessary was the glad acknowledgment of the King, but this was not to be. His presence, the description of the kingdom and the display of its power, did not awaken response; the forerunner might mourn, and He Himself pipe, but they would neither lament nor dance and at last, treated as a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber He has to pronounce woe upon the cities in which most of His mighty works were done.

This should be carefully pondered for it brings before us one of the most decisive moments in the world's history. Decisive not only for the Jew, but for the nations of the world, and creating the position for the greatest display of wisdom and resource, the richest unfolding of heaven's grace, the position which God takes account of to fulfil the counsels of eternity. In the light of previous testimony however, it will create no surprise since all had been foretold in the prophets, and indeed, it was this that was before Paul in the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia when he told the Jews that in condemning

their Messiah they were but fulfilling that which their own prophets had written (Acts 13: 27).

There are, therefore, three important landmarks around which all this part of the history turns which if taken account of, will serve to simplify matters at the same time as impressing us with the profundity and beauty of all Scripture.

(1) The connection of Matthew 11 with Isaiah 49.

(2) The strong link between Matthew 16 and Isaiah 8.

(3) The bringing together of Psalm 118 and Zechariah 11 with Matthew 21 - 23.

(1) The point at which we have arrived in Matthew 11 will be found to fit in exactly with the words of Isaiah 49: 4, where the blessed Lord speaks by the prophetic Spirit saying, "I have laboured in vain, I have spent My strength for naught and in vain. yet surely My judgment is with the Lord and My work with My God . . . Though Israel be not gathered yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord." At that moment the answer comes from His God; — "Is it a light thing that Thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I have even given Thee for a light of the nations, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth." If the reader will at this point carefully read the words of our Lord in Matthew 11: 25-27, he will see that never was there a time when He was more glorious in the eyes of His Father than when Israel made that solemn decision.

(2) Having broken with the nation at the end of Matthew 12, He formally abandons the testimony and takes wider ground, Matthew 16: 20. By charging the disciples to tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ, He connects with Isaiah 8: 16, 17. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among My disciples, and I will wait for Jehovah who hideth His face from the house of Jacob; and I will look for Him." It is at that moment that the disciples are seen as given to Him *out of the nation*, as shown in the words of the prophet in verse 18. (See also Hebrews 2: 13).

(3) In Matthew 21 the Lord enters Jerusalem in fulfilment of Zechariah 9, and is acclaimed King in the words both of that prophet and Psalm 118. But in spite of all the leaders would not have Him. The birth of Messiah had been a fresh overture or covenant on the part of God, not only with Israel, but with all nations. Their refusal was bound to affect all the others and the symbolical act of breaking the staff in Zechariah 11: 10, signifies the breaking of this covenant with all the peoples. This, in all probability, was accomplished in the solemn words of Matthew 23, which end with the statement, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." All ended as we know midst the gloom of Calvary, fulfilling that great branch of prophetic testimony which spoke of the sufferings of our precious Lord, bringing with it the shattering of every hope. and producing distress and consternation among those who had been privileged to witness much of the glory and beauty of the King.

We have now to see the use that is made of the people's decision. In the ways of God Christ had been offered and refused, but all had been foreseen their decision in that way making room for the operations of divine love in the purposes of grace. While it was necessary that the trial of man in his responsibility should be completed in that people by the presentation of Him in whom all the promises centred, it was also foreknown that He would be refused. How the blessed God causes all to work for His own glory and the good of the creature may be seen in the way the rejection and ignominious death of Christ is used by Him to bring out the richest and fullest manifestation of His grace. The forces of evil were at work, but to make way in divine wisdom for the hidden purposes of eternity and the deeper glories of the Godhead. The prophets had written of the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow? but knew not that a long period which has lasted nineteen centuries would come between the one and

the other. The people having forfeited everything He said, "I will go and return to My place till they acknowledge their guilt" (Hosea 5: 15). See Genesis 42: 21 — "We are indeed guilty." He had said before that time while expostulating with them, "What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before." We know His own place was with the Father, as He said in John 17. "And now I come to Thee." His going there was in connection with deeper and richer purposes, which has engaged Him since and will continue to do so till the moment now at hand in which Israel, having received at the Lord's hand double for all their sins, shall say, "Come and let us return to Jehovah, He hath torn and He will heal us, He hath smitten and He will bind us up."

