

The Remnant

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

July-August, 2003

Volume 17, No. 4

SANCTIFICATION

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1.3-4).

How delightful the above text appears to the children of grace. This text is often associated with the election or choice of God’s people in Christ from all eternity. What joy wells up in the hearts of the trembling children of grace when made to feel that this text embraces them. However, it seems that some overlook a portion of this scripture. Some seem to disregard the fact that God has chosen the elect in Christ to be holy and without blame before Him in love. The choice of these individuals by God the Father to a state of holiness before Him is correctly called sanctification.

Sanctification, as defined in Scripture, is the setting apart of something or someone for a holy use, or to make a person or thing pure. Thus, the choice of the Father of the children in Christ is their being set apart or being consecrated to purity or holiness and made blameless. “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called (Jude 1.1).” “But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for Himself... (Psalm 4.3).” None are godly but those whom the Lord makes so.

The elect are sanctified by the active and passive obedience of the Son of God. “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1.30).” It can be truly said that Jesus is the sanctification of all of those for whom He died. He is not only their righteousness but also makes them holy and pure before God. Christ is all in all to the elect, for God cannot look upon sin. “For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity (Psalm 5.4-5).” “Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity...(Habakkuk 1.13).” Thus, those that the Father chose and gave to the Son, Christ made clean. “I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins (Isaiah 43.25).”

“Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours (1 Corinthians 1.2).” The saints are chosen to be holy and pure in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the flesh of fallen human nature, man is filthy and polluted. The old man of human nature is filled with sin and disobedience. It was necessary that corrupt human nature be made acceptable before God. This Jesus accomplished two thousand years ago on the cross of Calvary. “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the

The Remnant

published
6 times annually
by

Saints Rest Primitive Baptist Church
of Dallas, Texas

The Remnant Publications

In the interest of
The Old Order of Baptists

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The Remnant is sent free of any obligation
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Contents

Sanctification, by Elder Bruce Atkisson.....1

Tares and Treasures: Matthew 13.36-50
Parables 5, 6, and 7, by C. C. Morris.....7

Restitution (Acts 3.21),
by Elder H. H. Lefferts.....16

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(Continued from page 1)

blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance (Hebrews 9.13-15)."

Not only did the Lord Jesus reconcile the elect to God, but also He removed the curse of the law and cleansed their consciences from useless works. "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate (Hebrews 13.12)." It is through the finished work of Christ that the children of God are made acceptable to Him.

As stated previously, there are three aspects of sanctification we would like to examine in this treatise. We must understand that with the Lord God Jehovah, things are not in part or parcel, nor do they occur in any certain order. Man organizes these things in order that he might better grasp these magnificent truths of God. Even placed in such an orderly fashion, man could never fathom even the smallest portion of the Lord's works if not illuminated by the Spirit of Revelation. It is not the Lord that systematizes His decrees, for with the Omniscient God all knowledge and wisdom is constantly at His disposal. The eternal mind of the Omnipotent

God has a perfect knowledge of all things and all possibilities and has determined all things according to his good pleasure.

The third aspect of sanctification of which we now endeavor to treat is ascribed to God the Holy Spirit. "But we are bound to give thanks alway 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 (2 Thessalonians 2.13)." Salvation for time and eternity must be credited to the sovereign, omnipotent workings of God. From eternity to eternity, the elect have ever been the objects of Jehovah's love. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied (1 Peter 1.2)." "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee (Jeremiah 31.3)."

The child of God that has been quickened to spiritual life and brought to experience the new or heavenly birth possesses two natures. One nature is referred to as the *old man*. This old man is the corrupt human nature, which he receives, in natural generation from his corrupt father the first Adam. Man is born with this nature and never loses it, but continues with it all the days of his life. This nature is as old as he is and remains the slave to and lover of sin as long as man lives in this world. "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me (Romans 7.18-20)."

