

# The Remnant

*“Even so then at this  
present time also there  
is a remnant according to  
the election of grace.”  
Romans 11.5*

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## **“DRAW ME, WE WILL RUN AFTER *THEE*” Song of Solomon 1:4**

“**C**ome to Jesus. Come just as you are! Jesus is waiting. You must, indeed, you **can** come this very night,” purred the “evangelist.”

Jesus therefore answered and said: “**No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of My Father**” (John 6:65).

“Jesus said, ‘He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out,’” replied the evangelist.

Jesus answers: “**All that the FATHER GIVETH ME, SHALL COME to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out**” (John 6:37).

“Don’t listen to anyone who says you can’t come to Jesus. He wants you to come right now!” said the evangelist.

“Jesus therefore answered and said, “...**NO MAN CAN COME TO ME, except the Father which hath sent Me DRAW HIM: and I will raise him up at the last day**” (John 6:44).

What a shocking dialogue the above is to the ears of an unconverted or inexperienced man! Someone once said that John Calvin thought the doctrine of reprobation was a “horrible decree.” Of course, Calvin believed it to be true because it is clearly taught in the Bible. “*No man can come*” to Christ unless the Father draws him; or “*except it were given to him*” of the Father. Regardless of what preachers say, Christ’s own answer is the truth. The preachers say that the sinner can come anytime he pleases; and

the Lord says, “Oh, no! He cannot come unless My Father determined that he does.” It is not left up to man; but is left up to the Father. The Father will “*have mercy on whom He will have mercy, and have compassion on whom He will have compassion. And whom He will, He hardeneth*” (Romans 9:11-19).

Natural man’s sensitivities toward their fellow man draws forth a violent reaction to the truth Jesus taught in the above passages. “Do you mean to say that God will prevent one from believing and being saved?” Such a conclusion is invariably necessary, for it is certain that God does not **save all**. He does not **call all** to repentance. He did not **choose all** to salvation. It is not **given to all** to come to Christ. Indeed, it is not **given to all** that hear to believe. The reason is clearly given by our Lord: “*He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, BECAUSE ye are NOT OF God*” (John 8:47). But, says one, such cannot be the correct meaning of the text. Surely if they understood Christ, they could come.” “*Why do ye NOT understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word,*” said our Lord. (John 8:43).

“It is just too difficult to draw such a conclusion in light of the love of God. Didn’t He come to give everyone a chance to be saved?” “**For judgment I am come into this world, that THEY WHICH SEE NOT MIGHT SEE; AND THAT THEY WHICH SEE MIGHT BE MADE BLIND,**” said the Lord Jesus. (John 9: 39).

The above presents a side of the truth of free grace that is absolutely shocking the first time it engages

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one's attention. There is no doubt that most individuals find it very negative; and for this reason they will not entertain it in their minds very long. It does not fit the "evangelical Christian" theory of universal offers of salvation.

While at first glance the above scriptures appear negative, yet they are rather positive. It is the **positive** aspects of them that are of greatest interest in this article. It seems appropriate, however, to highlight the negative first as a background for the positive. We will prove the doctrine and then move on to the beauty and sweetness it affords a child of free grace.

The Bible proves conclusively that the evangelical theory of universal offers of salvation is false. The theory is only a figment of the imagination of ministers bent on gaining church members at any price. In the best-known text the "free offer" men advance, the context disputes their interpretation roundly. In John 12: 32, Jesus said, "*And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.*" The evangelical ministers will say: "See, God does draw everyone to Jesus!" However, in verses 40-41, John writes: "*He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts; that they should NOT see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory, and spake of Him.*"

It is not reasonable to believe that God would do this to them if, in fact, He willed their salvation. He would have done the exact opposite instead! Again, in the famous "Lord's Prayer," we hear the Lord praying to His Father saying: "*As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as THOU HAST GIVEN HIM...I pray for THEM: I pray NOT FOR THE WORLD, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine.*" John 17: 2, 9. It surely would appear that if it were His will that all be drawn to Him and saved by Him, that His intercessory prayer would have included all of them. But obviously, it did not! In one place, Jesus said His Father heard Him always (John 11:42). This being so, if God desired the salvation of every human being, all He needed to have done was to "pray for the world." Yet He explicitly told His Father that He was **not including the world in His prayer** for His elect children!

To make the negative aspect of this doctrine brief, we will cite only one more passage (out of many) to

prove this point. The apostle foretelling of the coming of that “wicked one,” writes: “*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; BECAUSE they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for THIS CAUSE God shall send them STRONG DELUSION, that they should believe a lie* [That God loves everybody and wants to save everybody]: *that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*” (2 Thess. 2:10-12). Now that is what some might consider being a *negative* aspect of the truth. Notice, however, the next verse. It sets forth the most *positive* and sweet part of the subject: “*But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning CHOSEN YOU TO SALVATION through sanctification of the Spirit and BELIEF OF THE TRUTH: whereunto He called you by our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (verse 13,14). That, dear friend, is very positive! God chose those His Father gave Him to salvation. As He said: “*Ye have not CHOSEN me, but I have chosen you*” (John 15:16).

## PART II, THE POSITIVE: EXCEPT THE FATHER DRAW HIM

“No man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me DRAW HIM: and I will raise him up at the last day (John 6.44).”

“Therefore said I unto you, that NO MAN CAN COME UNTO Me, except it were GIVEN UNTO HIM OF My father (John 6.65).”

The texts above show clearly that while no one can come to Christ except God draws him, those that the Father draws will be in the resurrection of the just. In other words, it is imperative that God **draw one to Christ** if that one is ever to be saved experimentally and everlastingly. This places salvation squarely in the hands of God. It denies any initiation of salvation to be by the efforts of the creature, whether friend, minister, or one’s own self.

It is a very **positive** declaration. To Jeremiah the prophet, God said: “*Thus saith the Lord, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to CAUSE him to rest. The Lord hath appeared of old unto me,*

*saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with LOVINGKINDNESS HAVE I DRAWN THEE*” (Jeremiah 31: 2, 3).

What a mercy is this! “*I have drawn thee.*” Jesus had said, “*No man can come unto Me except,*” and this exception is this gracious **drawing** by the lovingkindness of God. “*Yea,*” said He, “*I have loved thee with an everlasting love.*” We cannot escape the conclusion that one who is **drawn** to Christ has been loved of God “*from the beginning,*” and therefore has been loved of God from the foundation of the world, or ever the world was. The apostle said even the same, when he wrote: “*according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated US unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved*” (Ephesians 1:4-6).

“*With lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*” That is as to say, “not with violence,” but “in love and gentleness.” It surely is with “*lovingkindness*” when God draws one to Himself. “*And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, LIVE*” (Ezekiel 16:5, 6). In such a helpless and polluted condition! Why should God have mercy on such ungodly sinners as this? Yet, Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. That call is an appointed call. “*Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the TIME OF LOVE; and I spread My skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou BECAMEST MINE*” (verse 8).