It is during this period that a new thing comes to pass. While Christ is on high the Holy Ghost comes to dwell in His people on the earth. consequently *the whole counsel of God is brought out*. The Church age is undoubtedly the most important time in all the dealings of God with Man because the Holy Ghost, a diving Person, is here to unfold the glory of God and Jesus. This necessitates the opening out of the counsels of God concerning the glory of the Son in the Creation calling out the Assembly as His Body and Bride, which brings into moral display all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, going far beyond anything ever before conceived, showing the dealings of God which began with Genesis to be as yesterday, all being as elevated in character as heaven is above the earth. Such things are far beyond the scope of Israel's blessing and would scarcely be fitting in a paper dealing with the glory of Christ in that people. But besides her place in relation to divine Persons and the counsels of eternity. the Church fills an important part in relation to time and the ways of God. While here in the scene of His holy government she is made the witness of His grace, patience, and faithfulness in such a way that all these great and blessed principles of truth, which had for their centre the earthly people, are now being worked out in her. In this way, it is so important to see that nothing that God had in mind for His earthly people can be said to have failed. Their refusal made room for the call of others, who are brought in and made the recipients of the blessing in such a way as to demonstrate both His faithfulness to His people and the securing of His glory in them. The Lord Jesus Christ had come as *Centre of all the counsels of God*, and at the same time, *the One in whom all His ways were gathered up and centred*. His refusal brought about redemption by which He took His place at the right hand of God, and by the Spirit the Assembly was formed to take her place in regard to both the counsels of eternity and the time-ways of God. While the former, which is the deeper and fuller, must be reserved for another time we are compelled to look into the latter because of its connection with the ways of God with Israel and the earth.

We would emphasize this and press upon the reader the importance of giving attention to it since it is the key to open up the whole range of divine dealings. Many can say a great deal about the past and look forward to the great things of the future, describing minutely the moral and political disorders of the day; books, too, constantly coming out, interesting and helpful as far as they go, but not having the key, viz., the place of the Church as the vessel in which the ways of God centre, there is both loss and confusion. The result is that these things are spoken of as if the great gap of time during which Christ is at the right hand of God were a mere hiatus where all is blank. The Church may be spoken of, but in such a vague way that there is no distinct sense of her place as the vessel wherein are deposited the blessings which are proper to the earthly people.

The link between Israel and the Church is the elect remnant given to Christ out of the nation. In that important section of the epistle to the Romans, where the faithfulness of God to that people is seen to agree with His promises, it is said that they are not all Israel who are of Israel. This was also put before them by the Lord Himself in John 8, when He said, I know that ye are Abraham's seed, and in the same breath, If ye were Abraham's children ye would do the works of Abraham. The generation of

faith is thus distinguished from the nation as an election of grace and this is confirmed by figurative teaching. Isaac, the son of the free woman, represents the line of faith, while Ishmael sets forth the nation in unbelief (Gal. 4: 22-26). Much confusion exists, for want of attention to this important distinction. While the apostate nation is cut off and, like Cain of old, doomed to wander in the land of and with the mark of a vagabond, the election of grace are brought in and become the true nation, the Israel of God. The people had, as it were, thrown back in His face the Messianic blessings, but He found hearts in which they could be enjoyed, these came into all the blessing of Israel and far more, being given to Him as companions and transferred from Israel and earthly blessing to the Church. Thus we can see how all that belongs to Israel is maintained and carried through for God in the Church during the time that the nation is suffering under His government for the murder of their Messiah.

It is in this light we must view the great apostle when, having brought out the counsels of God in connection with the change of dispensation. he still speaks of himself as standing for the true hope of Israel. It is well worth pondering that the man to whom, above all others, was committed the truth of the heavenly calling does not give up the true hope of those whose blessing is on the earth. After the interview with the elders of Ephesus, where he speaks of himself and his labours in connection with the Gospel, the Kingdom, the Counsels, and the Church of God, he speaks before Agrippa as standing for the hope of the promises made of God to our fathers to which our twelve tribes, serving God day and night, hope to arrive. This, it will be seen, he connects with resurrection as showing the ground of Israel's blessing to be like that of all others, viz., the redemption work of our Lord Jesus Christ. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance and the true Israelite never loses sight of the fact that, in His own time, God will bring His people in like all others, as subjects of His mercy.

But some one may enquire what are the blessings which belong to Israel which are shared by those who form the Church and carried through in them provisionally for God in view of that people. The answer is that the Kingdom, the new Covenant, the Sanctuary, and the Priesthood, with all the holy adornment belonging to these things are existent today in the presence of the Holy Ghost, things which were spoken of and fore-shadowed in pre-Incarnate days, and in like manner, the great blessings of Salvation, Reconciliation and Eternal life, with all the peace, love and joy which necessarily belongs to such things. These things, and far more, came here in the Person of Christ and was offered to Israel who, being the covenant people, had a certain claim. After all, such things could only reach man by redemption and God took account of Israel's rejection of His Son to bring that about.