There will never be any change made in this nature until the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved. The old Adamic nature will never bow in obedience to the commands of God without a struggle. "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members (Romans 7.23)." Thus, left to his inherited sinful nature, which comes by natural generation from the lineage of Adam, man finds no hope. Man is made

to exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death (Romans 7.24)?" This expression used by the Apostle Paul is alluding to a practice of Roman law in which, on occasion when a man committed murder, he was sentenced to have the corpse secured across his back and around his neck for a period of time. The dead body would of course begin to decay and the man was left with a corrupt, putrefying burden that he was forced to bear around with him as a penalty and a reminder of his crime. This is an appropriate analogy of the old sinful nature, which the child of God must deal with daily. It is from this fallen, corrupt, rebellious nature inherited from Adam that all sinful thoughts and actions proceed.

Thanks be to the mercies of a compassionate God that when no relief or respite from this dead weight can be found, which so often troubles the frail little child of grace, the Lord is gracious to provide a release from this burden. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin (Romans 7.25)."

We have mentioned that there are two natures found in the regenerated or spiritually alive child of God. We now come to that second nature which by grace we receive from the Lord Jesus Christ. "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual (1 Corinthians 15.45-46)." Thus to be born from above is to be brought forth with a complete and new spiritual life.

This life is not received by natural generation from Adam, but is created by the power of God the Holy Spirit in the form and likeness of Jesus Christ the Lord from heaven. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2.10)."

This new spiritual nature, which is created in the form and image of Christ, is denominated the *new man*. "If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put

on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4.21-24).” This is the inward or Christ-man, the one who loves the law of Christ and desires to obey and practice righteousness. “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man (Romans 7.22).” The new inward man is a complete and new creation within the person. Truly if not for the mercies of an all gracious and compassionate God, the children of grace could never perform any works that conform to the revealed will of the Thrice Holy Jehovah.

It is by this new spiritual nature, which delights in the holiness of God, that the Christian is enabled at times to obey and walk in the commandments of Christ. The warfare rages but, “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world (1 John 4.4).” Sin shall not rule in the mortal body of the saints because God has ordained it so. “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof (Romans 6.12).”

The sin-burdened child of grace might complain that sin is a constant hindrance to him; and that he can do nothing that is not mingled with sin and imperfections. Nevertheless, when blessed of the Lord to reflect on his past experiences, the Christian realizes that due to the utter hatred of sin in his daily life he delights to perform the revealed will of God. Thus, though the saints slip, slide, and fall on many occasions the Lord does not suffer them to remain in this state, but recovers them by divine grace and leads them to return unto Him repeatedly.

“Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry (Colossians 3.5).”

Mortification or a putting to death the sinful actions of the flesh is not literal. In the past men have done injury to their bodies in trying to overcome their sinful desires and lusts of the flesh.

In order to slay the carnal motions of sin no less power than that of the Spirit of God is required. “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8.12-14).”

If the quickened child of grace does anything deemed to be good or obedient in this life it is by the in-working power of the Spirit of God. All spiritual works and obedience springs forth from the operation of the Spirit of Holiness within the child of God. “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phillipians 2.12-13).”

Owing to the dual nature within the Christian, the spiritual warfare continues to take place within the elect child, which brings forth his thoughts and actions often in fear and much trembling. “This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would (Galatians 5.16-17).”

Walking in the Spirit is a work of grace produced by the Holy Spirit dwelling in the individual. Experimentally (experientially) through the graces produced, he works out his salvation while going about living life here in time. When under the power and influence of the Holy Spirit, the lusts of the flesh can be subdued for a season and therefore sin does not reign or rule the child of God. The victory over sin is always obtained by the power of the Holy Spirit, for when left to themselves the elect are nothing more than depraved rebels.

Thus, to not practice or constantly observe a sinful lifestyle is completely ascribed to the grace of God. How dark the days and seasons when the child of grace is left without the felt presence of the Lord. When God is pleased to turn His face from His children for a period of time and leaves them to grope in gross Egyptian darkness, a darkness that can be felt, they go for a season in their own strength with seemingly no guide. It is in these intervals the little trembling child of grace is taken to school and instructed by the Lord that, “without me ye can do nothing (John 15.5).” This is the Old School of Christ that never fails to teach the lesson. Holy thoughts, words, or deeds he cannot perform. He receives no pleasure in the reading of the Scriptures or the preaching of the Word; nor any joy in the presence of or communion with the saints. The

perception of the Christian in these times is that he is alone with and in his sin. Often he feels himself to be totally and utterly deceived and hope smolders as a burning ember that threatens to be completely extinguished.