The **drawing** of one to Christ can be by many different ways. The covenant promise of the everlasting Father to His beloved Son was that “*Thy people shall be willing in the day of THY POWER, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: Thou hast the dew of Thy youth*” (Psalm 110:3). It is a powerful drawing to Christ Jesus when He in His power **makes them willing**. If He shows them their sinfulness; their inability to attain an adequate righteousness of their own; that all their religious devotions and legal efforts cannot justify them; then they

will be made to flee to Him for **His righteousness** and consequent **justification**. They will, in His own time and way, cause them to finally exclaim, "*The Lord our Righteousness*" and salvation! God will teach all His people that they are the chiefest of sinners. He will make them to see what they are by nature in the carnality of Adam's flesh! And, He will cause them to come to Him for rest. In fact, Paul declared this to be "*a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;*" of whom he was chief; and that in him, "*first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting*" (1 Timothy 1:15-16).

The doctrines of God our Savior will **draw** a believer to Christ often. In our day, the doctrinal downgrade has been highly successful. Modern-day "Christians" have thrown the doctrine of Christ away. They never knew how important doctrine is! Without doctrine, they **cannot know Christ**. His doctrine describes Him. It tells who and what manner of person He is. This Biblical description of Him **draws the believer to Him**. To wit, it is as if they say: "Jesus is a hateful, mean, ugly subhuman creature with horns and a forked tail and cannot save anyone unless they let him." Is this the Christ we worship? **Of course not!** His doctrine declares Him to be Love. He is merciful. He is sovereign. He does His own will as He pleases. He has already saved all His people by the sacrifice of Himself. He effectually call sinners to Himself, and He teaches them all things that they need as they need them. Without the doctrine of Christ, one cannot know Him. But it is with His doctrine that His people are **drawn** to Him. His people need a god that is indeed a GOD! And this He certainly is! They do not need a *helper in salvation; they need a SAVIOR!* And this He certainly is also! All the great and glorious attributes of God are taught only by the doctrine of Christ. These are all instruments in the hand of God to **draw** a trembling sinner to the loving arms of a loving and adorable Savior. Every living child of God has a witness that this is true. Consider this most frequent evidence: A free grace believer is in a busy place and hears a stranger mention any of God's attributes: His sovereignty, His free grace, His death for the sheep only; His divine providence, election, predestination, etc., and what happens within his mind, heart, and emotions. A sense of pleasure!

A nearness to this stranger! But if he heard a stranger say, "I love Jesus," "Are you saved?" "Are you a Christian?" "I'm helping the Lord!" "My church is on fire for the Lord!" "I was saved yesterday," "Jesus saves," etc., what is the effect within him now? Repulsion! Disdain! These expressions are statements of **doctrine**: true and false. The true doctrine is descriptive of the greatness of our God. Again, without doctrine, talking about "Jesus" makes one think: "Which Jesus?" The world is full of those Paul called "*another Jesus.*" The doctrine of God our Savior is a strong **drawing power** to a child of grace: stronger than any steel to a magnet! "*If I be lifted up, I will draw all [manner, or sorts of] men to Me*" (John 12:32).

### PART III EFFECTS OF GOD'S DRAWING

**"Draw me, we will run after Thee: the king hath BROUGHT me to His chambers: We will be glad and rejoice in Thee, we will remember Thy love more than wine: the UPRIGHT love Thee"** (Song Of Solomon 1:4).

The young mother reaches for her crying child and tenderly **draws** him into her arms and cradles him in her bosom. The child stops crying, and begins snubbing. Soon he is satisfied and returns to play. There is no sweeter experience on earth than God drawing His own distressed child into His everlasting arms, and cradling him in His bosom of eternal love and favor. What peace in believing and experiencing such a rest. And this "*rest remains for the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works,* as God did from His" (Hebrews 4:9-10). We call this experience **conversion**, and it is not a one-time experience. Time after time God withdraws His felt-presence. Time after time He **draws** His precious child into His arms of comfort and peace.

That **drawing** influence causes a young convert to desire the presence of God and His truth. "*Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of Thy companions?*" (Song 1:7). Is that not an adequate expression of one's love to Christ? Why should I feed in a congregation where Christ does not commune?

Where does our Lord meet with His people by His Spirit? Where can I hear the joyful sound of free and sovereign grace? Lord, lead me out of this religious and legal wilderness. **“Draw me to Thyself!”**

*“If thou know not, O thou fairest among women,”* He says to your soul, *“go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds’ tents”* (Song 1:8). Seek out My shepherds that feed My sheep. You may have to drive a long distance across a barren desert, but My shepherds feed with *“wholesome words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness”* (1 Timothy 6:3), and there are shepherds that *“consent not to wholesome words,”* nor the doctrine of Christ (*ibid.*).

*“Draw Me.”* *“My Beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, My love, My fair one, and come away.”* Thus He **draws** one to Him after a period when his soul is in a time of winter and stormy experiences. *“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.”* He gently woos the soul with His drawing power: *“Arise, My love, My fair one, and come away”* (Song 1:13).

It is the experience of every true believer that at times his soul is brought before the throne of grace by the breathing of the Holy Spirit. This too, is a **drawing** to Him. *“By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth: I sought Him, but I found Him not”* (Song 2:1). How often a believer has attempted to pray and failed. The man-made “Christian” can pray at will, but not so the tried child of God! The living child has a desire to commune with God and finds his inability disturbing. Here is how some attempt to find Him when He withdraws Himself: *“I will rise now, and go about the city in the streets, and in the broad ways I will seek Him whom My soul loveth”* (Song 2:2).

Do you suppose the Lord will be found in the **broad way** *“that leadeth to destruction”*? Most think so. That word “way” in the text *“broad is the way that leadeth to destruction,”* in the Greek is *hodos*, and means “progress,” or “progressive.” The modern religions pride themselves for being progressive, but it is the broad way that leads to destruction. No, the soul cannot find Christ there! *“I sought Him, but I found Him not”* (*ibid.*). Christ would not set up His church in the earth, and give His blessing to her enemies.

Let one leave the broad way and then we can read: *“It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found Him whom my soul loveth: I held Him, and would not let Him go”* (Song 3:4). Is this not love? *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if you do whatsoever I command you.”* As if to say, “If you do not pick and choose what you will obey.” God’s children love Him, and obedience is a sign of this love. Why else would one be baptized and suffer the reproach of the Church? Why else would one commune and wash one another’s feet? Why else *“go beside the shepherds’ tents”* to feed? Is loving His church, His ordinances, His doctrine, His commandments too grievous to bear for one who loves Him so ardently?

