

PART SECOND

THE THINGS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST

CHAPTER II

THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO ABRAHAM: HIS FAITH AND WORKS.

Five points of prophetic testimony—The general elements of a kingdom constituents of the kingdom of Christ—The promise made of God to the fathers, the hope of Israel, and the gospel, the same—Who the fathers are—Abram originally from Babel, and an idolater—The Lord preaches the gospel to him in Mesopotamia—He believes it, and emigrates westward in consequence—Becomes a wanderer in the land of Canaan, which is promised to him and Christ for ever—His faith counted to him for righteousness—The promise of a resurrection to eternal life—Confirmation of the covenant of promise—The extent of the land defined in the Covenant—The personal re-appearance of Christ necessitated by the nature of things—The phrases “in thee”, “in him”, and “in thy seed”, explained—The nations God’s people in no sense—Abraham, Christ, and the saints, “heirs of the world”—The token of the covenant—The signification of circumcision—Modern Israel under the curse of the law—Circumcision of the heart—The Allegory—The two seeds—Parable of the Seed—Summary of Abraham’s faith.

It is written in the prophet Micah, that “the Lord shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off (from Jerusalem)”; and as the result thereof, “they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into scythes; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid”. And “in that day, saith the Lord, I will assemble” Israel, “and make them A STRONG NATION: *and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion, FROM HENCEFORTH, even for ever*” And “Unto thee, O Zion, shall it come, even the FIRST DOMINION; the *kingdom* shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem”. And the Judge, who shall be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from everlasting, “shall stand and feed in the strength of Jehovah, *in the Majesty of the Name* of the Lord his God; and Israel shall abide; for now shall He be great to the ends of the earth. And this man (Christ the Lord) shall be the peace when the Assyrian (the Russo-Assyrian) shall come into our (Israel’s) land”. And “Assyria shall be wasted with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof; thus shall He (the Judge of Israel) deliver us from the Assyrian (Gog) when he cometh into our land”. “And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the Lord, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, *as a young lion among the flocks of sheep*, who, if he go through, both treadeth down,

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and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.” “And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, *such as they have not heard.*”

From this passage, which is only a specimen of the general tenor of the law and the testimony, we are informed,

1. That the nations are to be *subdued*, and that universal peace shall prevail in consequence;
2. That when this shall occur, the Israelites shall become a strong nation;
3. That they shall then constitute A KINGDOM;
4. That the Judge of Israel, formerly treated with indignity, shall be their King;
5. That Jerusalem shall be the metropolis, and Mount Zion the throne, of the kingdom.

Such is the revealed purpose of the Most High. But a consummation like this requires preparation; and that, too, a very long one; especially as it is to be developed upon certain moral, as well as political, principles. When the time shall come for the kingdom to be possessed, it will be said to the heirs of it, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom *prepared for you* from the foundation of the world”. From this, it appears that the work of *preparing* the kingdom takes from the foundation of the world to the resurrection of the dead. All this time the kingdom is preparing; but when the King descends, and rebukes the nations, and wastes the land of Nimrod with the sword, and makes Israel a strong nation, it will then be said that the kingdom is *prepared*.

The reader will probably inquire, what does this work of preparation consist in that it should take so long a time? This is an important question, and, in reply, I remark that if physical force only were employed in preparing the kingdom, it need not take so long. A kingdom may be set up in a few days, and abolished as speedily, as we have witnessed in our own time. But it is not so with the Kingdom of God. The physical is subordinated to the intellectual and moral; and as men, among whom it is being prepared, are so earthly and sensual, the mental progresses much more slowly than the physical; and therefore, a kingdom founded upon moral principles requires longer to prepare, but is more enduring when completed. In the following pages my endeavour will be to set forth an answer to the question in detail.

A *kingdom* is the dominion of a king. An *empire* is also the dominion of a king, but with this difference: the kingdom proper, or “*the first dominion*”, is restricted to a regally constituted territory; while the empire, or secondary dominion, though belonging to the same king, extends over other peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, than those of the royal domain. This is illustrated in the case of the British kingdoms and empire. The kingdoms are restricted to England and Scotland, which are by constitution regal territories; but the empire is a secondary dominion of the same united crowns, extending over Canada, Hindostan, and other parts of the globe, with all the nations, languages, and people, they contain.

There are various elements necessary to the constitution of a well-organized kingdom. In the first place, *a kingdom must have a territory*. This is only saying, in other terms, that something must be somewhere. To maintain the opposite would be to contend that something is nowhere. A kingdom is

not located in feeling, or in heart; though a belief of its future existence, a comprehension of its nature, or an attachment to it, may exist there. It must have a place, a locality, as well as a name.

It would be highly absurd to say that the kingdom of England and the throne of her sovereign were in Spain; yet this would be as reasonable as to say that the kingdom and throne of David are beyond the skies!—an orthodox dogma contained in the fiction that Jesus is now sitting upon the throne of his father David! What conceit after this is too ridiculous for creed-makers and systematizers to promulge?

In addition to a territory, a kingdom requires *subjects*, which compose the nation over whom there is the king. But, simply to set up a man and call him “king” would be unwise. It would be consonant only with the barbarism of savage tribes. A well-regulated monarchy requires graduation of ranks, and orders of the best men, with whom the king may divide his power, and glory, and administer the laws of the kingdom. These laws should be in conformity with the provisions and spirit of the constitution; which defines the principles, and creates and combines the elements, of the State.

Now it is worthy of remark, that *the subjects* of a kingdom do not possess the kingdom. They are simply the inhabitants of the territory, who are defended against external aggression, and protected as civilians by the power, and laws, of the State. The possessors of the kingdom are the king, and those with whom he is pleased to share his authority. This is an important distinction, and must not be forgotten in studying “the things of the kingdom of God”. The *subjects* of the kingdom and empire are a totally different class from the *heirs*, or possessors, of the dominion.

From this brief view, then, of the nature and constitution of a kingdom, its elements may be stated as consisting of:

1. A territory;
2. Subjects;
3. A king;
4. A constitution;
5. Laws, civil and ecclesiastical;
6. Aristocracy;
7. Attributes, or prerogatives, rights, privileges, etc.

Now, “*the kingdom of God and of his Christ*” will consist of all these things; and will be as material an institution—as real and terrestrial a monarchy as that of Great Britain. It is not now an existent reality; for, though it once existed under a constitution, which hath waxed old and vanished away, its elements are dissolved from their previous combination, and remain dispersed. Their restitution is, however, a matter of promise, attested by two immutable things—the promise and the oath of the living God. His kingdom and empire on earth are a great truth, but not an existing fact; they are visible only to the eye of faith, and are required by their founder to be received in the “*full assurance of hope*”, with rejoicing and confidence to the end.

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In studying the things of the kingdom of God, the foundation laid in the beginning must not be forgotten; for at that epoch its preparation was commenced. The system of the world is an adaptation to man in his fallen state; and out of the things thus arranged it is that Christ's imperial dominion is being evolved. By the law of procreation has been provided a population which, by the confusion of tongues, has been distributed into nations, whose habitations have been fixed by the controlling power of the Elohim. Thus nations have been formed which are destined to flourish in the blessedness of the Future Age. Their history records the fiery ordeal through which their generations have passed. For the most part, men see nothing in it but a strife for territory, and glory, for the advantage of their rulers; but the scriptures reveal the workings of an invisible machinery, whose activity is perceived by the believer, in the incidents which occasion the conflicts among them. He discerns the leaven, hid in the three measures of meal, at work leavening the minds of men, and developing the "*enmity*" *between the seeds*. And though the strife is terrible, he feels no dismay, but rejoices with firm and unwavering confidence in the certainty of the triumph of the truth and its adherents; because God has assured him in His word that the King He has provided shall crush the sin-power, and make the nations lick the dust like a serpent. Now this implies their subjugation; and it is to this crisis that all things are at present tending. And what then? Obviously, the transfer of the conquered to the sceptre of Jehovah's King, who overcomes them; as it is written, "The Gentiles shall wait for his law"; and "He shall reign over them." *The nations, then, are the subjects of the theocratic empire*. By the truth and judgments of God brought to bear upon them, exciting and controlling their activity, they are being moulded like clay in the hands of the potter, for the dominion of the saints in the Future Age.

The hope of these things, whose seeds were sown in the constitution of the world at the beginning, was the hope of the gospel then in its most general enunciation. The subjects and territory of the empire, and the rulers thereof, were plainly marked out. The earth, and the conquered seed of the serpent, obedient to the victorious seed of the woman, was the gospel of the kingdom in its most simple form. No particular portion of the globe, however, was indicated as the territory of a kingdom. The Spirit began with universals; but as the world became older, the particulars of the promise were unfolded to the eye of faith. But never, from the foundation of the world to the sealing up of the testimony of God, was such a kingdom, or dominion, promised as that which is believed in, and glorified in the "sacred" psalmody of the Gentiles. Earth, and not the skies, is the region where alone it will appear. I shall show this abundantly; and thereby prove that they who sing such ditties as those of which the following is a specimen, sing what ne'er was, nor is, nor e'er shall be:

"With thee we'll reign, with thee we'll rise,

And kingdoms gain beyond the skies!"

"According to your faith be it unto you." This is the first principle of religion delivered by the Great Teacher himself. It is just and right it should be so. No one can blame God for not bestowing upon them what they do not believe in; and, consequently, do not want, or seek after. This is precisely the position of the present generation of religionists in relation to the kingdom of God. They have faith in a sort of kingdom which He hath not promised; and in the one He has promised they do not believe. Hence, they believe in a non-entity; and, believing in what is nothing, they will get nothing but confusion of face. But we propose to show them a more excellent way; and in so doing invite their attention to

"THE PROMISE MADE OF GOD UNTO THE FATHERS."

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“The Hope of Israel.”

There is no one, I suppose, who reads the scriptures but admits that Paul was persecuted; being imprisoned, scourged, arraigned, and manacled, because he preached the gospel of the kingdom in the name of Jesus. This is admitted by all. It matters not, then, in what terms he states the *cause* of his trials, it will all amount to this declaration, namely, “For the gospel I am called in question, and am judged, and bound with this chain”.

But we will let the apostle state his case in his own words. When he stood before Ananias, the high priest, and the council of the Jews, he cried out, “On account of *the hope* and resurrection of dead persons (*νεχροῶν*) I am called in question”. But it may be asked here, “Concerning what hope was the question between the apostle and his persecutors?” He tells us in his defence before Agrippa: “I stand and am judged”, says he, “for *the hope of the promise* made of God unto our fathers; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For *which hope’s sake*, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews”. Now, from this statement, it appears:

1. That God had made a certain promise to the fathers of Israel;
2. That this promise became *the hope of the nation*, and was therefore a national question;
3. That this promise had been the hope of the twelve tribes in all their generations; was the ground of their worship; and that they hoped to attain it by rising from the dead.