In such times as these the Lord has designed that the inward corruptions of the heart might be brought forth and revealed to the individual and the Christian might have all carnal security and fleshly natural religion torn away. The secret idols of arrogance and self-righteousness are broken up and cast down.

Whatever value may have previously been placed upon the works of his own hands is now considered nothing and less than nothing. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phillipians 3.8-9)."

When the spiritual darkness that comes as a result of God's withholding His felt presence from His elect has continued for as long as seems good to the Lord, and when the child of grace can bear it no longer lest he give into despair, crushed by the weight and guilt of his own sins, Jehovah is pleased to dispel the night by the dawning once again of Christ in the soul.

Words fail to express the sense of joy and peace that breaks in upon the man, woman, boy, or girl who has been laboring under a load of inherent sin and depravity. However, Christ speaks peace to their soul. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11.28)."

Tears of repentance shed in faith and hope wash away the filth of sinful burdens and guilt. The soul is once more enabled to embrace the Lord Jesus as the only ground of justification before the holiness of the High and Lofty One that inhabits eternity. The infinite worth of Christ the great Head of the Church and only Savior of sinners is brought forth and impressed upon the mind of one who had almost lost hope.

His righteousness becomes their righteousness. His strength is made theirs; and in their weakness, the power of Christ is perfected or made complete.

"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness... (2 Corinthians 12.9)."

Sanctification is a work that is complete and perfect in that the inward, new, or Christ-man it is "... his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works...(Ephesians 2.10)." This new creature is perfect and sinless. "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4.24)." The inward man loves the law of God and the commands of Christ his King. "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man (Romans 7.22)."

Though he finds that he is not always obedient to the revealed will of God, he desires to serve the Lord perfectly. When found walking in obedience, he ascribes all glory to God for His glorious grace. While in disobedience and sin he knows it is his corrupt nature that is to blame. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin (Romans 7.25)." Through these sinful actions he is made to hate the corruptions of the flesh. "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption (Ephesians 4.30)."

The natural unregenerate man hates good and holy things and loves evil and sin. He is not perfect and never will be. He will continue to fill up the measure of his days until the grave receives him. Counter to this, a sanctified man loves righteousness and hates the sin that so easily besets him. Those who love the Lord cannot but hate evil and sin; for these things are totally opposite to that new nature created within them.

The quickened children of God not only hate sin and evil in others but also abhor that sin that they find in themselves. "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I (Romans 7.15)."

Though we affirm sanctification as being complete and perfect in the new man, it is certain that there is a growth in grace and knowledge of Christ here in time. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Peter 3.18)." This has been mistaken in the past for a *progressive sanctification*. It has been misunderstood that without this complete sanctification of the

inward man, no growth in grace could be possible. This is the progressive work that continues every day while the children of God sojourn here in time.

“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ (Ephesians 4.7-15).”

Though too high for mere man to explain, the spiritual warfare that continues within the saints is the result of regeneration (quickenings) and sanctification, and produces the growth in grace, which the children of God experience. Thus, outwardly and inwardly, “...all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose (Romans 8.28).” The providences of life, appointed and governed by Jehovah God, and the works of the Spirit that are active within every one of the elect, bring forth the desired and eternally purposed result. When viewed collectively this is the perseverance of the saints of God. “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phillipians 1.6).”

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set

down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord (Hebrews 12. 1-14).”