Being **drawn** to Christ might be a test of one’s affections. *“I sleep, but my heart waketh: It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to Me, My sister, My love, My dove, My undefiled: for My head is filled with dew, and My locks with drops of the night”* (Song 5:2). Have you ever been so busy that when you felt a heart to pray did not do so? While busy, have you thought to read the Bible, yet did not? Is it possible for the saints to have such experiences? Well, read this: *“I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?”* Rather busy, would you not say? In this passage, the Lord reached through the door-latch hole to open it anyway, and here follows a way He **draws** one to Himself:

*“My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels [compassions] were moved for Him. I rose up to open to My Beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweetsmelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to My Beloved; but my Beloved had withdrawn Himself, and WAS GONE”* (Song 5:6). So now you will pray! So now you have time to meditate on His name! And now, He is **gone!** Not a whimpering prayer rises from your heart! The Holy Book is as a sealed book – it does not speak a comforting word to you! You realize you do not have a “free will” in the matter of divine worship. He has **withdrawn Himself. He is GONE!** But, is this not a method to **draw** one to Him? “In absence, the heart grows fonder” someone has said. If you read the remaining verses of this Gospel Love

epic, from Songs 5:6 to 6:9, you can see how God **draws** His children to seek Him. “*I sought Him, but I could not find Him; I called Him, but He gave me no answer*” (verse 6).

In the text, the watchmen of the city, representing the ministers of man-made religion were of no help at all in find the Lord’s felt presence. The soul’s seeking Him brought inquiries from others who this was who was so important to her, and the soul’s description of Him by means of doctrine, led her to this *exclamation*: “*His mouth is most sweet: yea, He is altogether lovely. This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem*” (Song 5:16). As soon as she has described him, no doubt she has found Him! When others wish to know where He is, she now is able to tell them (Song 6:1-3).

When the Lord **draws** one of His elect to Himself, it is with such lovingkindness that He owns that one as His. “*My dove, My undefiled is but one; she is the choice one of her that bear her. The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines [corn-grinders—servant girls], and they praised her.*” There are times, when blessed with a sense of His love that a child of grace can honestly say: “*I am my Beloved’s, and His desire is toward me*” (Song 7:10). If His desire is NOT towards one, then surely that one would never be **drawn**. God **draws** those that are given to Christ in divine election, and have been *predestinated to an inheritance undefiled and that fadeth not away*, reserved in heaven for them.

It is true that no man can come to Christ except it be **given to them** of the Father; or be **drawn** by the Father to Him. But, O how precious such words of grace are to those that are drawn with the cords of everlasting love! May God bless your hearts to seek Him too?

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## OBSERVATIONS ON SOME OF THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

### I. THE SELF-EXISTENCE OF GOD

*...In the beginning God...(Genesis 1.1)*

**T**he first words of the first book of the Bible, the book of beginnings or origins, is our text above; and yet it does not tell us of anything about the Creator, but simply affirms his existence. The book of Genesis states as fact the presence and power of the only self-existent being in the universe. To the mind of the heaven born child of grace, God has always been, and beyond that there is no question.

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God. Thus it is by faith that we accept what the Bible states as factual truth without reservation, that Jehovah is the supreme being in the universe, who has always existed (Exodus 3.14), uncreated, and yet is the creator of all things. In Exodus we first learn that the personal name of God is Jehovah and that it seems to be synonymous with I AM. Jesus tells the unbelieving Pharisees in John 8.58 that “before Abraham was I am.” Notice that he said not “I was” but “I am.” Here Jesus affirms himself as God by making use of the name given to Moses so long ago to express the eternal existence of Jehovah.

This doctrine is further expressed in Psalm 90.2: “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even *from everlasting to everlasting*, thou art God.” How beautiful and powerful this verse is to those who are blessed from above to see and embrace the eternity of our God, to be convinced from time to time, by the power of the Holy Spirit, that he has always been and shall always be, and he that keepeth Israel never sleeps nor slumbers.

What comfort this brings us in the midst of the afflictions of life that, although everything seems to change around us, The Ancient of Ages is unchangeable and stands as a Rock for his people. Isaiah 45.5: “I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me.” The eternal, Immutable God, Almighty, all wise, and complete in knowledge and understanding, whose presence fills heaven and earth and all places

seen and unseen, stands forever as the strength of his chosen and foreknown people. There is none other that we may look to for help in time of need or to sustain us through all our trials.

John 8.28: "For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." The eternal life that the children of God receive when they are quickened comes directly from the Godhead. The life that is in the Son is what is imparted to the children of grace at the new birth. This life is what sustains us and shall last even into eternity. 1 John 5.11 says, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

The religious world speaks of *falling from grace*, which term they use incorrectly. There can be no such thing when our very life is in Christ and founded upon the eternal purpose of God himself. The purpose of God is as eternal and immutable as he is himself and thus can never be frustrated nor defeated. Colossians 3.4: "When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." This is the work of our eternal, self-existent, unchangeable God and not our own. What peace we receive when this is revealed to our understanding by the Spirit of Holiness.

Let us hear the completion of this matter. Hebrews 1.10-12: "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands: they shall perish; but thou remainest; and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

## II. THE WILL OF GOD

Through the centuries, it has been held as truth that the will of God is the first cause of all things which come to pass. In this present modern age, only the Old School Predestinarian Baptists uphold this doctrine in its entirety.

This doctrine is termed the Absolute Predestination of All Things. This name is used to clarify beyond any shadow of a doubt that the eternal will of God embraces totally, 100%, unconditionally, every creature and event that has existed or ever will exist.

It has been declared by the soundest and most able of all the saints of God through all the ages of time,

that the will of God is the first and supreme cause of all causes. "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (Revelation 4.11)." "But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased (Psalm 115.3)." "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou (Daniel 4.35)?" "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places (Psalm 135.6)." "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Ephesians 1.11)." Thus it is proven, not only by the testimony of man, which must be accepted with caution, but the witness of the Scripture of eternal truth.

Recently this writer received a letter from a conditional (or "limited") Primitive Baptist group and minister, saying that they "did not favor nor fellowship this doctrine." I find this to be very sad coming from a group calling themselves Primitive Baptists. This type of statement is currently very common coming from among the moderate, progressive "Primitives" these days. Unless the Lord intervenes, they will continue in error and darkness that grows darker still as time goes by.

"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15.18)." Jehovah knew from all eternity, not only what he would do, but what he should will others to do and what events he should will to take place in time. This foreknowledge of God is absolutely unconditional and certain; consequently that which God knows shall without a doubt come to pass.

Being unconditional, this knowledge (and therefore the works of the Almighty) is not based on anything that God views as future, but all things take place by his divine purpose and determination. In other words, God knows everything because he has ordained everything.

For some this may be too harsh; however, the truth is best expressed plainly so no doubts or misunderstandings may enter. Many may quibble over terminology, such as, "efficient decrees" or "permissive decrees," or even the dreaded "you're making God the author of sin," but when it's all said and done, nothing may be traced higher than the will of God as the origin of all things.

A short time ago, following a war of words between this writer and a Conditionalist, an eleven-year-old boy expressed to his daddy, "How can God know anything that he didn't predestinate? That's pretty simple to me Dad." "I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes (Matthew 11.25-26)." Surely where proud ministers are blind the Lord has made little children to see.