But we have a still plainer avowal, if possible, of the identity of this national hope with the hope for which the apostle suffered so much. The Lord Jesus had appeared to him after his arraignment before Ananias, and said to him, “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome”. When he arrived at this city, he called the chief of the Jews together, and told them that he had nothing to accuse his nation of; but he had sent for them to inform them how matters really stood. He then told them how it was they found him in the custody of a Roman soldier, with fetters upon his person: “*On account of THE HOPE OF ISRAEL*” said he, “am I bound with this chain”. This is conclusive. *The hope of the promise made to the fathers* was, and, indeed, is to this day, *the Hope of Israel*; and for preaching this hope, and inviting the Gentiles to a participation in it without other circumcision than that of the heart, he was denounced as a pestilent fellow, and unfit to live.

But what was the hope of Israel about? The answer to this question is easy. Having made the chief of the Jews at Rome acquainted with the cause of his appeal to Cæsar, they remarked to him, that they should like to hear of him what he thought upon the question of the national hope, as so strenuously contended for by the sect of the Nazarenes. As it was not, however, convenient then, they appointed a future day when they would meet him, and hear what he had to say upon the subject. Accordingly, at the time appointed, they came together at Paul’s lodging, and he proceeded to lay before them his thoughts upon the subject of Israel’s hope. But I cannot do better than to state what he did in the words of Luke; who says that “He expounded and testified to them *the kingdom of God*, persuading them concerning Jesus *both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets*, from morning till evening”.

Now who can be so dim of vision as not to perceive that the subject-matter of the hope of Israel is the Kingdom of God? And observe, that in giving his thoughts of the national hope, the apostle’s persuasions turned upon things concerning Jesus. The Kingdom of God and Jesus were the subjects of

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Paul's testimony, when he preached "the hope of Israel", or "the hope of the promise made of God unto the fathers". Having begun his testimony with the chiefs of the Jews, some of whom received it, he continued to publish it for two years in his own hired house to all that visited him, "preaching *the Kingdom of God*, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence". In this way he bore witness for Jesus in Rome, as he had done before in Jerusalem.

But, one might say, if the hope the apostle preached, and the hope of the twelve tribes, were the same hope, why was he persecuted by the Jews? The answer is, because Paul and the rest of the apostles testified that Jesus whom they had crucified was the king whom God had anointed to be the Judge of Israel in His Kingdom, of which they were the natural born citizens. They had been constituted "a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation", by the covenant of Sinai; and had on that occasion accepted Jehovah as their king. They were therefore the kingdom of God. In after ages, they had demanded a king who might go in and out before them. He gave them David; and promised to *raise up* from among his descendants, sleeping in the tomb, a king, who should be immortal, and reign over them for ever, according to the provisions of a new constitution. Now the apostles testified that God had raised up Jesus from among the dead for this very purpose; and had sent them to the Jews first, to inform them that if they desired to reign as princes over Israel and the nations with his king, it was not enough for them to be natural born descendants of Abraham; but that they must acknowledge Jesus as King of Israel, and walk in the steps of Abraham's faith. They testified furthermore, that if they would not acknowledge him as their king, seeing that the kingdom and empire of God would require kings and priests to administer its affairs, they would turn to the Gentiles, and invite them to accept the honour and glory of the kingdom, upon terms of perfect equality with Israel; for so the Lord had commanded them to do.

This mortified the Jews exceedingly. They despised Jesus because of his poverty and ignominious death. A suffering and crucified king was a reproach to the nation in their esteem; and to be put on a level with Gentiles, whom they regarded as "*dogs*", filled them with indignation and madness against the preachers of such pestilent heresies. But it was the apostolic mission to withstand their fury with "*the testimony of God*"; and to establish their preaching by what is written in the law of Moses and the prophets, and by what they had seen and heard, and which was attested by the power of God exhibited in the miracles they performed.

We have, then, arrived at a great truth, namely, that the "*one hope of the gospel*" preached by the apostles to the Jew first, and afterwards to the Greek, was "*the hope of Israel*"; that the subject of it was *the kingdom of God and Shiloh*; and that these were the matters of promise made to the fathers. It remains for us now to look into this promise so that we may come to understand it well; for its provisions are the things of the kingdom; and to be ignorant of these is to be without understanding, and therefore faithless, of the gospel of Christ.

The apostle Paul, who will be our interpreter, tells us that the promise, which is the subject of the "*one hope*", was made to "*the fathers*". This is a phrase which signifies sometimes the predecessors of the generation of the apostle's time, who were contemporary with the prophets; and at others the fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It is in the latter sense the apostle uses the phrase in connection with "the promises"; for speaking of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob he says: "These all died in faith *not having received the promises*"; that is, the things contained in the promise: and after adding "a cloud of witnesses", who lived in after ages, and who illustrated their faith in the promise made to the fathers, he concludes by saying, "These all, having received a good report through faith, *received not the promise*: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made

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perfect”, by a resurrection from the dead to inherit the kingdom. They must rise from the dust before they can receive the promise. They are imperfect now, being in ruins. But when they are re-fashioned by the Spirit of God, and spring forth glorious, incorruptible, and powerful men, “equal to the Elohim”, they will have been “*made perfect*” and fit for the kingdom of God. But they are not to be thus perfect until all the believers of the promise are brought in; for all the faithful of all previous ages are to be perfected together.

The study of the promises unconnected with the study of the fathers is impossible. Those who are ignorant of the biographies of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob must be ignorant of the gospel; for these patriarchs were the depositories of the promises which constitute the gospel-hope; and of them, Abraham is especially designated as *him that hath the promises*—τὸν ἔχοντα τὰς ἐπαγγελίας. It is for this reason that a man must become of Abraham’s seed by adoption through Jesus Christ. Unless a son of Abraham by a like faith and disposition with him, neither Jew nor Gentile can share in Abraham’s estate. It is only Abraham’s spiritual family that can divide with him the promises he holds. God has made him the spiritual father of mankind; and the Lord Jesus, the elder brother of the family. If, therefore, a man become a brother of Jesus, he at the same time becomes a son of Abraham; for Jesus is Abraham’s seed, and was in the loins of Isaac, when Abraham offered his only son, and received him from the dead again, in a figure. If the reader understand this matter, he will fully comprehend the meaning of the apostle’s saying, that believers “are all the children of God (being Abraham’s) by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. And *if Christ’s, THEN Abraham’s seed, and HEIRS according to the promise*”.

After what has been advanced, no more, I think, need be said upon the importance of the subject before us. I shall, therefore, proceed now to a more particular illustration of the glad tidings of the kingdom by an exposition of

THE PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM.

The descendants of Noah were beginning to tread in the footsteps of the antediluvians. They became ambitious of making “*a name*” for themselves, irrespective of the name of the Lord. This their way was their folly; yet their posterity approved their endeavour. Idolatry was beginning to prevail; and they proceeded to build a city, and a tower, whose top should reach to heaven, in honour of their god. But the Lord came down and put a stop to their enterprise by confounding their language, and scattering them abroad over the earth.

Noah had lived 292 years after the flood, when three sons were born to Terah, a descendant of Shem, Terah being 70 years old. Shem was a worshipper of the true God, whom Noah styled “the Lord God of Shem”. Terah, however, seems to have departed from the simplicity of the truth; and was, probably, engaged in the mad scheme of making “*a name*” for the sons of men in the land of Shinar. But that undertaking being interrupted, it is probable he migrated from Babel, the name of the city they were building, in a southerly direction. Be this as it may, we find him in Chaldea at a place called Ur. At this place, eastward of “*the great river Euphrates*”, Abram, Nahor, and Haran were born to Terah. They lived there many years, serving the gods of Shinar. The idolatry of Terah’s family appears from the testimony of God Himself, who said to Israel, “Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood (Euphrates) in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and *they served other gods*” When Joshua reported this to the people, he admonished them, saying, “Put away *the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt*, and serve ye the

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Lord. And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord". And the people said unto Joshua, "The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey".

While Terah's family dwelt in Ur of the Chaldees, the Lord appeared to them, and said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land *which I shall show thee*". This command caused them to remove from Ur, and to journey towards the land of Canaan' on their way to which, they arrived at Haran, and dwelt there. Thus Terah, Abram, Sarai, and Lot, obeyed the voice of the Lord, and separated themselves from the idolaters of the Chaldean district of Mesopotamia. They remained in Haran till the Lord appeared again to Abram. On this occasion, the Lord came to show him the land he was to go to; but did not immediately name it. He appears only to have told him to travel westward until He met him again; for it is written that he went in that direction, "not knowing whither he went".

At this interview in Haran, the Lord said to Abram, "*I will make of thee A GREAT NATION, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed*". Alluding to this promise, the apostle says, that in making it, "*the gospel was preached to Abraham*"—the glad tidings of blessedness to the nations, when Abraham and his descendants should be great, and renowned throughout the earth. Abraham believed this gospel promissorially announced to him by the Lord God. Nor was his faith inoperative. It was a living, moving faith—a faith through which he obtained a good report. By the influence of that faith, which embraces the things hoped for, it is testified that Abraham "when he was *called* to go out into a country which he should after receive for an inheritance, *obeyed*; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. For he looked for *the city* having foundations, whose architect and builder is God". He turned his back on Babel, and with Sarai and his nephew, Lot, and all his substance, he left his father's house, crossed the Euphrates and the Jordan, and entered *the land of Canaan*, still travelling onward until he arrived at Sichem, in the plain of Moreh. Having come thus far into the country, the Lord appeared again to Abram to let him know that he was in the land He intended to show him; and added this remarkable promise, saying, "*Unto thy SEED will I give this land*".

Let us pause here in the biography of Abram, and consider this promise. Here was a country, lying between the Euphrates and the Mediterranean, in which were Abram and all his house, with his flocks and herds, and which was in the actual possession of warlike tribes, living in cities walled up to heaven. Concerning this country, the Lord, to whom heaven and earth belong, said to Abram, *I will give it to thy Seed*, when as yet he had no child. But it is particularly interesting to know who is intended by Abram's Seed in this promise. Is it the "*great nation*" spoken of in the former promise? or is it some particular personage to whom the Land of Canaan is here promised *as an inheritance*? I shall offer no opinion upon the subject, but let the apostle to the Gentiles answer the question. In writing to the disciples in Galatia about the inheritance, he says, "The promises were made to Abraham *and* to his Seed. God saith not, *And to seeds*, as of many persons; but as of one person, as it is written, *And unto thy Seed, which is Christ*". The apostle here tells us that *the Land of Canaan was promised to the Christ*, when God said to Abram, "Unto thy Seed will I give this land". Let the reader, then, bear this in mind as one of the first principles of the gospel of the kingdom. Deny this, and there is an end to all understanding of the truth.

Having built an altar at Sichem to commemorate the Lord's promise concerning his Seed's inheritance, and sojourned there a while, he removed to a mountain between Bethel and Hai, where he built another altar, and called upon the Name of the Lord. After this he journeyed, going on still toward the South.