This the work of God that goes on, more or less, all the days that are allotted to the elect. On that great day when the Lord shall come and raise the dead with but a word from His lips, all will be made whole, perfect, and spiritually fit to dwell with God forever. Every one for whom the Lord paid the ransom price with His precious blood shall no more be hindered by a body of flesh and corruption but in the resurrection shall enjoy that everlasting felicity that can only be found in the presence of the Triune Godhead. Until that time may God give His sheep the blessings of grace to persevere and to overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

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TARES AND TREASURES

MATTHEW 13.36-50 PARABLES 5, 6, AND 7

When Christ left the house (or synagogue) in Capernaum, as recorded in Matthew 13.1, and He sat by the sea side, He gave the parables of the kingdom of heaven (not the kingdom of *God*). His leaving the synagogue was a symbolic gesture representing his leaving the house of Israel desolate: “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate (Matthew 23.38).” Today, multitudes think God has left national Israel forever desolate; but this is not at all the case. Note the Scriptures carefully. Notice the words “till” and “until” as Christ and the Scripture writers use them here and elsewhere. When Christ left the temple, the full account says, “Behold, your **house** is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, *till* ye shall say, ‘Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.’” And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple... (Matthew 23.38-24.1).

Remember, in the preceding chapter, earlier that same day, the Pharisees had accused Him of working His miracles by the power of *Beelzebub*, which is another name for Satan the prince of devils (Matthew 12.24).

When He left their synagogue and went to the seashore, Christ symbolically did exactly what His apostle, Paul, literally said and did in Acts 13.45-47: But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, **It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.** For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

Paul was not applying this prophecy to himself. What he quoted here from Isaiah 49.6 is a prophecy of Christ Jesus the Lord. It is Christ whom God had set as a light of the Gentiles, “that Thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.” Read all of Isaiah 49, and may the Lord bless the reading of it.

The sea of Galilee, by which Jesus sat on that day (Matthew 13.1), in a figure represents the Gentile nations. (Note “Galilee of *the Gentiles*” in Matthew 4.15 and *nations* in Isaiah 9.1f.)

Looking back from the vantage point of Matthew 13.34, the four parables of (a) the sower, (b) the wheat and tares, (c) the mustard-seed tree, and (d) the leavening of the three measures of meal all describe and prophesy of the course of the church among the Gentiles: (a) The gospel, proclaimed among the Gentiles, is believed only by those to whom it is given, while the rest are blinded; (b) Satan sows tares (false wheat) to both imitate and oppose the children of God; (c) the wicked take refuge in the branches of Christendom; and finally (d) the entire professing church is corrupted (leavened) in doctrine and practice.

The Lord does nothing haphazardly or by accident. All fulfilled prophecy proves predestination. He gave all seven of His parables of the kingdom of heaven in a precise order, interspersed with symbolic actions (His going out of the house, verse 1, His returning back into the house, verse 36, and His explaining two of the parables in verses 18ff and 37ff), all in a predestined and symbolic order. He did so for a prophetic reason: Each detail foreshadows the orderly progression of events of the kingdom of heaven from the time of the establishing His church until the end of the church age when it has run its course in the world.

Remember, these seven parables are about the kingdom of *heaven* (Matthew 13.11, 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47, and 52), not the kingdom of God (John 3.3-5). Do not quickly (and wrongly) jump to the conclusion that the church is the kingdom of heaven. She is the bride of Christ, the Lamb’s wife, and as such she is indeed *a part* of the kingdom of heaven (which rules over **all**—Psalm 103.19). The governor’s wife is part of the state he rules over; but his wife is certainly not exactly the same as the entire state! Nor is the kingdom of heaven the same as the church, nor the same as *the kingdom of God*, which is entered only by being born from above (John 3.3-5).

He gave these first four parables by the sea because the sea in Scripture typifies the Gentile nations, and four is the number associated with the world (the four cardinal directions of the compass, the four “corners” or four quarters of the earth, the

four Gentile world empires recorded in Daniel 2 and Daniel 7, “the four winds,” the four gospels, *etc.*). By parables, Christ is giving a prophetic view of the church age and what is to follow it.

The sea as a type of the Gentile nations is not some speculative or personal opinion lightly thrown in. Bible readers cannot rightfully make up “types and shadows.” They must search the Scriptures to see how God uses natural objects—seas, storms, and ships; sun, moon, and stars; clouds, fields, leaven, wheat, tares, vines, buildings, beasts and birds—to represent spiritual truths:

“...Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters... And he saith unto me, **The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues** (Revelation 17.1, 15)”; “**But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt** (Isaiah 57.21)”; “**O thou [Babylon] that dwellest upon many waters...** (Jeremiah 51.13).” These are but a few of the passages that tell how the Lord uses seas symbolically.