Much has been made in the area of speculation and human reasoning, by men in the past and present, concerning the decrees of Jehovah in eternity. It is folly to attempt to enter into the counsels of eternity and to darken with words the purposes of Jehovah, or to be wise above what is written. The Scriptures of eternal truth express all that is sufficient for finite man to know concerning the triune God and his works.

To vainly speculate beyond this is not only foolish, but dangerous; and, more often than not, it is the source of heresies and many false doctrines. The revealed will of God, as providentially delivered to us through the centuries down to this very hour, is the only certain rule of faith, practice, and conduct that the subjects of grace, under the illumination of the Holy Spirit, should ever require. To try to proceed further than this is folly.

Finally, it must be stated that the eternal, unchangeable will of God is servant to none. Far be it for lowly worms of the dust to dictate to or question the righteous decrees of the great I AM.

His holy, omnipotent will is the supreme rule of all things. He did not will things because they were right, but they are right because he alone wills them. A wise man of the past once wrote, "God has no motive for what he does [other] than his own will; which will is so far from being unrighteous, that it is justice itself."

May the Spirit of God open to the minds and hearts of his people these powerful truths, that they may be comforted through all their trials and afflictions and that out of the depths of the furnace, they may look to the three-in-one God for every supply.

### III. THE UNCHANGING GOD

*I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed (Malachi 3.3).*

God is immutable or unchanging; if he were not he would not be God, but would be imperfect. As mentioned earlier Jehovah is the one absolute, eternal, all-powerful, being in the universe. It should almost go without saying, that he never has, nor ever will be any different than he always has been. The preceding text is one of many that the scriptures of truth record concerning this fundamental truth.

Equally evident should be the fact, that if God were to change, it must be a change either for better, or for the worse. If for the better, it would infer that there was something lacking in his perfection; if for the worse, then the only conclusion would be that he is no longer as perfect as he once had been. "...with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning...(James 1.17)." How comforting to the ones who have been made to feel their inherent weakness and utter impotence before the Most High, to realize that, *their* heavenly Father, and *their* blessed Redeemer, has from everlasting set his affections upon them, to engage all his mighty power to guide them through this present evil world, and to eventually deliver them to glory. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever (Hebrews 13.8)."

It follows that, as God is eternal and immutable, that his purposes as made by him are also immovable and concrete. "I the Lord have spoken it: it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent...(Ezekiel 24.14)." God has decreed in himself all things that come to pass, without exception; reason as we may, the Bible agrees with this statement of faith. The mighty Jehovah's decrees concerning creation, providence, and grace, shall all be fulfilled by his own omnipotent, immutable hand. "But he is of one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth (Job 23.13)." None of man's works, either what might be called good, or evil, can alter the word that has gone out of his mouth. He shall have his way no matter what the sin darkened minds of puny men may believe, or contrive. "If ye believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself (2 Timothy 2.13)." The determinate counsel embracing the destiny of God's elect likewise cannot be frustrated by anything or anyone, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities,

nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8.38, 39)."

Many have made the argument that the Bible states in various places that God is said to repent, or perhaps, to change his mind. However a correct understanding in the light of the absolute sovereignty of the triune God, reveals that the result of an event found on the pages of holy writ is always in accordance with the doctrine of the immutability of Jehovah. Notice the case of Jonah's command to preach to the Ninevites: "...yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown...(Jonah 2.4)." Bidden to preach to this wicked city by the Lord because their sin had come up before him, the result was that all of Nineveh repented, and they were delivered of the Lord. Evidently, God made use of the prophet Jonah to bring this people to a providential deliverance (at least at this time) from the punishment for their wickedness. This is a demonstration of God's providential workings, which in times past has been called, by men much wiser than this writer, "secondary causes," designed and used by God, and not by man, to accomplish his purposes.

Another example from Scripture, which is often used by the enemies of God's sovereignty, is the case of Hezekiah, "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live (2 Kings 20.1)."

Providentially the king was afflicted, and so he was brought by his illness, and the proclamation of the prophet, to turn to the Lord in prayer. The end result displays the eternal will of Jehovah that he live for fifteen more years. That which comes to pass is always the demonstration of God's eternal purposes taking place in time, as he constantly works out his decrees.

Thus, it is the testimony of Scripture to the finite mind of man, that Jehovah is absolute in all his perfections. His eternal counsels never fail to bring about the fulfillment of his never changing will. Even if his people should doubt, it doesn't affect the eternal purpose of their blessed Saviour, who, having declared the end from the beginning, shall also do all his pleasure.

#### IV. THE OMNIPOTENT GOD

*...Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth...(Revelation 19.6).*

How alien and strange the doctrine of omnipotence must seem to the religionists of this world. Those who trust in their much professed free-will pay only lip service to this doctrine so vital to the faith of God's elect. Never having experienced the evidence of the Lord's almighty power working in their lives, to bless, deliver, and preserve them; they may profess to know and understand it, but they know not of what they speak. Only the Holy Spirit's operations in the daily lives of the saints can shed light upon this wonderful attribute of the three-in-one God.

When, by grace, the Christian is brought to an experimental knowledge of his total impotence before God, he finds himself condemned by the righteous law of God and sees no hope but in God his Saviour. The position in which he finds himself, and the deliverance from it, both are from the Almighty. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom...(Psalm 111.10)." Fear toward God is best described as a holy reverence for our heavenly Father, and this is produced by an understanding of his supreme power. Likewise, this same knowledge, when revealed from heaven to the child of grace, imparts a true sense of humility that no mere intellectual understanding can achieve. Jehovah's omnipotence then, is the cause of every grace produced in the elect (see Galatians 5.22-23). Equally true is the fact that if he hides his presence from his children, then the works of the flesh become evident and active. Therefore, the saints can do nothing apart from the sovereign will of Jehovah. "...for thou also hast wrought all our works in us (Isaiah 26.12)." Certainly, to the spiritually alive child of God, this doctrine is of the utmost importance to the perception of a thrice holy God.

The result of this experimental knowledge, that the Lord is absolute in all his perfections, is a genuine humility, a childlike trust in God in every circumstance. A total giving up of themselves, when this knowledge is impressed upon them by the Spirit of Truth, brings the saints into a state of blessed communion that no false work of the flesh can ever achieve. In seasons such as these, the children of the covenant can truly be still and know that their God is sitting upon his throne (see Psalm 46.10), and all

things are under his sovereign government. “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 5.20);”

This doctrine of the eternal attributes of Jehovah God is vital in a correct understanding of what the Bible teaches upon the wonderful theme of salvation by sovereign, unconditional, free grace. It is only by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, that the Christian can comprehend any of the perfections of the Godhead. This holy, revealing light must not only shine upon the pages of holy writ, but it must come into the soul to give a living knowledge that agrees with what scripture teaches on this important subject. May God grant to his children, access to his throne of grace, that his children may better understand these deep things. Even so, as the Lord wills.