Having been driven into Egypt by famine in the Land of Canaan, he sojourned there for a time, and acquired much wealth. After it had subsided, he left Egypt and returned to the station between Bethel and Hal, where he called on the Name of the Lord. Soon after this, Lot separated from Abram, and went and dwelt among the cities of the plain, now submerged under the Dead Sea. After this separation, the Lord appeared to him again, and said, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, *to THEE will I give it, and to thy Seed FOR EVER*. And I will make thy seed (*plural here*) as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it, and in the breadth of it: *for I will give it unto thee*".

This of the at Haran and amplification was an promise given Sichem. At the former place, the promise of blessing which was to come upon him and the nations, and in which his seed in the sense of a multitude was to become great—was given in general terms; at the latter place, the Christ was promised as descending from him to inherit the Land of Canaan; but in these promises, nothing was said about what Abram was to have, nor as to *how long* the Christ was to possess the country. In the promise, however, amplified near Bethel, these desiderata were supplied. Abram was informed that he should inherit the country as well as Christ; and that they should possess it "*for ever*". Having received this assurance, he removed his tent from Bethel, and went and pitched it near Hebron in the plain of Mamre, and builded there an altar to the Lord.

When Abram had resided nearly ten years in the Land of Canaan, the whole country was in arms east of the Jordan, and to the north and south of Abram's encampment. A rebellion had broken out against Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, who appears to have been the principal potentate of the time. During the war, Sodom was attacked and taken, and Lot, and all his goods, carried away with the spoil of the city, for he dwelt there. Abram having heard of this, hastily collected a company of three hundred and eighteen retainers, and started in pursuit of the spoilers, whom he overtook and put to the rout as far as Hobah, on the west of Damascus. He recovered all the spoil, and returned south, considerably disturbed in mind, doubtless, on account of the danger of the times.

At this crisis, *the word* of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, and comforted him with the assurance, saying, "Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield, and thine *exceeding great reward*". Abram was now eighty-five years old, and he had no child. How, then, could the promise made of God at Haran, and repeated at Sichem and Bethel, be fulfilled, seeing that he was childless? He was even now an old man, and had concluded to make Eliezer of Damascus his heir; how then could the great, the exceeding great, reward be realized by him? Prompted by these considerations, but in no wise distrusting God, Abram said, "Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? Behold, to me thou hast given no seed; and, lo, one born in my house is my heir". But, "the word of the Lord came to him, saying, This (Eliezer) shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir." The Lord's messenger, who brought this word to Abram, then led him forth from his tent, and directed his attention to the heavens, saying, "Count the stars if thou art able to number them: and he said unto him, *So shall thy seed be*". This was a great draft upon the faith of an old man of upwards of fourscore

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with a wife of seventy-five years of age. But, it is testified of him, that “against hope he believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, saying, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now as good as dead (he being about a hundred years old), neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was also able to perform”. Such was the manner of Abram’s faith; his *mode of thinking* upon the things reported to him in the word of the Lord; and his *disposition* in relation to them. So pleased was God with him that “*he counted it to him for righteousness*”.

Abram, having first sought the kingdom of God in leaving his father’s house to “seek the city, whose architect and builder is God”, had now become the subject of the righteousness of God by faith; so that the Lord was now prepared to add all other things to him. He reminded him of the purpose for which He had brought him into the Land of Canaan, saying, “I, the Lord, brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees *to give thee this land to inherit it*”. Abram had been in the country ten years. He had become well acquainted with the land, and he perceived that it was a noble and desirable inheritance. When, therefore, the angel referred to the Lord’s promise, Abraham requested a sign, saying, “Lord God, *whereby shall I know that I shall possess it?*”

In reply to this, he was commanded to take “a heifer of *three years old*, and a ram of *three years old*, and a turtle dove, and a young pigeon”. Having killed them, “he divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another, but the birds divided he not”. This sacrifice was representative of the qualities of the Christ, concerning whom confirmation was about to be made, attestative of Abram’s and his Seed’s possession of the land in the fullness of the times afterwards to be arranged. From the time of the sacrifice until the going down of the sun, Abram was engaged in watching the carcasses, so as to keep off the birds of prey. It is probable that the sacrifice was exposed about three hours; at all events, “when even was come”, and the sun was going down, Abram fell into a state of figurative death, by a deep sleep and horror of great darkness coming over him.

This is a very remarkable feature in the case before us. Abram had built altars, and had called upon the name of the Lord before; but there were no such attendant circumstances as these. Here, however, he stands watching the exposed sacrificial victims until even; and then is laid powerless in the similitude of death, and of the intense darkness of the grave. While he was in this state, the Lord revealed to Abram the fortunes of his descendants in the ensuing four hundred years; the judgment of the nation that should oppress them; their subsequent exodus from bondage with great wealth; his own peaceful death in a good old age; and the return of his descendants into the Land of Canaan again. The following are the words of the testimony: “Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterwards shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; *thou shalt be buried in a good old age*. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full”.

I suppose the reader need hardly be informed that all this was literally accomplished. Jacob and his family, consisting of seventy persons, migrated into Egypt *two hundred and five years after the revelation was made to Abram*. When a king arose in Egypt who knew not Joseph, the saviour of the country under God, the Israelites were sorely oppressed *till the end of four hundred years from Abram’s deep sleep*. After this four hundred years had expired, even thirty years after, God having judged the Egyptians, they left the country with great substance; and in the fourth generation re-

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entered the land of Canaan, as God had said. The iniquity of the Amorites was then full; and Israel, under Joshua, became the executioners of divine vengeance upon them.

But God had said to Abram at Bethel, *I will give THEE the land of Canaan FOR EVER*: and in the answer to this question, “Whereby shall *I* know that *I* shall inherit it?” here tells him that he should die, and be buried in a good old age! Now the promise to Abram rests upon the veracity of God. If we attempt to interpret it by the history of the past, we are brought to the conclusion that the promise to Abram has failed. Stephen alludes to this *apparent* failure of the promise to Abram in his speech before the Sanhedrim in these words: “God said to him, Come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he into this land in which ye dwell. And *he gave him none inheritance in it*, no, not so much as to set his foot on: YET *he promised that he would give it to him for a possession*, and to his seed (τῷ σπέρματι, *in the singular*, to one person called *the seed*) after him, when as yet he had no child”.

What shall we say then? Shall we dare to say that God hath lied to Abram, or that He meant something else than what He promised? Far be it from the writer or the reader to insult God by any such insinuation; but rather let us say with the apostle in reference to this particular incident, that “God cannot lie”; that in promising to Abram *an everlasting possession of the Land of Canaan*; and, nevertheless, afterwards declaring that he should die and be buried, and his posterity be oppressed for four hundred years—“He promised” to him *a resurrection to “eternal life”* before the arrangement of the times (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων). If Abram were sentenced to die, how could the promise of God concerning the land be fulfilled, unless he were raised from the dead? And as he is to possess it *for ever*, when he is raised, he must be also made incorruptible and immortal to enable him to possess it everlastingly. *The promise of eternal life*, then, consists in *promising a mortal man and his son possession of a terrestrial country for ever*; and this promise to the two becomes a promise to all who believe it, and are constituted one in them.

Abram understood this, and so do all who become Abraham’s seed through Jesus as the Christ, concerning whom the promise was made. The apostle says he saw the promises in their fulfilment afar off, but was persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that he was a stranger and pilgrim in the Land. And, in saying such things, he plainly declared that he was seeking a country. And truly, if he had been mindful of the Mesopotamian Chaldea from whence he migrated, he might have returned if he had pleased. But no; he desired a better country than that beyond the Euphrates—that is, the Land of Canaan *under a heavenly constitution*: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the God of all whose faith is like theirs in word and spirit: for He hath prepared for them a city.

This manner of teaching the doctrine of a resurrection—namely, *by promising, or declaring something that necessitates it*—is not peculiar to the case before us. There are other instances; one, however, will be sufficient at present. I refer to the dispute between Jesus and the Sadducees. The latter, who admitted as authority only the writings of Moses, denied the resurrection of the dead. In proving it, therefore, to their conviction, it was necessary to demonstrate it from his testimony. This Jesus undertook to do. He first stated the proposition, saying, *Moses has shown that the dead are raised*. He then directed their attention to the place where Moses teaches this resurrection. It is there written, “I, the Lord, am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”; in recording this, Moses teaches the resurrection of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. “But”, says one, “I see nothing said about resurrection there.” Nor did the Sadducees. “No”, continues the objector, “nor about the dead either; for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not dead, but alive in heaven, where Christ, and Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part 2 Chapter 2. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

Lazarus, and the thief are. They are all living; and therefore God is their God.” This is very good Platonism, but very bad logic, and egregious nonsense. When Jesus quoted the passage, it was to prove that “the dead are raised”. The question therefore is, How does this testimony of Moses prove it? In this way—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are dead; but “God is not the God of the dead”, yet He is called “their God”: therefore in order to be their God, they must be made alive, “for God is the God of the living”: hence, to style Him “God of Abraham” teaches the resurrection by implication; “for all live to him” in the age to come. But why call Him the God of these fathers now? By anticipation; for, says the apostle, “God, who makes alive the dead, styles *the not being* (τὰ μὴ ὄντα) *as being*” (ὡς ὄντα)—that is, God’s promise is so certain to be fulfilled, that *He speaks of what is to be as though it were past*. He has promised to raise Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who, while dead, have no being; and as He cannot lie their restoration to being is inevitable. God therefore speaks of them as though they had already been raised from the dead, and “is not ashamed to be called their God”. God is not the God of dead men who are not to rise again. He is the God only of those who become His children by being the children of the resurrection, and who can die no more, because they are equal to the angels. Such, then, is the way in which the doctrine of the resurrection is taught by the Lord God in Moses and the prophets; plainly, indeed, but in, such a manner as to require the exercise of the reasoning faculties of men.

But to return to Hebron. Eternal life having been promised to Abram and Christ by constituting them heirs of the land of Canaan for ever; the Lord proceeded to grant Abram a sign whereby he might know assuredly that he and his seed should inherit it. The sun having gone down entirely, which was figurative of the setting of “the sun of Righteousness” below the horizon of life, Abram beheld “a smoking furnace, and a flame of fire pass between the pieces”. This was a sign which could not be mistaken. The animals he had slain, and watched, and defended so long from the birds of prey, were consumed by fire from heaven. By this he knew, and was assured, that he and his seed, the Christ, should inherit the land for ever. But this was not all. On the same day, the Lord converted his promise made at Sichem, and repeated near Bethel, into a covenant with Abram, as Moses testifies, saying, “In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, *Unto thy seed have I given this land*, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates”: inhabited by “the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites and the Perizzites, and the Rephaim, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

In commenting upon these things, the apostle saith, “The covenant previously confirmed by God, the law which came into existence (γεγονώς) four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance (the land of Canaan and its attributes) be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise“. To understand this we must know that a question agitated the congregations of Galatia, namely, *that it was necessary for the disciples from among the Gentiles to be circumcised, and to keep the law of Moses, as well as to believe the gospel and be baptized, or they could have no part in the inheritance covenanted to Abraham and Christ*.