We see in the second of Acts the Kingdom established in an altogether new way, the King having taken His place on high as the Centre of royal power and authority. From a dispensational point of view it covers a certain geographical area and encloses a mass of people who enjoy the benefit of the King's sway in an outward way, accepting Christianity as a creed and owning the Lordship of Christ in a nominal way. Like Israel of old, the righteous are seen in the midst of a mass of profession, where many are favoured with the light of God. The Kingdom exists, however, as the great moral security for man and only those who in faith have bowed to the Lord Jesus Christ have entered there and are said to be brought into the Kingdom of the Son of God's love. "I will sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously.... The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is His name.... The Lord shall reign for ever and ever" (Exodus 15).

The Covenant prophetically spoken of by Jeremiah is given effect to in the spirit of it in the Gospel today, the preachers being called new covenant ministers (see 2 Cor. 3). The terms of it are forgiveness of sins and the law written on the heart, which has in view cleansing from sins and deliverance so that man becomes a reflex of Christ. The cup of the new covenant is in the hands of the Assembly today and used at the greatest of all feasts, the Lord's Supper. This is a thought of priceless

value, for it is at that feast that the saints enter into all the blessedness of the sanctuary, taking their part in divine service in the company of the great Priest who is over the service of God. It has often been remarked that when you get the covenant immediately the sanctuary and divine service come into view. In both 2 Corinthians and the epistle to the Hebrews the covenant leads on to the whole range of truth connected with the sanctuary and the service of God.

Nor can it be different with the other items of truth already mentioned, for from the moment sin came, faith was ever taught to look forward to the coming age, where God's triumph will be displayed in the removal of sin and the curse and the display of what springs from His own heart of love. Reconciliation may be said to be the great underlying thought of the great day of atonement in Israel. We get there, in no ambiguous terms the assurance that all will be reconciled to the great Godhead in the eternally abiding value of the work of the cross, where all that is connected with breakdown will be so entirely removed that the complacency of God will rest upon all. Surely it needs little application for us to see how thoroughly the soul may enter into and enjoy this to-day with such Scriptures before us as Luke 15, 2 Corinthians 5, and Ephesians 1.

Isaiah speaks of a day of salvation which, like all the great predictions of that prophet, look forward to the day of glory when the glad earth shall ring with the praises of her Creator and Lord; when the creature shall be set free from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. That day has come now according to 2 Corinthians 6: 2, bringing with it deliverance from sin, the world, and the power of Satan, and leading on to the blessed knowledge of eternal life in Christ Jesus. This, too, is spoken of in the Psalms as connected with Zion as the habitation of Jehovah, where He will rest forever. "there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Eternal life is preached in the Gospel today and in the latter writings of the New Testament is opened out by the Spirit of God as one of the richest items of truth contained in the whole revelation of God. Thus we can see the beauty, symmetry, and perfection of God's ways and, like the apostle of old, are led to cry out, "O depth of riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable His judgments and untraceable His ways.... For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor? Or who has first given to Him and it shall be rendered to Him? For of Him and through Him and for Him are all things: to Him be glory for ever. Amen" (Rom. 11: 33-36).

The transition from Judaism to Christianity covered a period of forty years, during which time God was graciously bearing with His people and seeking to lead them out of that which was about to be judged and set aside. Both the city and the temple must go and the truth of the Assembly be apprehended as a heavenly thing outside of dispensations, a faith system outside of that which appeals to sight and sense. This transit was carried out in the companions of Christ of whom He says, "Behold I and the children which God has given Me." These were seen in the apostles and all those Jewish Christians who, by identification with the rejected Messiah, became the foundation of the new thing and are addressed as partakers of a heavenly calling in contrast with what they before stood in as Jews. Peter addresses the same class and though suffering in their outward lives, calls them a kingly priesthood who offer up sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, going on to the great thoughts of a chosen race, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a people for a possession, that they might set forth the excellencies of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. Thus showing that if they had lost the shell they had come to the kernel, that all that had been sinned away in unbelief by the nation was theirs in a new and divinely stable way.