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## ISRAEL

*Brother Morris, We find in Romans 9.27 “a remnant of Israel shall be saved,” Romans 9.6, “not all are Israel which are of Israel,” Romans 11.26, “all Israel shall be saved.” When led, please give your views on (1) National Israel, (2) the tribes of Israel, (3) Elect Israel, (4) The Jews. —H., Texas*

### Introductory Remarks

The subject of the nation of Israel and the Jews is without doubt surrounded with controversy. There are many biblical expositors and writers who believe the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob forever finished His dealings with that nation when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Roman legions in AD 70. Many others believe the Lord has a future for the nation of Israel, citing both prophetic Scripture and current developments in the mid-east as supporting evidence.

Compounding the disagreements on Israel are arguments about dispensationalism and *hyper*-dispensationalism, Zionism, international secular politics, the doctrine of the second coming of Christ

and the “last days,” and other doctrinal positions interwoven, pro and con, throughout the debates.

It is no casual or easy task Brother H. has set before us. In expressing our opinion on this or on any biblical subject, we dare not go elsewhere other than to the sacred Scriptures as our source of information. We dare not willingly and knowingly go beyond what the Bible says on the subject, nor would we dare willfully, deliberately, stop short of divine revelation merely because we perceive our views are perhaps not among the most popular.

Since everyone professing Christianity claims they abide only by “Thus saith the Lord,” and there yet remains much contradiction and disagreement between the various schools of thought on the subject of *Israel*, each earnest reader must seriously compare spiritual things with spiritual for himself or herself, and, by the grace of God, prayerfully hope to be brought by the Holy Spirit to the right conclusions.

With these considerations in mind, we will approach Brother H’s question under these headings: I. National Israel and the twelve tribes; II. The Jews; III. Elect or “Spiritual” Israel. We will also need to look into problems involved in interpreting the Scriptures, and before we are done, we should look in detail at Romans, chapters 9 through 11.

### I. NATIONAL ISRAEL AND THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

The *tribes* of Israel and *national* Israel are historically the same. Israel as a nation traces its origin back, not merely to the man named Israel, but to Abraham the Hebrew (Genesis 14.13). The term *Hebrew* has a double meaning. First, it is derived from the name of Eber (Genesis 11.14), a direct ancestor of Abraham; and, second, the name Eber itself is derived from a word meaning *the east, a region across, or one who has crossed over*. Usually this *crossing over* seems to imply one who has come from the east of the Jordan River, as Abraham did.

The Lord God made certain unconditional promises to Abraham. There are primarily two of these gracious promises that we will consider:

(1) **The Lord gave the land of Canaan** to Abraham and to his descendants by an everlasting, unconditional covenant: “And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, 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** (Genesis 13.14f).” “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**: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites. (Genesis 15.18ff).” “And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, **for an everlasting possession**; and I will be their God (Genesis 17.8).”

God passed His promise to Abraham on to Isaac. “And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. And the LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and **unto thy seed, I will give all these countries**, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed (Genesis 26.1-4).”

At Bethel, God reiterated to Jacob His promise to Abraham and Isaac: “I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: **the land** whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of (Genesis 28.13-15).”

(2) **The Lord said that the promised Seed, the Messiah, the Christ of God**, would be born of Abraham’s offspring through Isaac: “And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my

covenant with him for **an everlasting covenant**, and with **his seed** after him (Genesis 17.19).” “And said, 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 (Genesis 22.17f).”

The inspired record says, “thy seed... **his...**,” a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, as Paul interpreted it to the Galatians: “Now to Abraham and **his seed** were the promises made. He saith not, And to **seeds**, as of many; but as of one, And to **thy seed, which is Christ** (Galatians 3.16).”

God renewed this promise to Jacob at His appearance to him at Bethel: “...in thee and in **thy seed** shall all the families of the earth be blessed (Genesis 28.14).”

Although God put certain stipulations on Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, such as the covenant of circumcision, the direction to remain in the promised land, and the legal covenant given to them through Moses, *neither promise, the land or the Seed, was conditioned upon their obedience*. God’s promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their natural offspring were entirely gracious, free, unconditional, and everlasting.

Here, based upon the unchangeable veracity of God, certain principles obtain:

A. If any one of God’s unconditional promises could fail or be annulled, then any other of His promises could. In other words, we specifically argue: If God could break His promise to give the promised land to national Israel unconditionally and forever, He could have as easily broken His promise that the Messiah, the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ would be born of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and David after the flesh. If not, why not? It is the same God who promised both. The one was as unconditional and gracious as the other.

B. If God’s unconditional promises to Abraham could be annulled, then His promises to the church in general and to each of His elect as particular individuals could also be annulled. Again we ask, if not, why not? It is the same God who promised both, we repeat; the one promise was as unconditional and gracious as the other.

C. Since God promised the land of Canaan to national Israel by an everlasting, unconditional covenant, then they shall indeed occupy that land so long as the nation of Israel exists.

The fact that Israel did not occupy the promised land from AD 70 until the twentieth century AD does not at all invalidate this principle. God had a reason for their dispersal (discussed by Paul in Romans 9-11), just as He has a reason for His gathering them again to the promised land in our day. The facts that the nation of Israel was reestablished over fifty years ago, and that the Promised Land has been continually inhabited by the Israelites since then, are all the more proof of this principle.

### The Twelve Tribes of Israel

These promises, of both the holy promised land and the holy promised Seed (the Lord Jesus Christ), God perpetuated by covenant to Abraham's son **Isaac** and to Isaac's son **Jacob**, whose name the Lord changed to **Israel**. "...Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs (Acts 7.8)."

Jacob/Israel had a small harem consisting of two wives, Leah and Rachel, and two concubines, Bilhah and Zilpah. By these four women he fathered twelve sons. Their names were **Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah**, all of Leah; **Dan** and **Naphtali**, both of Bilhah; **Gad** and **Asher**, of Zilpah; **Issachar** and **Zebulun**, also of Leah; and **Joseph** and **Benjamin** of Rachel.

Each of these twelve boys grew to manhood, married, fathered children, and raised families of their own. As these twelve families continued to multiply, they eventually grew in number to become **the twelve tribes of Israel**.

The Lord later modified this tribal arrangement somewhat.

First, He set apart the tribe of **Levi** to be the priests who would minister (1) in the tabernacle worship while the first tabernacle was still standing (and later in the temple at Jerusalem); and (2) in the cities of refuge, and generally throughout the promised land.

The tribe of Levi did not receive a territory allotted to them as did the other tribes. God's removing Levi in this manner left eleven tribes to

inherit the promised land when they entered it in the time of Joshua.

Second, then, to replace the missing tribe of Levi, Joseph's two sons, **Ephraim** and **Manasseh**, were each appointed to become a full tribe, thereby restoring the number of tribes to twelve.

## II. THE JEWS

The term *Jew* comes from the name of **Judah**, as from both the man Judah's name and also from the territory his descendants eventually occupied, which was known as "the land of Judah" (Ruth 1.7, *et al*). Judah, who was the fourth son of Jacob by Leah, was the progenitor of the kingly tribe through which king David came. In the fullness of time, in accord with the Lord's promises, Jesus the Christ was born of this Abrahamic-Davidic line (Matthew 1.1-16; Romans 1.3; and Galatians 3.16 to 4.4).