The apostle styles this Judaizing and preaching “another gospel”. It was the beginning of that awful apostasy, the fruit of which we behold in the ecclesiastical system of our day. He contended strenuously against this perversion of the truth in all places. The Judaizers argued that a right to Canaan when made a heavenly country under Christ, was derived from the law of Moses; the apostle denied this, and maintained that the law could give no title to it. That it could only be obtained “*through the righteousness of the faith*”; “for the promise that he should be *the heir of the world* was

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not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they who are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise is made of none effect: because the law worketh wrath. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that (portion of the seed) only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all", both Jews and Gentiles, "before God, whose promises he believed"; as it is written, "a father of many nations have I constituted thee". The Judaizers claimed a right to the inheritance because they bore the seal of the covenant, marked in their flesh by circumcision; the apostle, because he believed the same things that Abraham did, and was the subject of God's righteousness through the faith of Jesus Christ, without any title derived from the law of Moses.

Seeing that he threw the law out of the question altogether, he anticipates the objection, viz., if this be so, wherefore, then, serveth the law? Of what use is it? To this he replies, "It was added because of transgressions, *till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made*". It was "a schoolmaster" until Christ; but when "the things of the name of Jesus Christ" were manifested for faith, or, as he expresses it, "after that faith is come", Israel is "no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all", both Jews and Gentiles, "the children of God in Christ Jesus through the faith".

The apostle lays great stress upon the covenant of promise being prior both to circumcision and the law of Moses; consequently Abram could not derive his title to Canaan and the world from either of them; for the promise was given before he became the subject of the righteousness which is by faith of it; and he was constituted righteous before the promise was made a covenant and confirmed; and this confirmation was fourteen years before the institution of circumcision, and 430 years before the promulgation of the Law of Moses. "Faith", says the apostle, "was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness when he was in uncircumcision"; and then it was, he was constituted the father of many nations, and Heir of the World.

The promise, before it became a confirmed covenant with Abram, indicated the country he is to inherit; but it did not point out its territorial frontiers. This deficiency was supplied at the confirmation. It was to extend from the Euphrates to the Nile, comprehending a tract of country of considerable extent, and inhabited by the nations enumerated in "*The Covenant*". Abram, therefore, could be at no loss to know in what direction, or to what limits, his future country was to extend; for he had travelled it all over in its entire length and breadth. Now, if a map of the territorial area indicated in the covenant be examined, it will be seen that the broadest extent is "*from sea to sea*", as it is expressed in scripture; that is, from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf; and its greatest length, "*from the river to the end of the land*"; or, from the Euphrates at its junction with the gulf, northward; and from the Pelusiac branch of the Nile to the entrance into Hamath.

But the frontiers of the territory were afterwards more particularly marked out at the time of the captivity in Babylon. The twelve tribes were then all in exile from the land, and it was once more wholly possessed by the Gentiles, as it is now. They were powerless and prostrate under the heel of the oppressor; and without hope of recovering the country by their own efforts. At this crisis, the Lord revealed to them the extent to which in after times they should re-possess their country. "This", said he, "shall be the border, whereby ye shall inherit the land according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And this shall be the border of the land toward the north side, from the great sea (Mediterranean), the way of Hethlon, as men go to Zedad; Hamath, Berothah, Sibraim, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath; Hazar-hatticon, which is by the coast of Hauran. And the border from the sea shall be Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part 2 Chapter 2. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

Hamath. This is *the north side* of the land. And the east side ye shall measure from Hauran, and from Damascus, and from Gilead, and from the land of Israel by Jordan, from the border unto the East Sea. And this is *the east side* (running along the Euphrates). And the south side southward, from Tamar to the waters of strife in Kadesh, to the river toward the Great Sea. This is *the south side* toward Teman. The west side also shall be the Great Sea from the (west end of the south) border, till man come over against Hamath. This is *the west side*. So shall ye divide this land unto you according to the tribes of Israel.”

Now, let it never be forgotten in the investigation of “the things of the kingdom of God”, that the Israelites have never possessed the country as defined in this survey since it was revealed to them through the prophet. The twelve tribes have not even occupied the land together; and those of them that have dwelt there after the return from Babylon to the overthrow by the Romans, held but a very small portion of it, while the Gentile Kingdoms lorded it over all the rest. Now either God is a liar, as some people make Him out to be who deny the restoration of the twelve tribes; or, the time He refers to in the promise of the land according to these boundaries, is not arrived. This is the only conclusion a believer in the gospel of the kingdom can come to. All theories opposed to this are mere sublimated infidelity. If Israel be not restored, then the promise to Abraham will have failed. But Abraham’s seed are under no apprehension of this kind. They believe in God, who has sworn by Himself, that what He has promised He is able, willing, and determined to perform.

Here, then, is a noble domain, lying between Assyria, Persia, Arabia, the Red Sea, Egypt, and the Mediterranean; capable, when peopled by an industrious, enlightened, and well and strongly governed, nation, of commanding the commerce and sovereignty of Asia, and the wealth of Europe and America. Such is the land, containing, according to the survey of the British Government, 300,000 square miles, concerning which God said to Abram, “To thee will I give it and unto thy seed *for ever.*”

But, the apostle says, that the covenant, confirmed 430 years before the law was promulgated, was “concerning Christ” especially. It was the Father’s Covenant of which Christ was the Mediator. This being the case, his death was necessitated; for so long as he was alive, the covenant had no force. Neither Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, nor himself, could inherit the land for ever, until the covenant was ratified by his death. Hence, his was “the blood of the New Covenant, which was shed for many”; that they which are called might receive the remission of sins, and obtain the promise of the inheritance for ever. The covenant of promise, then, was typically confirmed 430 years before the law; and finally dedicated by the death of the mediator; this being accomplished, the covenant could not be disannulled, or added. But when we look at Jesus in the light of this Divine Covenant, we perceive some grand and important deficiencies in its effects, if the history of the past is to be taken as the criterion of its accomplishment. In the historical view of the covenant, we are led to the conclusion that it has not been carried out at all; and that its beneficiaries have received none of their Father’s estate. Look at Abraham. He has received nothing. The same is true of all who believed the things hoped for from his day to this. Even the Lord Jesus, who has been perfected, has received nothing of what is assigned to him in the covenant. “I will give”, said God, “this land to thy Seed for ever.” Now look at the facts in the case. “Jesus came to *his own*, and *his own* received him not.” What is to be understood by this? What is signified by “his own” twice repeated in this text? The facts in the case supply the answer. Jesus came “unto his own things” (kingdom, or realm); but his own people, the Jews, who are “the children of the kingdom”, did not receive him, but rejected and crucified him. “But

to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *to them who believe in his name.*”

But what constituted the land of Canaan *his* realm, more than John the Baptist’s, or any other Jew’s? Because it was promised to him in the covenant; and because he was the sole surviving heir of David’s throne. We see, however, that like his father Abraham, he never possessed even so much as to set his foot upon; and so poor was he, that though “the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air had nests, yet he had not where to lay his head”. Under God, he was indebted to some of those who received him, for his daily bread. What significance this fact attaches to that petition of the prayer he taught his disciples, saying, “Our Father, who art in heaven, give us this day our daily bread”. There were thirteen of them, himself and the twelve, who had all to be provided for from day to day; and though he could multiply a few loaves and fishes to feed thousands, his own wants were supplied by contribution.

When Jesus was crucified, and buried, his enemies conceived that his claims to the realm and throne of David were extinct. The common people would have taken him and made him king, if he would have permitted them; but the rulers, already possessed of the vineyard, hated him; for they knew that if he should obtain the kingdom they would be cast out. They rejoiced, therefore, at his death. But their joy was soon turned into dismay; for God raised him from the dead. And for what purpose? In the words of the apostle, *God raised up Christ to sit upon David’s throne*; for, in the words of David, “The righteous shall inherit the Land, and dwell therein for ever”; and again, “Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the Land.”

But, even after his resurrection, when he was made both Lord and Christ, though “heir of all things”, yet were not all things subjected to him. He received neither the land nor the sceptre; but ascended to heaven, having received nothing promised in the covenant. He left the land, the kingdom, Abraham, and all the prophets, behind him. In after years, the land was reduced to a wilderness, its cities laid waste, and the Hebrew commonwealth dissolved. It became the battle ground of Crusaders, Saracens, and Turks; and until this day has been subjected to the worst of the heathen. Forty centuries have passed away since God confirmed His promise of the land to Christ, who has been waiting nineteen hundred years at His right hand for its fulfilment. Is Jesus never to possess the land from sea to sea, and from the rivers to its extremities? Are Turks and Arabs, and a motley crew of Papists, Greeks, and Fellahs to perpetuate its reproach for ever? Or is a Gentile dominion to be established there to lord it over Asia?

Where is there a believer of the gospel of the kingdom to be found who will affirm it? Millions of “*professing* Christians” imagine something of the kind; but they are infidels, and insulters of God—not believers in the “covenants of promise”. To affirm any other destiny for Palestine and Syria than that stated in the promise, is, in effect, to tell God that He has spoken falsely. But on the ground that “He cannot lie”, what does the nature of the case necessitate in order to fulfil the promise to Abraham and Christ? This is the answer, and let the reader mark it well:—to meet the demands of the covenant, *it is indispensable that Jesus return to Canaan, and that he raise Abraham from the dead*. Reason and scripture agree in this.

Hence, the second advent is as necessary as the first. The appearing in sinful flesh was necessary for the dedication of the covenant by the death of the “Mediator”; and the second appearing in the spiritual nature in power and great glory, for his effectual carrying out of all its provisions. For it is manifest that this cannot be done except by One who is all-powerful. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part 2 Chapter 2. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

all constitutionally in them, are the beneficiaries. The things promised them are eternal life, the land of Canaan, and “a city”, or state, “whose architect and builder is God”. Hence the Mediator must be able to form them the dust, and to give them life for ever. He must be mighty in battle; for he will have to expel the Mohammedans, Catholics, and other barbarians from the land, and to restore the kingdom of David “as in the days of old”.