Surely this indicates the importance of the time when Christ is on high and when all that is soon to be displayed is set forth to faith in the power of the Holy Ghost. Looking back we see the revelation of God coming out in our Lord, looking forward we can see the time for display is near, meantime, all

is set forth in testimony, for it is a principle with God to set forth in testimony all that He is going to display. In the linking up of the time-ways of God we may therefore see a unity of thought and feeling amidst much diversity, which characterises all the elect independent altogether of dispensations and His ways with different companies. What marked the faithful in the days before the flood was to walk with God. Well it is for those who do so today. In the exercise of such a blessed privilege it will be marked by much greater light. The communion of these noble worthies of faith and the Old Testament saints in general could not be in the same wealth of truth which we possess to-day since all looked forward to the advent of the Son. Not one of these, however favoured, could know the Father as such, consequently they could not possibly know association with the Son. But if the blessing is different the path is the same. This world of sin and sorrow must ever be the training ground for the children of faith. There sin and death prevail, there everything is in opposition to righteousness, and there the saint learns the treachery of His own heart while learning the goodness and love of the heart of God.

All this shows the great value of the Old Testament for the saints today and since these Scriptures, which are the special portion of the earthly saints, helps us today to a deeper knowledge of our good and gracious God, showing us His grace, patience, and faithfulness, we may well conclude that those precious, heavenly communications in the New Testament, which belong to the Assembly, will serve to educate those of the earthly saints in the knowledge of God both in His nature and character. If we who are called from heaven to heaven find much in the Psalms and kindred Scriptures which meet and help us while passing through the world which, through grace, has become to us a desert, we can well understand that the saints of a coming day will draw much from Romans, Colossians, and Ephesians, and other Scriptures, to deepen their souls in the apprehension of the wealth of the glory of God. "Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and song, He also is become my salvation, Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

Part 4.

But we must pursue the line of the scarlet thread a little further for, "Glorious things are spoken of Thee, O city of God." Her past tells an awful tale, but, like Job of old, the end of the Lord shall surpass for excellency of glory. The siege and capture of Jerusalem by the Romans is one of the blackest pages in the history of the race, when that nation, dreadful and terrible, devoured and brake in pieces, when she exceeded herself in blood and butchery and made the nations of the world to tremble at her wild ferocity. It had been foretold by Moses and the prophets and by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and some of the darkest parts of Holy Writ describe it (see Deuteronomy 28: 49-68; Zechariah 11; Luke 21: 20-24). They had chosen a murderer instead of their King and now murder and carnage embroil them, they had sold their Messiah for thirty pieces of silver, they themselves are sold it is said, thirty of them for one penny, and the very foundations of society trembled in a cataclysm which threatened to decimate the most important nation of mankind. How solemn to think that the worst is still to come (Matthew 24: 21). They cried, His blood be upon us and our children. The first part of this sentence was fulfilled in the above, the rest remains for the great tribulation.

Meantime Christendom, that is, the mere outward profession of Christianity without the reality, is going on to judgment, having rejected the revelation of God in His Son; The judgment of the Gentile and the reinstatement of the Jew is at hand and there are not wanting signs, like the rustling of the mulberry trees, which tell us that great things are at the door. That He who changeth times and seasons, removeth kings and setteth up kings, and has determined beforehand both the times and the bound of their habitations, is moving in view of the fulfilment of His thoughts for the glory of His Son. The

League of Nations shaping the revival of the Roman Empire, the coming into the political arena of Egypt, and greatest of all, the raising up of Israel as seen in the vision of the valley of dry bones (Ezek. 37). All begins at the right hand of God and the effect is seen here by those who wait upon the Lord. May we have grace to be like Habakkuk upon the watch-tower.

Israel, the people of God, have long been trodden down and even become accustomed to it, like Issacher, who bowed his shoulder to bear and was a tributary servant. But now they are awakening as from the dead and coming into view as a nation, making their presence felt throughout the civilized world. (The careful reader will not need to be reminded here that this is a sure indication that the translation of the Church to her place in heaven is near at hand). The following words from a leading Zionist are worthy of our consideration, spoken about a quarter of a century ago. "It seemed as if we were witnessing a miracle which affected ourselves and all around us. We felt ourselves part and parcel of a fairy tale, in which we saw our brethren, thousands of years buried, again become flesh and blood. We wanted, in the joy of this reunion, to rehearse the sad history of the hundreds of years in which we have been dead and in our tomb, in a grave which lacked the peace of the grave." This raising up of Israel it will be recalled, connects with the feast of trumpets, which shows that we are in the feasts of the seventh month. In Leviticus 23., we are shown that after the feasts of the first and third months there is a long period elapses till we come to the feast of trumpets in the seventh month and the rising of the new Moon for the resurrection of Israel is in view of her taking her place on earth to reflect the glories of the Sun of righteousness, her glorious Messiah. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed on our solemn feast days (Psalm 80: 3). The prophet Joel should be read with this, particularly Joel 2, as showing the intervention of the King at a time when the peoples are saying, where is their God.