**Jerusalem:** High in the hills of the land of Canaan, during the almost 1,000 years from the time of Abraham to the time of David, this impregnable fortress-city remained under the control of the Jebusites, one of the original Canaanite tribes. In Abraham's day it was called **Salem** (Genesis 14.18). Salem was later called **Jebu-Salem**, or Salem of the **Jebusites**. Through corruption of pronunciation and dialects down through the centuries, the city came to be called **Jeru-Salem**, or Jerusalem, as it is known to this day. Jerusalem was eventually conquered by David's armies. David then made his home on Mount Zion, a high region in the southwest part of the city.

The first time the Bible records the use of the word *Jews* is in 2 Kings 16.6, when "...Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drave **the Jews** from Elath...." Evidently this was a catchall term used by the Syrians and other Gentiles generally referring to the nation of Israel.

Because of (1) king David's prominence, (2) David's and Solomon's establishing the spiritual and political capital of Israel in Jerusalem, (3) the return of the exiles under Ezra and Nehemiah to Judah and Jerusalem, and (4) these distinctions' prevailing even unto the time of Christ, the term *Jew* continued to be a synonym for national Israel and does so to this day. Christ and Paul so used the term:

1. **Christ so used the word "Jew":** We often hear quoted, "**Salvation is of the Lord,**" and rightly so; but we rarely hear quoted what the Lord said to

the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well: "**Salvation is of the Jews** (John 4.22)." He certainly did not mean salvation was to be found in the perverted religion, supposedly based on the law of Moses, of those Pharisaical Jews who went about to kill Him (John 5.18, 7.1). The Lord Jesus Christ meant that salvation proceeds not from Samaria or from any other nation in the world, other than from **Judah**, as was prophesied from Genesis 49.10 on: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto Him [Shiloh] shall the gathering of the people be."

Shiloh means *to be tranquil, i.e. secure or successful: be happy, prosper, be in safety* (Strong's Concordance). This is everywhere understood to be a prophecy of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was through Judah's tribe that Shiloh, the promised Messiah, the Christ, would come, bringing salvation.

The woman, in a feeble attempt to display her knowledge of religion to Him, had earlier said (verse 20), "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."

When He said, "Salvation is of the Jews," etc., she grasped His meaning quickly. "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things."

Salvation proceeds from the Messiah, born after the flesh into the tribe of Judah. By telling her, "Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," He anticipated (1) the future destruction of the city of Jerusalem in AD 70; (2) the abolition of the Levitical sacrificial system at the temple; (3) the gospel's going to all nations of the earth; and, (4) spiritual worship in every nation, instead of a religion centered around fleshly ordinances in Jerusalem's temple. He further explained, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

2. **Paul also used the word "Jew" to mean all Israel:** "What advantage then hath **the Jew**? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the

oracles of God (Romans 3.1f)." Circumcision and the oracles of God were not committed *only* to the tribe of Judah, of course, but to all of national Israel. Often in Paul's writings, he clearly uses "Jew" as a euphemism for the entire nation of Israel.

### III. ELECT OR "SPIRITUAL" ISRAEL

There should be no doubt that "spiritual Israel" and "spiritual Jews" are valid terms that apply to all of God's elect, whether they come from among the Israelites or from among the Gentiles. These are the children of God, His elect family of all ages and nations, Jew and Gentile, *spiritual Israel* or *spiritual Jews*.

Flesh and blood parentage or racial descent has nothing to do with being a spiritual Israelite. On the one hand, then,

(1) there are national Israelites who are *not* spiritual Israelites, or elect; but there are also national Israelites who *are* spiritual Israelites or children of God;

(2) there are national Jews who are *not* spiritual Jews, but there are also national Jews who *are* spiritual Jews. On the other hand,

(3) there are elect Gentiles who *are* classed as spiritual Jews and spiritual Israelites. For completeness' sake, we add,

(4) there are Gentiles who are neither spiritual Jews nor spiritual Israelites.

The sum of the matter is, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature (Galatians 6.15)." "...ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all (Colossians 3.9ff)."

This "spiritual Israel" since the time of Christ and His apostles is what we know as **the church**. It is this writer's understanding that all of God's elect, from Adam to the end of time as we know it, are in the body of Christ. The term *church* in this (spiritual) sense embraces all of God's children in this and all previous ages. "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 8.11)." In the *New Testament*

sense, however, the church is primarily associated with the Gentile nations: “Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name (Acts 15.14).”

### Understanding Israel’s Future

Problems in understanding the future of national Israel develop from at least two errors: when anyone

(a) applies *all* Old Testament references to Israel as *only* types, figures, or prophecies of the church, or

(b) ignores *some* Old Testament references to Israel, declining to apply them to the church consistently.

The former error, (a), that of exclusively applying Old Testament passages in some “spiritual understanding” to the church, is too often motivated by a hasty rejection of anything that suggests dispensationalism. This eventually leads to the error that God has no future in store for national Israel. Romans 9 through 11, however, shows that after “the fulness of the Gentiles be come in (Romans 11.25)” (a reference to the present age of the church), “all Israel shall be saved” (verse 26, one of the texts our brother asks about, to be discussed later).

The key word in this regard is **until**, verse 25: “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.” Ignorance of this mystery, Paul says, leads to being “wise in your own conceits” or wise in yourselves; that is, the conceit of self-wisdom, as opposed to that wisdom which only proceeds from God.

**Until** is a *timely* word, a word here indicating that an end of the blindness of national Israel is to come. “**Until** the fulness of the Gentiles be come in” tells us that in God’s predestinated purpose, the *fulness* of the Gentiles shall come in, and that marks the end of the period called “the *times* of the Gentiles.” Then, the long age of blindness that has happened in part to Israel will also have an end—or else the word **until** signifies absolutely nothing.

The second error, (b), that of ignoring *some* Old Testament references to Israel, springs in part from the fact that some expositors, bent on “spiritually” applying all (or nearly all) Old Testament history and prophecies to the New Testament church, cannot reconcile in their own minds the judgments and the

punishments upon Old Testament Israel with the New Covenant promises of grace to the church.

We cite only one example here, that of the abandoned baby in Ezekiel 16. [*Please see Editor’s Note on page 17.*] All who believe in God’s sovereign grace rejoice to hear the first fourteen verses applied to the church. But then, *for the next forty-five verses*, from verses 15 through 59, we find a vast passage practically no one seems to want to apply to the church—and rightly so, because IT SHOULD NOT BE SO APPLIED! But then, some will yet pick up the thread dropped at verse 14 and apply the gracious verses 60-63 to the church again.

Why would free grace preachers gingerly avoid nearly three-fourths of this chapter? Because in so doing, we hope to emphasize free, sovereign mercy and grace as it is in Christ Jesus, which is most right and commendable. Yet, in order to apply this text to the New Covenant church, many feel they must ignore the lengthy judgments and warnings, as *they truly do not apply to the church or harmonize with the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Consider:

“But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was. Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and of my silver, which I had given thee, and madest to thyself images of men, and didst commit whoredom with them...Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them (verses 15ff)?”