The accomplishment of these, and many other things to be hereafter developed, makes the future pre-millennial advent of Christ a necessity. There is no room for opinion upon the subject, for opinion implies doubt. It is a matter of absolute certainty; and the belief of it is as essential to a participation in the kingdom of God as faith in the death and resurrection of the Lord. For a man to deny the advent of Jesus to Palestine in power and glory before the millennium is to proclaim to men and angels his utter ignorance of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. To talk about his coming at the end of the millennium to make a bonfire of the world is ridiculous. Restitution and renovation, and not destruction of the earth, is the Almighty fiat, as I have already shown at sufficient length. “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly”, is the heart-breathing of the true believer, who, with the hearing ear rejoices in the Bridegroom’s voice, which says, “Behold, I come as a thief, and quickly; *and my reward is with me*, to give every man according as his work shall be. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” The prolonged absence of Christ for ten more centuries would break the hearts of the saints of God, who have long since cried with a loud-voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them who dwell on the earth?” No, no; the day is come at length when he is about to gather the vine of the earth, to reward his saints, and to destroy the oppressors of the world. Then will “the kingdoms of the world become those of Jehovah and of his King; and he shall reign for ever and ever”; and the covenant with Abraham concerning Christ will be fulfilled in every jot and tittle of its details.

ABRAHAM THE HEIR OF THE WORLD.

Abraham and Christ are inseparably associated as co-heirs of the covenant of promise. Hence, they are joint-heirs of the country mentioned in the covenant. But out of this arises a question of considerable interest, namely, when they jointly possess the land of Canaan, what will be their relation to the world at large? The answer to this is, that at that time their name will be great in the earth; Abram’s descendants will be a great nation; and he and Christ will be a blessing, by all the families of the earth being in them. This was stated in general terms when the gospel was preached to Abraham at Haran. In searching out these matters, the phrases “*in thee*”, and “*in him*”, and “*in thy seed*”, should be particularly attended to. They are little words, but full of meaning.

The reader knows what it is to be *in a house*, and he is aware that he must pass *into it* before he can be *in it*. This is the literal. Now, suppose we call the house *a man*; and in answer to the question, “Where is he?” we say he is *in the man*, this would be to speak figuratively, but still scripturally and intelligibly. Before, however, a person or a nation, or a multitude of nations could be said to be *in the man Abraham*, and *in the man Christ Jesus*, it is equally clear that they must pass *into Abraham*, and *into Christ*. Now although many nations may literally come out of one man, a multitude of nations cannot literally be packed into one man. When, therefore, nations and individuals are said to be in Abraham and in Christ, it is manifest it must be in a figurative sense. Hence, “*in thee*”, “*in him*”, and “*in Christ*” are figurative expressions, or *terms of constitution*. They are things of stubborn import. They do not express a feeling, but a *relationship* which is predicated on belief and obedience. These are literal and actual things; for there is no scriptural faith without belief of the letter, or written, or

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spoken, word; nor any obedience without conformity to prescribed action. To pass, or to be introduced, into a man is to sustain a relationship towards him of faith, affection, and allegiance, as prescribed.

No person, or nation, can introduce themselves into a man; their induction, in other words, must be according to prescription, and not according to their own appointment. God, or he to whom, as His “Apostle”, or Ambassador, He has committed all authority, is the only person that can prescribe *the formula of induction*. Mankind are diseased, and cannot cure themselves. “The blessing of Abraham” is for their restoration to health and happiness. They are, therefore, the recipients of favour, and not the prescribers, or legislators, in the case. The nature of the inducting formula is determined by the kind of subject to be induced. If the subject to be passed into Abraham and Christ be an individual, the formula is spiritual; that is, it places him in a moral and domestic or family relationship to them; but if the subject be a nation or a multitude of nations, then the formula is civil and ecclesiastical, or political. A person in Abraham and Christ (and a man cannot be in one without being in the other) is the subject of *adoption* by a spiritual formula, which will be perfected in “the redemption of his body” at the resurrection; while nations in Abraham and Christ are adopted by a political formula, which is perfected in the blessings of good government, peace, equitable laws righteously administered, the enlightenment of all classes in the knowledge of God, universal prosperity, and so forth.

The formula of spiritual adoption is exhibited in the gospel. It requires a man to believe “the promise made of God to the fathers” concerning the land of Canaan, the Christ, the blessedness of the nations in Abraham and his seed, eternal life by a resurrection, etc.; and to be baptized into the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When an individual has done this, he is in Abraham and Christ, and an heir with him of the promises he believes. So that “*the seed*”, though spoken of one person—that is, of Christ—comprehends all the believers of the promises, who, by adoption are “*in him*”. The phrase “the seed” is therefore used in an individual and federal acceptation. Hence, whatever is promised to Abraham and Christ is also promised to their federal constituents—to the sons of Abraham, and brethren of Christ, by adoption into the family of God.

But the formula of national, or political, adoption has not yet been promulgated to the world. No people has ever been politically in God but Israel. The natural descendants of Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob became the people of God in a national sense by the adoption provided in the Mosaic law. But no other nation before or since has ever stood in the same relationship to Him. Neither Egypt of old, nor Britain and America of modern times, can say, “We are the people of the Lord.” God has never called these nations “*My people*”, for they have never been the subjects of political adoption as Israel were. State religions are established upon the hypothesis that the people are God’s people; and, therefore, as acceptable worshippers as the Jews under the law; and that they are constitutionally “in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ”. Hence, they call the nations of Europe “Christian nations”.

But a greater fallacy was never entertained. There are no Christian nations; neither indeed can there be until the formula of political adoption shall be made known. The nations are now *in Satan their father, and in his vicegerent the Lord Pope*. Hence, it may be said to them as Jesus said to the rulers and clergy of Israel, “Ye are of your father the Devil, and the works of your father ye do”. The Devil is their father by birth and constitution. The nations of Europe became the people of Satan by constitution, when they put on the Pope as their high priest and mediator according to the Justinian code. Having received this, they became Satan’s seed, and the Pope’s brethren; and being thus in Satan and in the Pope, are joint-heirs with them of a “just punishment, even an everlasting”

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destruction,” to issue forth “from the presence of the Lord and the glow of his power”; and which hangs over them, like the hair-suspended sword of Dionysius, ready to fall with death-dealing vengeance on every side.

But a time is coming when the Antichristian, Mohammedan, and pagan nations of the world will all become the people of God, and, therefore, Christian. This is evident from the testimony of scripture, which saith, “In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and *the Egyptians SHALL SERVE with the Assyrians*. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and Assyria, even *a blessing in the midst of the Land*: whom the Lord of Hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be *Egypt MY PEOPLE*, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel *mine inheritance*.” And again it is written of Christ, “He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth. *In his days* shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They (the Arabs) that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish, and of the isles, shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: ALL NATIONS SHALL SERVE HIM. His name shall endure for ever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be *blessed* IN HIM; all nations shall call him blessed.”

According to this testimony, it is proved that the nations, or families, of the earth will become the people of God as well as Israel, who will have the pre-eminence among them as the inheritance of the Lord; and so Israel and the nations will constitute a kingdom and empire, which will then compose “*the World*”, and be blessed in him and Abraham; whose subjects will reciprocate the benefits bestowed upon them, and serve their god-like rulers with heart-felt loyalty, and blessings upon his name for ever.

But when we contemplate the nations now in Satan, and Israel scattered to the four winds, and compare their present condition with what is to be when they all serve Christ and are blessed in him and Abraham, we perceive the womb of futurity to be pregnant of a mighty change; and one, too, which cannot be effected by mild and persuasive measures. The time for persuasives has passed away. The nations turn a deaf ear to everything which is not in harmony with their lusts. Hence, coercion can alone bring them to wait for the divine law. For this reason, it is testified of Christ—“He shall break in pieces the oppressor”; and “will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard. And the nations shall see and be confounded at all their (Israel’s) might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth; they shall be afraid of the Lord, Israel’s God, and shall fear because of thee.”

This testimony shows that the nations will be reduced to abject submission, even the most powerful among them. Their courage and means of resistance will have departed; for by the sword of the Lord and of Israel they will have been subdued. At this crisis however, they will find a deliverer in him who hath overcome them. “Look unto me”, saith he, “and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself,” to Abraham, “the word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear, saying, Surely *in* the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come.” If we turn to this oath of subjection and future blessing we shall see what is meant by every knee bowing to the Lord. “By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou, Abraham, hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, that in blessing I will bless thee, and in Thomas, D. J. (1990). *Elpis Israel: an exposition of the Kingdom of God* (electronic ed.). Part 2 Chapter 2. Birmingham, UK: The Christadelphian.

multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore; *and thy seed (Christ) shall possess the gate of his enemies*; and *in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*; because thou hast obeyed my voice.”

The nations being prepared by coercion, the formula of political adoption is promulgated to them. This is contained in *the law which goes forth from Zion*. The details of this law are not all specified. In general, it establishes the power of the Lord, then become “a great mountain filling the whole earth”, above all other powers; and constitutes the newly erected Temple in Jerusalem “the house of prayer for all nations”. This law gives the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem, which is Zion; where the Lord reigns over them henceforth for ever. The nations accept the law, which saves them from extermination. This is evinced by the effects which follow its promulgation. They all flow to Jerusalem as the centre of the world, and fountain of all blessings; for “my springs”, saith the Lord, are “in thee”. They go thither for instruction in the ways of the Lord, and return to walk in his paths, to live at peace among themselves, to abandon the study of war, and to devote themselves to agriculture, commerce, and the arts. This is the millennial future state. Abraham and Jesus are, then, the greatest personages upon the earth; the former being the spiritual father of Jesus and the saints, and the political father of a multitude of nations, over whom Christ and his brethren rule until “the end.”

Such is “*the world*” of which Abraham and his Seed are the heirs. Speaking of the latter in this relation, the apostle says, “Whom God hath appointed heir of all things, and on account of whom he constituted the Ages”—the Age of Jubilees, and the Jubilee Age. And to the joint-heirs of Abraham and Christ he says, “Let no man glory in men: for all things are yours; *the world*, life, death, *things present and things to come*; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.” And again, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?” The verb here rendered “*judge*” is the same as is translated “*go to law*” in the preceding verse. The apostle, therefore, asks if they do not know that they will sit judicially, and dispense justice to the world, according to the divine law; and because this is their destiny he positively forbids believers in the covenants of promise to submit themselves to the judgment of the unjust. It is better, says he, for one to be defrauded than to submit to such a humiliation. Let the heirs of the world arbitrate their own affairs in the present state; for it is a strange thing if men, whose destiny is to judge the world and angels, cannot settle things pertaining to this life.

Thus, then, there are three parties, yet constitutionally *one family*, who are heirs of the world as it will be politically organized in the Future Age—namely, Abraham, Christ, and the believers in the promises made to them, called saints, who are in Abraham as their father, and in his Seed as their elder brother. These are *the inheritors* of the kingdom and empire attached to the land of Canaan—“the children of the promise who are counted for the Seed”; and “not of the world”, or *subjects*. These are men in the flesh, Jews and Gentiles, whose lives and fortunes will be at the disposal of the Royal Family of God. The members of this social circle are not known now by the world, which has set its affections upon those who mislead it, teaching it to look for a visionary elysium beyond the skies! But such leaders as these have no light in them, for they do not speak according to the law and the testimony. The word of God converts their wisdom into folly, declaring in the teeth of their traditions that “he that putteth his trust in God shall possess *the land*, and shall inherit his holy mountain”; while Israel in the flesh “shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever as the branch of the Lord’s planting, the work of his hands, that He may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. I, saith the Lord, will hasten it in its time.”