But before taking the place of blessing she has yet to pass through the fire. The common saying that the darkest hour of all the night is just the hour before daylight is clearly seen here, for the Israel of the Ishmael type comes into evidence with every desire to assert herself by taking her place among the nations, but without her King. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and *some to shame and everlasting contempt*" (Dan. 12: 2). How clearly this and many other Scriptures are being fulfilled before our eyes. A nation is springing into existence as it were which has been terrible from its beginning, hitherto a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled, with all the marks of youth, energy and virility, and with a determination characteristic only of that people, to play her part in the progress of civilization and in the perfecting of the race. The re-peopling of Palestine by the Jews, the assertion of their national rights, Zionism, which means the claims of the ancient people, her schools and universities, and the proposal to rebuild the temple, all this and much more and unbelief which refused the King is still at work also, and it is impossible that they can be right without their King. The movement is clearly national and political, the effort being to bring about what Scripture speaks of in man's way without Christ. How solemn to see, as taught of God, beneath all the present activity with all its promise and apparent success the beginning of a work which, in its full-blown results, will be the most daring and God-defying combination that has ever been upon the earth.

The Lord had long ago to say, "I am come in My Father's name and ye will not receive Me, if another comes in his own name him ye will receive." In the flush of excitement and apparent success they are about to receive a king under whose domination they will reach the lowest and darkest point that it is possible to get; saying in bold defiance, "We have made a covenant with death and with sheol have we made an agreement: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through it shall not come to us." Here we have the fulfilment of the Lord's words in Matthew 12, for the unclean spirit comes back and

takes with him seven other spirits worse than himself and they enter in and dwell there, and the last condition of the nation is worst of all. Then shall their chosen ruler exalt himself and magnify himself above every god, and speak monstrous things against the God of gods, and he shall prosper until the indignation be accomplished.... And he will practice in the strongholds and fortresses with a strange god, whoso acknowledgeth him will he increase with glory and he will cause them to rule over the many and shall divide the land to them for reward. It is then that Jehovah whets His glittering sword and His hand takes hold on judgment, saying, I will render vengeance to Mine enemies and will reward them that hate Me, I will make Mine arrows drunk with blood and My sword shall devour flesh (See Isaiah 28: 15-18; Daniel 11: 36-39; and Deuteronomy 32: 41, 42).

We may well ask what does it all mean? See the accumulation of Scriptures setting forth the appeals of longsuffering goodness that the poor besotted people might be brought to see and own their God, listen to the plaint of Jehovah in the book of Jeremiah in highly figurative language when He says, "My bowels, my bowels! I am pained at My very heart, etc. (Jeremiah 4: 19-22), and compare the language of the same blessed Person when, in the days of His flesh, He wept over the infatuated people, saying, If thou hadst but known, etc. (Luke 19: 41-44). No, no, nothing can be right even among the nations of the earth till Israel is in her proper place of blessing, and certainly she can never be there till she owns her glorious Messiah, in whom all her blessing centres. Jehovah has said long, long ago, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it! This also shall be no more until He come whose right it is and I will give it to Him" (Ezek. 21: 27).

But there is another side. The melancholy picture of a nation defying the God whose mercy and long-suffering has so long been towards them is lighted up by the believing class, whose unflinching faithfulness and tenacity for the glory of God in relation to the sins of the whole people is a sight for all creation to behold. They are a people terrible indeed from their existence hitherto, and maintaining their distinctive position through every conceivable character of suffering, marked by ability that puts them in the front rank in every pursuit in life: leaders in science, commerce, politics, and many other things, but alas, blind to the goodness of God, and found in the front rank of the great closing apostasy, which forms so to speak, the closing scene in the great drama of the agree. In the fearful scenes among the nations which have marked these last days, there has not been wanting men from among the Jews who have led in disorder and lawlessness, introducing anarchy and revolution, with all the fearful accompaniments of those things. From that nation came an Ahithophol and a Judas Iscariot, and from it there is about to arise the Anti-Christ, who surpasses all, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, etc." Under this last leader the bulk of the nation will be found in league with the Gentiles against Jehovah and His Anointed in a carnage which is beyond expression, and compared to which the French Revolution will indeed be an "innocent idyll," and to which no parallel can be found in the world's history.