But never lose sight of the fact that Christ and His disciples were on a literal sea in more than one real, literal storm in a real, literal boat (Matthew 8.24-27, 14.24-32), and Paul and Luke experienced a real, literal voyage and shipwreck in Acts 27. Some expositors “spiritualize” things and events to such an extent that their hearers forget the events actually took place. These things really happened, even though “spiritual applications” and “types and shadows” may be found in such events.

What does “literal” mean? The word *literal* means “real; adhering to fact or to the ordinary understanding and meaning of words and expressions.” Literal is not contrasted to *spiritual* (spirits are *literal* spirits); *literal* is to be contrasted to *figurative, metaphorical, or symbolic*. *Literal* things are not necessarily the same as *physical* or *natural* things, although they can be and usually are. “A rose is a rose is a [literal] rose” (Gertrude Stein), and a boat is a boat is a boat. But literal roses and boats can also have figurative and symbolic meanings. A boat can symbolize the church (which is the people and not the building) in some respects, but not all; church members do not regularly need a few coats of marine paint or have to have a State-issued number

painted on them (at least not yet!) before they can legally go out on a lake.

God is a Spirit (John 4.24), and He is literal—not figurative or symbolic—because He is real. Also, spirits may be “natural” spirits, as the spirits of beasts (Ecclesiastes 3.21). The kingdom of heaven is literal, because the Bible says it is, giving countless number of real characteristics and descriptions. It behooves us to be familiar with these distinctions.

Continuing with our text: **Then** He sent the multitude away, indicating *in a figure* an end to the church age as we have known it for almost two thousand years. He **then** went back into the house. This action on His part typifies the fact that after He has finished with the Gentile nations, He again has a future for Israel, and He will return to them.

“And they [the Jews, national Israel] shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, **until the times of the Gentiles** be fulfilled (Luke 21.24).” “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 (Romans 11.25).”

If the time were not coming when Jerusalem will no longer be trodden down by the Gentiles and Israel will no longer be blinded, then language has no meaning.

After “the times of the Gentiles” is completed, and “the fullness of the Gentiles”—which is the church—“be come in,” God will take up the house of Israel again. (The Lord is even now bringing national Israel back to the holy land as He prophesied in Isaiah 11 and many other texts.)

What happens next prophetically is linked directly to the disciples’ requesting of Him, “Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field” (verse 36).

Talk of absolute predestination! They asked at the exact time that His explanation of the parable and the fulfillment of the parable come together perfectly in the prophetic timetable, immediately after the whole of the church-phase of the kingdom of heaven is totally leavened, and immediately after His taking up again the house of Israel.

As the leavening of the entire three measures of meal represents the apostasy of the Laodicean age,

and His going back into the house (Matthew 13.36) symbolizes His turning from apostate Christendom among the Gentiles and His returning to Israel as their Messiah-King, so the explanation of the parable of the wheat and tares explains exactly what happens next after His return to Israel.

THE WHEAT AND TARES EXPLAINED

This is what Christ said the parable means. It is plainly *His* interpretation. May God grace His people to ignore men's "interpretations" and to stay with what He says:

He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man.
The field is the world [Greek, *kosmos*, world].
The good seed are the children of the kingdom.
The tares are the children of the wicked one.
The enemy that sowed them is the devil.
The harvest is the end of the age [Greek, *aión*].
The reapers are the angels.

As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this age (*aión*). The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather **out of** his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Do not miss that last sentence. Not everyone has ears to hear these things.

End of the World?

There are two words here translated as *world* in the above verses (38-40), but only one is correctly translated by our word *world*, in the sense of *planet earth*. It is the Greek word *kosmos*, rendered *world* over 160 times in the New Testament.