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THE TOKEN OF THE COVENANT.

It was fourteen years after the confirmation of the covenant, and when Abram had attained the age of ninety-nine, that the Lord appeared to him to repeat His promises, and to appoint the *token* of the covenant. On this occasion, God talked with him, and changed his name from Abram to Abraham, as an everlasting memorial that He had made him heir of the world, by constituting him a father of a great multitude. "Behold", said God, "my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I constituted thee." And besides this constitutional fatherhood, the Lord assured him that though so old, he should be prolific of multitudes which should descend from his own loins. "I will make thee," said he, "exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee; and kings shall come out of thee." The Lord then announced, that the covenant He had confirmed should be *established* between Him and Abraham, and his fleshly descendants in their generations for an *everlasting* covenant; and that He would be a God to him and to them. He also again declared His oft-repeated promise, saying, "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, *all the land of Canaan*, for an *everlasting* possession: and I will be their God."

In the passage from which this is taken, God says, "I *will make* my covenant between me and thee"; and afterwards, "Behold, my covenant *is* with thee." The "*will make*" refers to a covenant subsequent to that confirmed fourteen years before. That to be made was *the token* of that which was already made; and "*the seal* of the righteousness of the faith which Abraham had when it was counted to him for righteousness." "This", said God, "is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee: every man-child among you shall be circumcised; and it shall be *a token of the covenant betwixt me and you*, Abraham." The appointing of this token in their flesh was the establishment of the covenant with Abraham's seed in the time of Isaac and Jacob in their generations. When, therefore, Israelites behold the mark in their flesh it reminds them that they are "the children of the covenant which God made with their fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy Seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed"; that the land of Canaan, *all of it*, is promised to them for an everlasting possession; but that an everlasting possession in it can only be attained by belief of the thing promised in the covenant being counted to them for righteousness in the way of God's appointment. They know, or rather ought to know, that the sign of circumcision and the Mosaic law can give them no title to the *everlasting* occupancy of Canaan, either as individuals, or as a nation. It is circumcision of the heart, of which circumcision of the flesh is but the sign of the circumcised heart of Abraham, that confers a title to the land *and all its attributes*. Before Israel can inherit the land for ever, and so be no more expelled by "the Horns of the Gentiles", they must "circumcise the foreskin of their hearts, and be no more stiff-necked"; and "love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, that they may live." This may seem to some to put their restoration a long way off. And so it does, if the circumcision of their hearts is to be effected by the instrumentality of the Society for the Conversion of the Jews. By the well-meant endeavours of this body, it never can be accomplished; for the Society and its agents are themselves deficient in this particular.

But "God is able to graft them in again"; and testifies by His prophets, saying, "A new heart also will *I* give you, and a new spirit will *I* put within you, O Israel; and *I* will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and *I* will give you a heart of flesh. And *I* will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people; and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses; and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine

upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.” In this testimony, while Moses exhorted them to circumcise the *foreskin* of their hearts, the Lord says that He will change their hearts Himself; not, however, by “the foolishness of preaching”, for that has failed even by the mouth of apostles energized by the spirit, but by means in reserve which will astonish Israel and the world, and of which He has spoken at large in the holy scriptures. I will anticipate this part of the subject so far as to say, that the Lord has left on record an illustration of the manner in which He changes the heart of a nation, and plants them in a land flowing with milk and honey, in the history of Israel’s exode from Egypt, and their settlement in the land of Canaan. This is a representation on a small scale of how He intends to graft them in again, as He has declared by the prophets.

In after times circumcision came to be performed as a mere custom, or ceremony. An institution of God, that was appointed as a memorial of His promise concerning the *everlasting* possession of Canaan and the world; and of that righteousness by faith of the promise which could alone entitle to it: and which was to express the faith of those who practised it—degenerated into a mere form which was observed, like infant sprinkling, by “the pious” and most ungodly characters alike. But it is evident that circumcision, being instituted *after* the covenant of promise was confirmed, and *after Abraham had obtained a title to it* by a righteousness of faith, could confer upon the person circumcised no right to possess the things promised for ever: and certainly none to reprobates who practised it, as Turks and wild Arabs do now, because their fathers have done before them, time immemorial to them.

What obligation, then, did this sign of the covenant, and seal of Abraham’s justification by faith without circumcision, impose upon the circumcised? Let the apostle answer the question. “I testify”, says he, “to every man that is circumcised, that *he is a debtor to do the whole law.*” This was a fearful obligation for a man to be brought under, who sought to be justified, to the end that he might obtain an *everlasting* inheritance in the land of Canaan, which implies the acquisition of eternal life and glory. The law was weak through the flesh; and gave only the knowledge of sin. It was an unbearable yoke of bondage; and a law which no man born of the will of the flesh had been able to keep without sin. If, then, a man sought to obtain a right to an everlasting possession of the land by obedience to it, he had undertaken an impossibility; for the law, on account of human weakness, could give no one a right to live for ever; and without life eternal a man could not everlastingly possess the land; and this life no one can attain to who is not justified from all his past sins; for if in his sins he is under the sentence of death, as it is written, “the wages of sin is death”. The apostle speaks directly to the point; for he says, “If there had been a law given, which could have given (*a title to*) life (*eternal*), verily righteousness (or justification from past sins to life) should have been by the law”; “for if righteousness had come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain”. He says explicitly, “By the law shall no flesh be justified” A circumcised person is therefore bound to keep that which he cannot possibly keep; and which if he did keep could not benefit him, because justification to life is by faith in the promise, and not by conformity to the Mosaic law.

The relation of the Jews to eternal life as individuals, and to the everlasting possession of Canaan in blessedness and peace as a nation, is manifest. They are circumcised, and therefore bound to keep the whole law; by which law they seek to be justified. But how vain and impossible is their enterprise. The law says, “Cursed is every one that continueth not *in all things* written in the book of the law to do them”; and so unexceptional is this sentence, that it even cursed the Lord Jesus, saying, “Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree”; and in this way he was made a curse for men. Now, the law

teaches that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins, and prescribed certain sacrifices which must be offered upon an altar in Jerusalem, and there only. To say nothing of other impossible things, these offerings, which are indispensable, the Jews neither do, nor can, present. These are things, then, they do not continue in, and therefore they are cursed by the law, and condemned by Moses in whom they trust. They are under sentence of death, and of eternal exclusion from all inheritance in Canaan and the world. They may possibly believe in the promise made to Abraham, that God will give the land to him and the Christ; but they deny that Jesus is the person named in the covenant, which is tantamount to rejecting the covenant itself.

While circumcision obliged Israel to keep the whole law, in which there was an annual remembrance of national offences, it gave them through that law only *a tenant at will occupancy* of the land of Canaan; and that *not to the extent* which pertains to its everlasting possession. This appears from the words of Moses, as it is written, “If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law, ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it”. The condition of their tenancy was their good behaviour. If they served God according to the law of the land He had given, He would bless them in their basket and store; but if they served other gods, He would let in the worshippers of those gods upon them, and expel them from the country. Israel has rebelled; and therefore they are in dispersion, until the time appointed shall come to remember the covenant made with the fathers; and therefore to remember the land.

The national tenancy of Canaan under the law being leasehold, no purchases of freehold estates could be made in the land. If Israel had been a freeholder, the case would have been different. But the land belonged to the Lord; and they had no more right to grant it away in parcels for ever, than the tenant under a twenty-one years’ lease has to cut up his holding into lots, and sell them to purchasers for ever. Israel were the Lord’s tenants; and the law said to them on the part of their Landlord, “The land shall not be sold for ever; for the land is mine, and ye are *strangers and sojourners* with me”; so that “in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land”. Hence, if poverty compelled a man to sell his farm, it was always redeemable by himself, or kin, according to certain conditions; but if neither could raise the money to redeem, the estate was not lost to the original owner; for though it remained in the hands of the purchaser, he was obliged to return it for nothing at the year of jubilee. Even under the New Constitution, when the nation obtains everlasting possession, the servants of the Prince will have to surrender his territorial gifts at the year of liberty; while his sons will possess them for ever.

The covenant of promise confers a more extensive holding of the country than the law of Moses. At no time of their occupation did Israel possess all the land from the Euphrates to the Nile, as promised in the covenant; and even if they had, such holding would not have been in the sense of the covenant, for they have not held possession according to the limits defined “*for ever*”. “*All the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession*” is the promise; but the indisputable fact is that Israel have only possessed a *part of it for a limited* and turbulent period. In Solomon’s days, when the nation was at its zenith under the law, the land was jointly possessed by Israel, the Tyrians, and the remains of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites, etc.; but when the age of the covenant arrives, Israel under Shiloh will possess it all; “and there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts.”

No uncircumcised person was permitted to be a member of Abraham’s family. Home-born, or purchased, slaves, as well as sons, were to be alike circumcised, or else to be cut off; for he that was uncircumcised on the eighth day after the first circumcisions were instituted, or not at all, had broken

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the Lord's covenant. This was a great calamity; for *none but circumcised persons can inherit the promises*. This may startle; but it is strictly true. It will, however, be remembered that true circumcision is of the heart. Circumcision of the flesh is but an outward sign of Abraham's circumcision of heart; and every one who would inherit with faithful Abraham must be circumcised of heart likewise. When he was circumcised of heart his faith in God was imputed to him for remission of sins that were past. His former idolatry, etc., was forgiven, and the body of the sins of his flesh put off. Now, a man believing what Abraham believed, with the same effect on his disposition and life, is also circumcised of heart, when, *in putting on Christ*, he is "circumcised with the circumcision made without hands by the circumcision of Christ", performed on the eighth day according to the law. In putting on Christ, his faith is counted to him for righteousness as Abraham's was. "The body of the sins of his flesh," is cut off. The foreskin of his heart is circumcised, and he is the subject of "circumcision in the spirit"; and his praise, though not of men, is pronounced of God.

Now, I respectfully inquire, will a man who understands the signification of circumcision of the flesh, and the nature of circumcision of the heart jeopardize his reputation for soundness of mind by saying that infant-sprinkling, even if a spiritual practice, was divinely appointed in the room of circumcision in flesh or spirit? That the immersion of a man of the same faith and disposition as Abraham's is connected with circumcision, I have shown; to such a man, immersion into the glorious name is *the token* of his justification by faith, as circumcision of the flesh was to Abraham. It is, indeed, a substitute for circumcision of the flesh; but the accompaniment also for circumcision of the heart: and as all of Abraham's faith were to be cut off from his people who were not circumcised in flesh, so all of his faith now will be cut off who are not immersed; for immersion is the appointed, and only appointed, means of putting on the circumcision of Jesus Christ by which the body of the sins of the flesh are put off. But this is a very different affair to infant-baptism coming in the room of circumcision of the flesh. Suppose it did, then the law of circumcision must have become the law of the substitute—that is, of infant-sprinkling. The baptized subject, then, is bound to keep the whole law, and in default thereof comes under its curse. The immersion of an unbeliever amounts to nothing. To such a person it is no token. What shall we say, then, of the baptism of an infant? Is the sprinkling, and marking it with the sign of a cross a token to it, or to others, that it is "justified by faith, and has peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ"? Or is it a sign of the faith of its godfathers and godmothers, or of its parents, of their being justified by faith, and circumcised of heart? Or is it a token that the clerical administrator has faith in the covenant of promise? Nay, rather, it is a token of the astounding ignorance of the letter and spirit of the gospel, and of the Judaism of all concerned; and a striking illustration of that "*strong delusion*" spread over the face of all people as a covering veil.