It is a relief therefore, to turn to that which, mid all the fearful condition of things, is well-pleasing to God Our Lord Jesus Christ came of that nation and took the place of a Jew, and if we bow and adore Him as our Lord and God, let us not forget to honour those men of God who witnessed a good confession, who were the ornaments of their generation and whose life work has left its mark for good on the history of the whole race. Men "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

The suffering and service which lies before this remnant in the closing struggle requires picked men. There is a work to be done for the King and He shall choose His workers. If Gideon has thirty-

two thousand men for the battle they must be tested, that all who wish to return to their homes may go. But from the ten thousand who wish to go there must yet be a selection that the three hundred fit for the battle may stand alone (Judges 5). So it is at the end, when many shall seal their testimony with their blood and in that way enter into heavenly blessing. The King shall select and put His own stamp upon His servants. Happy are they of Abraham's sons who have the stamp of God upon their foreheads and are honoured with the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy. Their experiences are detailed for us in many Scriptures, particularly Psalm 9 - 15, 44, 94, and the closing chapters of Isaiah.

This class began, as we have seen, in those given to Christ out of the nation, who were transferred to church position. The same class are in evidence and are preparing, under the work of the King, for reverting to the proper position of Israel and the establishing of the Kingdom in glory upon the earth. In the work of God among the Jews in these last days, large numbers have been brought to own the Lord Jesus Christ as the Centre of the nation's hopes and the cry has arisen from many, Jehovah has forsaken me and the Lord hath forgotten me. This can never be, listen to His answer. Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? even these may forget, but I will not forget thee. Lo, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands: thy walls are continually before Me.... I will lift up My hands to the nations and set up My standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their bosom and thy daughters shall be carried on their shoulders . . . and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah, for they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me (Isaiah 49: 14-22).

The idea that all this is merely dispensational has been the cause of much loss since it ignores many of the exercises of the human heart and much of the grace of the Lord. Listen to the yearnings of His heart on their behalf. "For Zion's sake will I not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth (Isaiah 42: 1). All must begin with Him where He is, and the exercises of the moment tell us that occupation with the Church has not dulled His affections for His earthly people, but that He is raising up intercessors and bringing them into communion with Himself to pray for it. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, Jerusalem; all the day and all the night they shall never hold their peace: ye that put Jehovah in remembrance keep not silence and give Him no rest till He establish, till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. In the progress of events the darkness deepens till the great siege and sack of the city, spoken of in Zech. 14, will have shattered the hopes and dreams connected with present Jewish activities, and drawn forth the agonising cry, "How long, O Lord." The distress of this time is put in words for us in Psalms 74 and 79, and linked with what comes out in the close of Isaiah, "Look down from heaven and behold the habitation of Thy holiness," and then, "Oh that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down . . . wilt Thou restrain Thyself for these things, Lord, wilt Thou hold Thy peace and afflict us very sore."

We would remind ourselves that all this is earthly and in relation to the earthly people. The Church as such, is heavenly in hope and character, and is outside of time and prophetic events as far as related to Israel and the earth. There may, however, be a number of that nation converted before the catching away of the heavenly saints, which will form the link between the present and coming age. This seems quite in accord with the ways of God in His dealings at the change of dispensations and indeed, there seems some indication of it by the present action of the Spirit of God among that people. The Scripture already cited in reference to their raising up seem, too, to indicate something of this, for while many of them come forth to everlasting contempt it is to be noted that others of them come forth to everlasting life, and are found turning many to righteousness, which doubtless refers to those who go forth with the testimony of the coming One. A transitional period marked the Church's beginning, the

same may be seen again when she is removed to heaven, when the Jews will come in again to form the link, this time from the Gospel of the glory to that of the kingdom, as was put before their fathers, but with the definite fulfilment in view.

The cities of Judah will be visited with this message, for the preachers will be in the midst of their work when the King comes. "Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of Man be come" (Matthew 10: 23). These are they who, amidst unprecedented suffering, stand for the testimony of Jesus and the testimony of Jesus we are told, is the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19: 10). This testimony connects for Israel all the fulness of Messianic prophecy with the One whom their fathers despised and crucified, combining in His glorious Person all that belongs to God with every Israelite desire. The mass of the people however, while crying to Jehovah for deliverance, will in all probability be unable to connect deliverance with the crucified One till they behold Him face to face, but will mercifully find in their Scriptures many portions fitted to give expression to the deep distress through which they are then passing.