How does one apply such words to *the gospel church*? By saying it is “Rome”? Fine, and well. The description fits the harlot Rome well enough; but *Rome is no part of the virgin bride of Christ*; so that “application” doesn’t really fit the child described in verses 1-14.

Remember, Jehovah God gave new life to this beloved orphan, and He washed, cleansed, bejeweled, clothed, fed, raised, *and married* her! He did not do any of this for the apostates in Rome or for any other false church. But He did do it for Israel.

“And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth,

when thou wast naked and bare, and wast polluted in thy blood (verse 22).” Yes, this is still the abandoned baby of verses 1-14. “And it came to pass after all thy wickedness (woe, woe unto thee! saith the Lord God).”

“Thou hast built thy high place at every head of the way...and hast opened thy feet to every one that passed by, and multiplied thy whoredoms. Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians...and hast increased thy whoredoms, to provoke me to anger... Thou hast played the whore also with the Assyrians, because thou wast unsatiable; yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet couldest not be satisfied. Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith....the work of an imperious whorish woman... and hast not been as an harlot, in that thou scornest hire; But as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her husband! They give gifts to all whores: but thou givest thy gifts to all thy lovers, and hirest them, that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom....”

And on it goes, and we have not yet gotten to the judgments: “They shall also bring up a company against thee, and they shall stone thee with stones, and thrust thee through with their swords. And they shall burn thine houses with fire, and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women: and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.”

Shall we apply this passage “figuratively” to the false church? Perhaps. Mystery Babylon will yet be so destroyed. Or we might leave it to the Arminians to apply to their “unsaved,” and to the Conditionalists to apply to their “unfaithful children of God.” However we approach this text, it is not at all meant for the New Testament church, other than for exactly what Paul said: “Now all these things happened unto them [national Israel] for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world [Greek *aionon*, ages] are come (1 Corinthians 10.11).” “All scripture [including these Old Testament passages] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Timothy 3.16f).”

To make of this a “spiritual application” to the true church of Jesus Christ, one must totally disregard the basic facts of whom and to whom this chapter is **primarily** written: national Israel, represented by her capital city Jerusalem, under the Old covenant. Look again at verse 1:

“Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause **Jerusalem** to know her abominations, and say, Thus saith the Lord God unto **Jerusalem**; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite,” etc. There is no way the church, as “spiritual” Jerusalem, the body of Christ, can rightly be said to be born of an Amorite father and a Hittite mother, for God is their Father and “Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all (Galatians 4.26).”

Further: If we insist on spiritualizing Jerusalem in such a chapter, then we must also spiritualize all the other cities and countries round about. Egypt? That, most agree, is a type of the world. Then what “spiritual application” shall we make of the others—the Hittite mother, the Amorite father, the elder sister Samaria, and the girls: Sodom, Syria, the Philistines, and all their daughters? These, too, must all fit in, somewhere. Who or what does each of them “spiritually” represent?

However, when one is given to see that Ezekiel plainly wrote and preached this passage to the earthly, *literal* Jerusalem of his own day, and not about the New Testament church as the “spiritual” or “figurative” Jerusalem, then all, including verses 15-59, falls into place.

But then, admitting this is the Old Testament Jerusalem of Ezekiel’s day, just exactly as he says, then the closing verses (60-63) show that the same old Jerusalem shall be restored, not with a temporal or conditional covenant, but with an everlasting covenant based on the **I wills** and the **ye shalls** of infinite grace: “**I will** remember my covenant with thee in the days of thy youth, and **I will** establish unto thee an **everlasting covenant**...Then **thou shalt** remember thy ways, and be ashamed...**I will** establish my covenant with thee; and **thou shalt** know that **I am** the Lord: That thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.”

A related third error that arises from the first two is (c) the Conditionalists' blind insistence that the Old Testament's record of God's **conditional Law covenant with Old Testament Israel** is to be carried over and applied to the New Testament church. Thereby, in their mind, the Law-works system overrides and nullifies **the unconditional New Covenant of grace in Christ Jesus**. The Arminian-Conditionalists are only too eager to misuse texts like Ezekiel 16.15-59 to misapply their do-right-or-else arguments to the church. They have a relatively easy time reconciling the judgments that fell on Israel with the disobedience, chastisements, punishments, and rewards they seem to see everywhere they look. As theirs is a works system of earning blessings and avoiding punishments, entirely grounded in fleshly effort and will-worship, they can comprehend no other kind of system. Least of all do they understand a God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, who uses Israel as a vast object-lesson for the church, and who will at last save that nation by the same free grace that saves the Gentiles.

The biblical facts are, (1) "God has **not** cast away His people which He foreknew (Romans 11.1-2)"; (2) the foreknown people in this case is the earthly Israel; and, (3) as Paul indicates, God has predestinated that nation's future restoration and salvation. Whether he is a Conditionalist or not, should the one who "spiritualizes" the Bible have to unavoidably face these facts, he would have to reevaluate his "spiritual applications" of a major portion of the Scriptures.

### **The Elect Are Spiritual Israel, Spiritual Jews**

"They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. (John 8.39)." Jesus was speaking here directly to natural, flesh-and-blood descendents of Abraham.

This text alone, if there were no other, shows there is a *spiritual application* of these things—Israel, Jews, children of Abraham—and being a spiritual son of Abraham, which is the equivalent of being a child of God, has nothing to do with one's flesh and blood descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But there are many other texts. The following six are but a representative few:

1. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God (Romans 2.28f)."

Here, Paul shows that neither (a) flesh-and-blood descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel nor (b) the rite of circumcision applied to a Jew or a Gentile proselyte is what makes a person a Jew in the covenant sense. Circumcision of the heart I understand to be when the Lord removes the hard and stony heart and implants a feeling heart: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36.26)." (This text in Ezekiel, however, while embraced in the New Covenant, is also a promise to God's elect within national Israel as well as a prophecy yet to be fulfilled. Its context—say all of chapters 36 through 39—makes this plain.)

2. "... For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9.6-8)."

3. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3.28f)." And this was written to believers of *Gentile* birth throughout the region of Galatia.

4. "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise (Galatians 4.28)." Isaac was born supernaturally of a ninety-year-old woman, an impossibility according to all known laws of nature. He was born as an impossibility according to the flesh, as the fulfillment of a gracious, unconditional, covenant promise to Abraham. Typified by Isaac, the Gentile elect are the spiritual children of God, supernaturally born, or born from above, an impossibility according to the flesh, in fulfillment of His gracious, unconditional covenant promise to Christ.

5. "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have

no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3.3).” Spiritual Israel, then, whether born of Israelite or of Gentile blood, is just that: spiritual. The elect of God, i.e., the spiritual circumcision, whether Jew, Israelite, or Gentile, have these three distinguishing marks:

- They all worship God in the spirit,
- They all rejoice in Christ Jesus, and,
- They have no confidence in the flesh.