THE ALLEGORY.

Abraham had two sons—Ishmael, the son of Hagar, an Egyptian handmaid; and Isaac, the son of Sarah. Ishmael was fourteen years old when Isaac was born. He was born in the ordinary course of things, and therefore said to be "born after the flesh"; while Isaac was born out of the usual course, Sarah being ninety and Abraham a hundred, she being also strengthened of God, according to the promise, and consequently said to be "born after the Spirit". Hagar was a bondwoman; but Sarah was free: yet, had it been left to Abraham, he would have made Ishmael his heir as well as Isaac, for he loved them both. But Ishmael manifested an evil spirit towards Sarah and Isaac, which he had imbibed from his mother. Moses says he mocked Isaac, or spoke contemptuously of him; which the apostle terms persecuting him, and characteristic of those of Ishmael's class. Sarah's indignation was

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fired at this; “Wherefore, she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac”. Although Abraham was exceedingly grieved at this, God approved of Sarah’s decision; and informed him that Christ should descend from Isaac, and not from Ishmael, saying, “*In Isaac shall thy Seed be called*”; nevertheless, because Ishmael was his son, he would make a nation of him also with twelve princes for its fathers.

This fragment of Abraham’s history has a signification beyond what appears on the face of it. The apostle informs us that the incidents are allegorical. That is, that *the two women* and their characteristics, represent *two covenants*; and *the two sons* of Abraham by them *two seeds*, or classes of persons. The covenants are “the one from Mount Sinai in Arabia”, and the other the covenant confirmed of God 430 years before that of Sinai was promulgated; and which, being a matter of promise, the subject of which is Christ as the inheritor of Canaan, and its future king in Jerusalem, now at the right hand of God, is said to be “Jerusalem which is above”. The apostle says that Jerusalem is the subject of both these covenants; but in different periods of her history. During her existence as the metropolis of the Hebrew commonwealth under its Sinaitic constitution, she was represented by Hagar the bondwoman; because the covenant from Sinai “gendered to bondage”; and in consequence the citizens of the commonwealth were in bondage with the mother city. They were “entangled with the yoke of bondage”, “under the rudiments of the world”. They were bound to keep the whole law, by which they sought to be justified, and as they could not do it owing to the weakness of the flesh, they came under the curse.

But this state of things was only provisional. God did not intend the Hebrew commonwealth to exist perpetually under the Sinaitic constitution. Israel was not always to be in bondage to the law of Moses. A great revolution was predetermined of God, which should result in the abolition of the Arabian covenant, and the dispersion of Israel among the nations. This is allegorically styled “*casting out the bondwoman and her son*”; which was necessary for the good and all-sufficient reason that the Sinaitic constitution of the commonwealth of Israel was not adapted for the people and state when Christ should sit upon the throne of his father David, and the saints should possess the kingdom. The law of Moses enjoined ordinances concerning the flesh, such as “the water of separation”, which would be quite incompatible with the realities of the Age to Come. Under the law there was “a remembrance again of sins every year” but under the New Constitution from heaven, “the sins and iniquities of the people will be remembered no more”. The Sinaitic constitution was faulty; it was therefore necessary that it should give place to a better, which shall be established on better promises. Hence, the bondwoman was to be cast out to make room for a more perfect arrangement of the commonwealth.

Since the expulsion of Israel by the Romans, Jerusalem and her children are in the situation of Hagar and her son, while wandering in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. She is divorced from the Lord as Hagar was from Abraham, and “being desolate she sits upon the ground”, and bewails her widowhood. But there is to be “*a restitution of all things*”. Jerusalem is to become a free woman as Sarah was; and to take her stand in the midst of the earth as “*the city whose architect and builder is God*”. She will then “remember the reproach of her widowhood no more. For her Maker will be her husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name; and her Redeemer the Holy One of Israel (even Jesus), *the God of the whole earth shall he be called*”. She will then be the metropolis of the world: and her citizens, or children, will be more numerous than those she rejoiced in under the law, as a married wife. The period of her glory will have arrived, the twelve tribes be again the united, peaceful, and

joyous inhabitants of the land; the “greater than Solomon”, their king; and his city, “the heavenly Jerusalem”, which “is free, and the mother of us all”.

But, while Hagar represents Jerusalem under the law; and Sarah Jerusalem under the new constitution of the Hebrew commonwealth; Ishmael represents Israel, glorying in their fleshly descent from Abraham, and boasting in the law; and Isaac, those of Israel and the Gentiles, who regard the flesh as profiting nothing, and who are the sons of Abraham by believing the promises made to him and to his seed. Hence, Ishmael and Isaac represent two seeds or classes of mankind, who shall not be heirs together of the promise. Indeed, their natures are so opposite that it would be impossible for them to fulfil in concert the destiny marked out for those who are to inherit the promises. The Ishmaelite-seed are wild men; whose hands are against all who believe the truth. They are mockers; for as Ishmael mocked Isaac, so Israel mocked Jesus, and spoke reproachfully of him and his brethren, who are one. The kingdom to be established is a righteous dominion, and requires righteous men for its administration; as it is written, “*He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord*”. It is impossible, therefore, that the Ishmaelite-seed can be heirs of the promise. All the honour, glory, and power of the state were in their hands under the Arabian covenant; and cruel and unjust was the use they made of their position. They put Jesus to death; and persecuted those to whom “he gave power to become the sons of God”, believing on his name; and were “contrary to all men; forbidding the apostles to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved”. They were then “*first*”; but power was destined to change hands, when they who were “*the first shall be the last*”. They had killed the heir that the inheritance might be theirs; but they have been destroyed, and the vineyard now remains to be bestowed upon others, who shall render its Lord the fruits in their seasons. Thus, as in the case of Ishmael and Isaac, “he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the spirit, even so”, says the apostle, “it is now”; and, we may add, ever will be, until the times of the restitution of the State when “the last shall be first”, and beyond the reach of evil.

No one but God had the right, or the power, to appoint “*the heir of all things*”. Abraham could not appoint him, neither could he be self-appointed. Abraham wished that Ishmael might be the heir; or, as he expressed it, “O that Ishmael might live before thee”. But God would not consent to this. He therefore promised to give him one for the heir, whom he should call Isaac; and of whom He said, “I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him”. But Isaac was not only born of promise; he believed the promises likewise, for the scripture saith, “By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau *concerning things to come*”. Now it is written, “*In Isaac shall thy seed be called*”—that is, Christ shall descend from him, and all *who believe the promises*, and put on Christ, shall be considered as “*in Isaac*”; and being thus “the children of the promise”, shall be “counted for *the seed*”, who shall inherit the land and the world for ever. “*The seed*”, then, is a phrase that must be understood in a two-fold sense—first, as referring to Christ; and secondly, to all who are constitutionally *in him*. Isaac is representative of both: for Christ was in his loins, and all “*in him*” must be constitutionally in Isaac also.

For want of understanding the scripture doctrine of the two seeds, some very fatal mistakes have been made by many well-meaning persons. They have gone so far as to deny that the seed of Abraham after the flesh will ever be restored to the land of Canaan, which is *in effect* to deny the fulfilment of a vast proportion of “the testimony of God” The seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman, indicated before the Flood, were afterwards distinguished in the seed of Ishmael, and the seed of Isaac. “The children of the flesh are not the children of God; neither are they all Israel, who are of Israel.” This is true; but it does not therefore follow that there is nothing more to be done with “the

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children of the flesh” than to burn them up. *To carry out the allegory, God has yet to make of the Ishmael-seed a great nation*; for though Ishmael was an outcast and a wanderer in the wilderness, God promised that he should be great, and dwell in the presence of his brethren. The children of Abraham according to the flesh are “the children of the kingdom” as well as the children of the promise; only, these two classes of children stand in a different relation to the government and glory of the commonwealth, and to the dominion of the nations in the age to come. The Ishmael-children were cast out of the government by the Romans; but the children in Isaac will “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”, when the kingdom is restored again to Israel.

‘In the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory’, the children in Isaac will reign as “*sons*”; while the children of the flesh will be the king’s subjects, or “*servants*”. This distinction is apparent from the following testimony; “Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes throughout all the earth”; of whom it is said, “If the Prince give a gift unto *any of his sons*, the inheritance thereof shall be his sons’; it shall be their possession by *inheritance*. But if he give a gift of his inheritance to *one of his servants* then it shall be his to the year of liberty; and after it shall return to the prince: but *his inheritance shall be his sons’ for them*.” The sons of the prince are joint-heirs with him; but the servants of the prince are only leaseholders for a certain number of years. If the natural Israel are not restored to Canaan, the spiritual Israel, that is to say, the prince and his sons, would inherit a kingdom without subjects to serve them. This would be like the Royal family reigning in Windsor Castle over the realm of Britain after all its inhabitants had expatriated themselves to the United States. It requires more than *a staff* to make a regiment; so also it requires a multitude of people as well as princes, priests, and kings, to constitute a Kingdom in Canaan, or in any country.

Now, the children in Isaac become the children of the heavenly Jerusalem by believing “the exceeding great and precious promises” set forth in “the manifold wisdom of God”. They hope to see Canaan and Jerusalem under the new covenant, which will constitute them both heavenly. They are even now said to have “come to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, and toll the heavenly Jerusalem”; but it is as yet only in spirit, that is, by faith and hope: and as the city and land will be made heavenly by the Lord from heaven, their glorious attributes are in truth “*above*”; to believe, then, in what will be brought down to the city from above, is for the children of the promise in Isaac to stand related to “Jerusalem which is above, the mother of them all”. Hence, the apostle exhorts them, saying, “If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead (to earthly things) and *your life is hid* with Christ in God. *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory*.”

PARABLE OF THE SEED.

Abraham was ninety-nine years old, and Ishmael thirteen when they were circumcised. Isaac was born when Abraham was one hundred. Between the circumcision of his household and the birth of Isaac, while he was yet living “in the plain of Mamre which is Hebron”, the Lord appeared to him, and again promised Sarah a son. At this crisis Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, and the Dead Sea formed. After this catastrophe, Abraham journeyed from Hebron towards the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar of the Philistines. On his arrival there, he entered into an agreement with the king of the country, which they confirmed by an oath, by which he

was permitted to dwell in any part of Philistia he pleased, and a certain well of water was restored to him, called Beer-sheba, which had been violently taken away by the king's servants.