The dealings of Joseph with his brethren serves to illustrate this period. They came to him in their need and he met it, but while yearning over them he made himself strange to them, holding them at a distance till the time come that he could show himself to them. Like them, these sufferers will be brought through a process of schooling, but maintained in the fiery trial, till at the end they look on Him whom they have pierced. When the appointed moment comes He shall come forth and calm the awful hurricane of persecution raging around them, like as in days of old on the lake of Galilee, bringing salvation to all them that look for Him. Then shall He pay His vows, fulfilling all that He has set Himself to do for His beloved people, and the language of Ruth 3: 11, will be fitting, "For the Man will not rest until He has accomplished the matter this day." What a moment will that be when one shall say, What are those wounds in Thy hands? And He will say, Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends. The meeting of Joseph and his brethren can but faintly adumbrate this scene, which shows the people face to face with the One whom their fathers had crucified, as the bearer of all the glory yet with the marks of the cross. Is this our glorious King, our long-looked for Deliverer, the One our fathers treated so ill?

"Yes this is He and this is love, love unimagined and unknown.

He left the joys of heaven above, turned from His Kingdom and His throne.

Yea, cast aside His holy crown, a weary wayfarer became.

Bore e'en Jehovah's bitter frown, endured the cross, despised the shame.

Then conquered hell and burst the grave and rose Omnipotent to save."

Then shall the words of Thomas (who it will be remembered, came in after the church period) spring to their lips, "My Lord and my God," (see John 20: 19-23 and 26-29).

What follows connects itself with the second feast of the seventh month, or rather, the feast of that date when the people, representative of the whole nation, King, Prophet, Priest, and People, shall be bowed in deepest repentance and shall mourn every family apart, the family of the house of David apart and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart and their wives apart: the family of the house of Levi apart and their wives apart: the family of Shimei apart and their wives apart: all the families that remain, every family apart and their wives apart. If we recall how these four names were connected at different times in the history with the death of a man we can see how fitting it is that they should be mentioned here as expressive of the nation's deep contrition regarding the death of their Messiah (see Genesis 49: 5-7 and 2 Samuel 12: 1-14)

But who can conceive what the presence of the King will mean. If for Israel richest blessing, what of the scorching judgment meted out to those nations which had been so long concerned in rebellion against the will of the King. We have heard, and perhaps seen, the tumultuous joy of the ringing of bells, the playing of music, and the beating of drums, and whole nations intoxicated with joy at the close of a war which had steeped such nations in blood for years. The second advent will end wars, because He comes in whose Person is the answer to every question and the solution to every problem, to deliver His people and reign supreme. Some little time is necessary however, in the nature of things, that all enemies may effectually be dealt with and order restored. We find in Jeremiah 31 the joy of Israel described at that moment when they shall come and sing aloud upon the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness or good things of Jehovah, for corn, and for new wine and for oil, and their soul shall be like a watered garden. Then shall the virgins rejoice in the dance, and the young men and old together? and their mourning shall be turned to gladness, for He will satiate the soul of the priest with fatness and His people will rejoice in His good things. But terrible indeed, must His attitude be towards those nations which were set to resist His coming, when He girds His sword upon His thigh in majesty and splendour, and appears red in His apparel, with garments like him that treadeth the wine vat.

Some time after this comes the entrance of the ten tribes known as Ephraim into the land of their fathers and the blessing of Jehovah, long scattered and lost to view, and not being directly connected with the refusal of Messiah, they had not been in the land when the furnace was heated one seven times more than it had been before. It is God's way to rehearse, as it were, the history of the nation by bringing these out from among the peoples and the countries with a mighty hand, and causing them to pass under the rod as a shepherd with his sheep, and purging them of the rebels and bringing them into the land that they may know Him (Ezekiel 20). The long-standing breach is healed, as seen in the symbolic act of joining the two sticks (Ezekiel 37), and they shall be one nation upon the mountains of Israel, and one King shall be King over them all.

Just before the King appeared there had been, in the providential judgments of Revelation 6 - 19, the break-up of all ordered life among the nations: the complete convulsions of the whole framework of society in all its various departments. This had in view divine construction, viz., an entirely new order of things affecting the very land itself. Not only will the social conditions of life be changed, taking in what is social, commercial, and political, but there will be changes by the word of His power which will affect the land both physically and geographically. The Mount of Olives we are told, shall cleave in the midst, half going towards the north and half towards the south, so that a deep valley is formed from east to west, wherein flows those living waters which go to the Dead Sea in the east and to the Mediterranean in the west. The waters have their source in the Sanctuary and are marked by life and healing, so that the part of the land so long known as lying in death and barrenness is now marked by fertility and beauty. The river itself abounds with fish and its banks with trees, both for food and medicine. The mighty power of the King, which was seen in the days of His flesh, is again in evidence and all nature hastens to obey His blessed command now in the day of His glory.