Also, these saints have a new heart and a new birth, which is “born, not of blood [i.e., not of any particular race], nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1.13).”

6. “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God (Galatians 6.15-16).”

These verses are part of Paul’s letter to the churches of Galatia, written to Gentile churches. His blessing on the Israel of God is directed to those who were born Gentiles. Yet, pronounced as a blessing upon the Israel of God, it seems clear he means *spiritual Israel*, as defined in the above verses. In this case, “spiritual Israel” is the Gentile churches in the region of Galatia.

### SUMMARY

As this writer sees it, there is a *literal, earthly nation* of Israel, one race out of the many of the Adamic race, chosen by God’s sovereign grace, descended in twelve tribes from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob/Israel. One of these tribes, Judah, was made so prominent in God’s providence that its name, shortened to *Jew*, has become synonymous with the nation.

There is also a *spiritual* Israel, the church, typified in some ways by the earthly nation; but being spiritual, it has nothing to do with racial origin or fleshly birth, because the Lord chose its members out of every kindred, tribe, and tongue of the Adamic race. This spiritual Israel, God’s elect, will ultimately sit down in the kingdom of Christ with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the ancient progenitors of national Israel.

The kingdom of Christ, known also as the kingdom of God (Ephesians 5.5, John 3.3-5), is the merging of both the literal and the spiritual king-

doms; the earthly and the heavenly kingdoms; the timely (past, present, and future) and the eternal.

Nowhere does the Bible suggest that the spiritual kingdom has superceded the earthly kingdom. Our God is the God of all levels, not just the spiritual. He indeed does have a spiritual kingdom, but this fact must not blind us to the fact that He still has an earthly people with a predestined future, national Israel, to whom He has sworn in ages past that He will never forget or forsake.

In answer to Brother H.’s question and request, such are my views thus far on this, one of the deepest and most vital, yet seldom discussed, of biblical subjects. If the reader’s conclusions are different from the ones to which I have been led, if not deceived, and I hope by the Spirit of Christ, then at least may we be blessed to be charitable in those differences. Above all else, may we be blessed to cleave close to God’s revelation in His written word as our sole authority in all doctrine and understanding of spiritual truths.

If the Lord has so willed, we hope soon to take up Brother H.’s citations from Romans (Romans 9.27, “a remnant of Israel shall be saved”; Romans 9.6, “not all are Israel which are of Israel”; Romans 11.26, “all Israel shall be saved”) in a future article on Romans 9 through 11.

—Elder C. C. Morris

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**EDITOR’S NOTE:** My extended remarks about Ezekiel 16 (on pages 14-15) were written *before seeing* Elder Phillips’ article and his comments on page 3, where he uses Ezekiel 16.5, 6, and 8 as a support text. A careful reading of both articles will show there is no contradiction or criticism intended. I heartily endorse Elder Phillips’ article, his use of this text as he uses it, and the conclusions he draws from it. While in the stand, I have often used, or tried to use, Ezekiel 16.1-14 exactly as he does in his article, believing this is one of the most beautiful passages in the Bible, accurately describing as it does the salvation Christ has provided for His own, whether Jew or Gentile, Old or New Covenant.

—Editor

## ELDER TROTT'S "SELECT WORKS" ANNOUNCED AGAIN

As the chief butler said to Pharaoh, "I do remember my faults this day (Genesis 41.9)." And, as another has said, "... mine own vineyard have I not kept (Song 1.6)."

We at *The Remnant* are dedicated to making sound, historic books and writings available to you, our readers. Occasionally, there are oversights, and I have made a rather big one.

This excellent collection of Elder Trott's writings, *The Select Works of Elder Samuel Trott, from 1832 to 1862*, was compiled by *Welsh Tract Publications* and released in the latter half of 1999.

Then, came my blunder. You see, shortly after that, we announced several other books in rapid succession, and I didn't keep up with things: We advertised Shaun Willcock's *Pagan Festivals* (November, 1999), the books reprinted by Brother Mark Jacobsson (January and July, 2000), Volume 7 of Elder Beebe's Editorials (advance notice was issued in September, 2000; it was released in January, 2001), *Hyper-Calvinism—Is it the Truth?* by Elder Stanley Phillips (May, 2001), and some reprints by Brother Dan Simmons (May and July, 2001), besides other minor book notices along the way.

We are more than glad to announce these and other books as they are made available by and through our brethren. However, in our advertising all these excellent books, the Trott book got lost in the shuffle. I completely overlooked maintaining a notice for it on **page 19** in our regular listings of **Books for Sale**. In fact, we have not even mentioned Elder Trott's *Select Works* in *The Remnant* since the March-April, 2000 issue, over a year ago.

Because many of our readers are not as familiar with Elder Trott's name and work of as they are with Elder Gilbert Beebe's, here is a little background information about him and his writings:

Elder Trott was a personal friend and contemporary of Elder Beebe, and was at one time the pastor of Welsh Tract Church in Delaware. He was a primary mover in bringing about the historic meeting in 1832 at Black Rock Church; and, from the human standpoint, it was he who was the chief author of *The Black Rock Address*. He often wrote in the pages of

*The Signs of the Times*, the periodical Elder Beebe began publishing in that year for the Old School Baptist cause. Most of Elder Trott's sixty-five writings that are republished in this book, covering the thirty years from 1832 to 1862, first appeared in print in *The Signs*. These writings are well worth having and reading for their historical, doctrinal, and spiritual content.

The book is 488 pages, bound in cloth covers of beautiful, durable F grade library buckram. One copy is \$20.00, postage paid. Anyone who has recently priced books from the commercial press knows that books of comparable quality and workmanship would easily sell for twice that figure.

### HALF-PRICE SALE THROUGH DECEMBER, 2001

We now propose something that, for us, is somewhat unusual: **A HALF-PRICE SALE**. This is the way it will work: For a limited time, through the rest of this year, you may order Elder Trott's book at **half price, one copy for \$10.00, along with any other book or books at the regular price** as noted on page 19.

For example: Buy one volume of Beebe's Editorials and Elder Trott's book for a total of \$30, postpaid.

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Remember, all prices are postpaid. Unless otherwise announced, this sale will end December 31, 2001.

—Editor

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Till I come, give attendance to **reading**, to **exhortation**, to **doctrine**.(1 Timothy 4.13).

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## **A STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:**

The following is an outline of principles the readers of *The Remnant* may expect to see maintained in this publication. Under no circumstances do the publishers or writers for *The Remnant* seek to delineate herein a standard of doctrine or views to be imposed upon the readers. Rather, we set these principles before the readers that they may know what general principles guide our efforts. All attempts at declaring articles of faith will be marred by prejudices and frailty, and ours are by no means any exception.

We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total depravity, and just condemna-

tion; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

7—The sovereign, irresistible, effectual work of the Holy Spirit in quickening the elect of God; the new birth is by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit without the use of any means;

8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.