After this arrangement, Isaac was born according to promise. On the day he was weaned, Abraham made a great feast. It was then Ishmael was detected mocking at Isaac, which caused his and Hagar's expulsion from the family. These being cast out, Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and there "called on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God". Having thus settled himself, "he sojourned in the Philistines' land many days". How long he continued there may be learned from the following considerations. In his speech before the Sanhedrim, Stephen says: "When Abraham's father was dead, he removed him into this land wherein ye dwell"; that is, he returned from Philistia to "Hebron in the land of Canaan". Now Terah, Abraham's father, was seventy years old when Abraham was born; so that when Isaac was born at Beer-sheba, Terah was a hundred and seventy. But Terah lived two hundred and five years, and then died at Haran; and it was after his death that Abraham removed to Hebron, where Sarah died, aged one hundred and twenty-seven. Now she died two years after Terah; so that it was in this two years that Abraham left Philistia. But Stephen says it was *when* Terah died he moved to Canaan, which makes the "*many days*" he sojourned in the Philistine's land *thirty-five years from the birth of Isaac*. This simple statement of facts removes a difficulty which has puzzled chronologists exceedingly. Moses says Terah died in Haran aged two hundred and five; and Stephen is made to say that Abraham removed from Haran to Canaan when Terah died, *thereby making Sarah a resident of the country only two years!* This is the fault of the English version, which renders *ἀχαιῶν*, "*from thence*" instead of *afterwards*, as it ought to be. "Abraham", said Stephen, "dwelt in Haran; and afterwards"—How long after?—"When his father was dead, he removed him"—Where from? From Beer-sheba of the Philistines. Where to? To Hebron "in this land wherein ye dwell". Thus Moses and Stephen agree.

Now, at some time while Abraham was sojourning in the land of the Philistines, God appeared to him for the purpose of putting his faith to the proof; and of giving him in the person of Isaac, a lively representation of what was to befall his seed, the Christ, then in the loins of Isaac, before he should be exalted to inherit Canaan and the world. The trial was a very severe one. He was commanded to take Isaac, "his only son whom he loved", into the land of Moriah; and "offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains", which God should point out. Moriah was itself a mountain upon which Solomon afterwards built the temple; and the land, or region, around, is celebrated by the mounts, afterwards called Zion, Olivet, and Calvary. The mountain chosen of God is not named; I can only therefore express my opinion that it was Calvary. It took him till "*the third day*" to arrive at the place, a distance of forty miles in a straight line from Beersheba. This will not be surprising when it is remembered, that he rode upon an ass, accompanied by two young men, beside Isaac, who conveyed the wood, and other necessaries for the journey. Their progress was therefore slow. "On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off." He then caused the party to halt. He told the young men to stay there with the ass: "and I and the lad", said he, "will go yonder and worship, *and come again to you*". But if he were going to slay Isaac, how could *Isaac* and he come again to them? The apostle explains this, saying, "By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten" of Sarah. "Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy Seed be called: accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a parable"—*ἐν παραβολῇ*. Abraham fully intended to slay Isaac; but he firmly believed that God would raise him from the dead again; because all the promises God had made him were to be accomplished in Isaac's Seed; as it is written, "My covenant will I establish with

Isaac and his seed after him”: therefore, said Abraham to the young men, “we will come again to you”.

The parable, or representation, of what was afterwards to happen to Isaac’s Seed, the Christ, now began. “Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering, and *laid it upon Isaac, his son*”; while he carried the fire and the knife. Isaac went on with great readiness, not in the least suspecting that he was the proposed victim. “My father”, said he, as they jogged along; and he said, “Here am I, my son.” “Behold”, said Isaac, “the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?” And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering”.

Having arrived at the place, built an altar, and laid the wood in order, he bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. He then stretched forth his hand, and took the knife, to slay his son. At this crisis, when Isaac was expecting instant death at the hand of his father, who loved him as his only son, the angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven, and commanded him to do the lad no harm. A ram caught in a thicket by the horns was appointed as a substitute for Isaac, who was therefore substitutionally slain; but by his personal deliverance from death, restored to Abraham as by a resurrection. Abraham called the place of this memorable and instructive transaction, Jehovah-jireh; and upwards of 400 years afterwards, it was known by the name of “the Mount of the Lord”.

But before we dismiss the parable of the Seed, it is to be remarked, that it was not completed in the figurative resurrection of Isaac. The sacrificial death and resurrection of Christ had been represented; but then, after these events, what was to be his destiny? The answer to this question is found in the closing incident of the parable. Moses testifies that “the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven *the second time*”. The first time he announced from heaven the acceptance of the son’s sacrifice; but the second time the Lord spoke from heaven, had reference to Christ’s triumph over his enemies, and his possession of the world, as preached to Abraham in the gospel at the beginning. “By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy Seed shall possess the gate of *his enemies*; and in thy Seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” Thus, the parabolic representation was finished, “and Abraham returned to his young men; and they rose up, and went together to Beer-sheba; and Abraham dwelt there”.

SUMMARY OF ABRAHAM’S FAITH.

Abraham is the father of all them who believe, and who walk in the steps of *that faith* which he had while yet uncircumcised. This is the apostle’s testimony. I think I need scarcely say, yet it may be useful to do so, that *no one can walk in the steps of Abraham’s faith who does not believe the same things*. This is self-evident. It is to be to Abraham according to his faith; and this is the rule for everyone else. We shall inherit what we have faith in. If we have an understanding faith in the truth, we shall inherit the truth; but if we believe in what is not true, and therefore visionary, we shall inherit nothing but the whirlwind. Now, if it be asked, *What is the truth?*—the answer is, *the things which Abraham believed*, with the acknowledgment that Jesus is the Seed spoken of in the promises made to him. It is, therefore, essential to our salvation that we be familiar with the matters of his faith. To make this as easy as possible then, I shall here subjoin a summary of the faith which was counted to him for righteousness. I would just remind the reader here that Abraham was justified because *he*

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believed in God. This does not mean because he believed in the existence of God. This is implied. To believe on God in the scripture sense is the “being fully persuaded that what he has *promised*, he is also able to perform”; and because this was the case with Abraham, “therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness”. Furthermore, this persuasion does not consist in saying, “Whatever it is God has promised I know not, but of this I am persuaded, He will perform it”. This is not the sort of persuasion God accepts. *He requires men to acquaint themselves first with what He has promised, and then to consult the testimony He has given until they are fully persuaded, as Abraham was.* “Now”, says the apostle, “it was not written for Abraham’s sake alone, that his full persuasion of the divine promise was counted to him for righteousness; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on God.”

In studying the life of Abraham, his biography presents him—

1. As an idolater under condemnation with the world;
2. As a believer of the gospel preached by the angel of the Lord;
3. As justified from all past sins by faith in its promises; and
4. As justified by works unto eternal life.

These four particulars are affirmable of all Abraham’s spiritual children. Born of the flesh, they are denizens of the world, and heirs of condemnation; then they believe the gospel; afterwards they are justified by faith from past sins; and subjected to a subsequent probation by which their faith is tried and made perfect. It is worthy of remark here, that *Abraham believed the gospel ten years before his faith was counted to him for righteousness.* This appears from the fact that the gospel was preached to him at Haran; and it was not until the occasion of the confirmation of the covenant at Hebron, that the Lord vouchsafed him an acquittal from all his past sins; which is implied in the testimony that “he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness”. This fact ought to teach the reader, that *it is not at the instant a man believes that he is justified.* A man may believe the truth for many years, and yet not be the subject of the righteousness of God. If so, it may then be asked, “When, or at what point of time, and how, is a man’s faith in the truth counted to him for remission of sins?” As to the manner of its imputation, this must necessarily differ from the case of Abraham. The angel of the Lord announced to Abraham his justification *by word of mouth*; but under the present arrangement of things, this is not to be expected. The angel sent to Cornelius did not pronounce his justification; but simply put him in the way of attaining it. I trust the reader has not forgotten the use of the key in his case.

The scriptures say that through Jesus is now preached the remission of sins to those who believe the gospel of the kingdom; and that justification by faith is through his Name. That is, God has appointed an institution through which remission of sins is communicated to believers of the things of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus: so that instead of sending an angel to announce to each individual that his faith is counted to him for righteousness, as in the case of Abraham, He has caused a general proclamation to be made, that “*through Christ’s name*” believers may obtain the remission of sins. Now, there is but one way for a believer of the gospel to get at this name, to wit, by being “baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”. The answer to the question, then, is this, that *a man’s faith in the gospel is counted to him for righteousness in the act of*

being baptized into the name. There is no other way than this, and even a believer of the truth will die in his sins unless he submit to it.

The “articles,” then, of Abraham’s faith were these—

1. That God would multiply his descendants as the stars of heaven for multitude, and make them a great and mighty nation;

2. That at that time his own name would be great;

3. That out of his posterity should arise ONE, in whom and in himself all the nations of the earth should be blessed;

4. That he together with this personage should have actual possession of the land of Canaan for ever;

5. That they two, with all his adopted seed, should possess the world;

6. That the seed, or Christ, would be an only begotten and beloved son, even the seed of the woman only, and therefore of God; that he would fall a victim to his enemies; and in his death be accepted as an offering by being raised from the dead, after the example in the case of Isaac;

7. That after resurrection, or at “a second time”, Christ would possess the gate of his enemies in triumph, and obtain the land of Canaan, and the dominion of the world according to the promise; and,

8. That, at that time, he and his adopted seed, would be made perfect, receive the promises, and “enter into the joy of their Lord”.

Such was the faith of Abraham in outline and such must be the faith of all who would inherit with him. In conclusion, I would direct the reader’s attention to the fact, that Abraham was the subject of a twofold justification, as it were; first, of a *justification by faith*; and secondly, of a *justification by works*. Paul says, he was justified by faith; and James, that he was “justified by works”. They are both right. As a sinner he was justified from his *past sins* when his faith was counted to him for righteousness; and as a saint, he was justified by works when he offered up Isaac. Of his justification as a saint James writes, “Abraham our father was justified by works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar. Faith wrought with his works, and *by works was faith made perfect*. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and NOT *by faith alone*.”

I have termed it a twofold justification by way of illustration; but it is, in fact, only one. The two stand related as cause and effect; faith being the motive principle it is a justification which *begins* with the remission of sins that are past, and is *perfected* in obedience unto death. The idea may be simplified thus. No exaltation without probation. If a man believe and obey the gospel *his past sins* are forgiven him in Christ; but, if after this he walk in the course of the world his faith is proved to be dead, and he forfeits his title to eternal life. But if, on the other hand, a man become an adopted son of Abraham, and “by a patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory, honour, and incorruptibility”, he will find everlasting life in the Paradise of God.