The new Temple from which the water flows shall be built on a scale far surpassing anything known before. The glory which the prophet saw reluctantly departing returns again when Jehovah beautifies the house of His magnificence and the latter glory of the house transcends all our greatest thoughts (Haggai 2: 7). Jerusalem, the City of the great King, is raised to a height which could be but faintly fore-shadowed in the days of David and Solomon. The resources of the various kingdoms of nature will be brought to it by the Gentiles for beauty and for glory, and her magnificence, as becomes the metropolis of the whole earth, will shine out in an unprecedented way. They of the nations shall

flow unto it, and many people shall go and say, come and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob.... For out of Zion shall go forth the law and Jehovah's word from Jerusalem. She is become a strong city. Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, her people are all righteous, for Jehovah is her everlasting light. Great is Jehovah. and greatly to be praised in the city of our God.

Not only did the shaking of the earth precede this, but the shaking of the heavens also, for well we know that there must be a sweeping out of all the hidden forces of evil that are there. The host of the high ones on high must be put down as well as the evil upon the earth, that the whole arena may be made suitable for the King. Such is the general state that it is characterized by the Spirit as new heavens and new earth, not that this will be literally till later, at the introduction of the day of God, for that creation which has witnessed the humiliation of the King must be purged to behold the greatness of His glory. This brings us to the Jerusalem above, through which Israel and Zion receive all their greatness and joins together in beauty, order, and symmetry, the whole grand system which we call a universe of bliss in our Lord Jesus Christ as the glorious Administrator of all.

We have seen that Israel's refusal of the Messiah brought about the call of the Church, that company called the Body of Christ, around which the purposes of eternity revolve and for which creation came to exist, and noted, too, how that divine wisdom makes that same company serviceable for carrying through all His ways in time, so that all that belongs to Israel as the covenant people was carried through these. This is that company that appears in the heavens as the city of gold, fitted to be the medium through her long course of disciplinary education, for the administration of heaven's richest blessing not only to Israel, but to all that dwell upon the earth. Jerusalem on earth is well fitted, after her long course of training, to express Jehovah God to the whole wide earth, but the City above is the Metropolis of the vast universe of God. The new covenant, reconciliation, and eternal life will then be known and enjoyed, but let us note how it comes about. In the course of her training, the nation had been the scene of heavenly visitors, those glorious beings which are His servants in Providential government, now a new thing comes to pass for those, who are the ministers, are the witnesses of redemption. The glorified saints of the Church take the place of the heavenly beings, inasmuch as the lesson to be taught could only be known by those whom Christ had died to redeem. Then, indeed, Jehovah shall hear the heavens and they shall hear the earth; and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel, for great shall be the day of Jezreel (Hosea 2: 22 and Hosea 1: 11).

The Church must go in before she comes out, and having no dates, she waits the assembling shout which we know is at the door. She goes into the Father's house just at the time that the Jews are entering the frightful scenes of the great tribulation, and when the fiery trial is over, will come out in the company of her Head to teach Israel all the preciousness of the thoughts of God. This surely is a consummation worthy of our good and gracious God, and surely the education connected with it is well fitted for beings such as we are. While opening out before the adoring hears all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, He deals with us so as to impart to us an appreciation and a capacity for them, which fits the soul for long-suffering with joyfulness. Where in all creation can we find language to give expression to the thoughts which flood the soul at the contemplation of such a climax as this, where the Scarlet of earthly, Jewish glory is seen in all its beauty and majesty centred in the Lion of the tribe of Judah, where every thought of God seen in the honoured witnesses raised up from time to time, but marked by weakness and failure, is carried through to the glory of God and the richest blessing of His people, by Him who became the Son of David.

If, through grace, we are permitted to trace a little the thoughts connected with the Purple we

may have to look at this grand climax again, but from a different standpoint. As we said at the beginning, we may take the telescope of the Spirit and by divine permission, range through the heights and depths of the creation, and with delighted hearts, see every part of it controlled and bearing the stamp of our glorious Head, the Man Christ Jesus, Son of David, Son of Man, Immanuel, God with us. Shall we not then, beloved reader, in the light of all this, set ourselves more for entrance into the deep things of our God and be more fitted to witness here for Him till the coming of our adorable Lord.