A *Kosmos*, defined, is actually anything that is a system complete within itself. It can be the world-system, as a whole; it can be something as small and simple as one complete place-setting at a table, which is one way the old Greeks used the word; or it can be the entire universe (Cosmos) itself. To the Greeks, a *kosmos* was any self-contained system considered complete as a unit.

The other Greek word, *aión*, meaning "Age, dispensation, or indefinite time" (Young's *Analyti-*

cal Concordance), is rightly rendered by our words *aeon*, *eon*, and *age*.

In the New Testament, *aión* is also rendered "world" over thirty times, which is a source of much of the "end of the world" confusion.

Of Dispensationalism

Do not let the biblical word *dispensation* in Young's definition throw you. It has nothing to do with being a "dispensationalist" like C. I. Scofield and the "dispensationalism" associated with him and his kind. (Scofield divided all biblical history and prophecy into what he called seven "dispensations.") "Dispensation" simply means *stewardship*, or *economy*, in the sense of God's dealing with certain situations in specific ways (Ephesians 1.10, 3.2; Colossians 1.25, *etc.*). Since Scofield was quite literal in his understanding of the Scriptures, the terms "Dispensationalism" and "Dispensationalist" are often incorrectly and dishonestly used as derogatory terms to refer to anyone who does not "spiritualize" everything in the Bible.

When we hear the term "the end of the world," we usually think of this terrestrial ball of rock, dirt, water, and atmosphere—*i.e.*, the earth—disappearing into nothingness. The Lord never said that would happen. In fact, He said the exact opposite: "For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain [literally, *without form*, the same word as in Genesis 1.2], **he formed it to be inhabited**: I am the LORD; and there is none else (Isaiah 45.18)." He formed it to be inhabited, and He will have His way; it will be inhabited.

Objection: The world will be burned up. 2 Peter 3.10 says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

Reply: The "**burning up**" of this world is only a part of the picture. The next verse (verse 11) says, "Seeing then that all these things shall be **dissolved**," and the next (verse 12) says, "...the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be **dissolved**, and the elements shall **melt** with fervent heat." Hebrews 1.10-12 says, "And, Thou,

Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall **perish**; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou **fold them up**, and they shall be **changed**.” Putting these statements together, the Scriptures say the heavens and the earth will be “burned up,” “dissolved,” “melted”; they will “perish,” be “folded up,” and “changed.”

Change simply means *to make different*, not to cause it to cease to exist. We all burn things, dissolve things, and melt things all the time. Burning paper, melting butter or iron ore, or dissolving salt or sugar does not make these things “not exist any more”; they continue to exist, but in a different state of being. God’s acts of burning, dissolving, changing, folding up, and melting do not undo His creative acts of Genesis 1. The burning up of the heavens and the earth will purge out all the effects of sin and unrighteousness from all creation, restoring the pristine beauty and perfection of the original creation before the fall, before the introduction of sin into the creation.

To say anything less is to charge God with being a quitter, insinuating He began a project (the creation of Genesis 1) He could not bring to a successful completion. So saying ranks alongside Arminianism’s myopic notion that the cross was an afterthought on God’s part because His giving of the law had failed.

Continuing in 2 Peter 3.13, Peter says, “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for **new heavens and a new earth**, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

In prospect, the apostle John saw the fulfillment of this promise as he recorded in Revelation 21.1: “And I saw **a new heaven and a new earth**: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.” Here, the words “heaven” and “earth” mean exactly that, heaven and earth, just like in Genesis 1.1. John saw the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. If it was coming down **from** heaven, it was coming down **to** something.

We have no scriptural reason to think this passage of Scripture means anything other than exactly what it says. The original creation will be restored to its original splendor and glory, and it will be a permanent fixture in the eternal state.

Question: But what about “the end of the world”?

Reply: The phrase “end of the world” occurs twice in the Old Testament (Psalm 19.4 and Isaiah 62.11). Both times refer not to the destruction of all matter but to going as far as one can, to the utmost extremity of the earth.

The phrase “end of the world” occurs five times in the New Testament. Every single time it is from the Greek word *aion*. Never did Christ or any of His prophets, apostles, or other biblical writers refer to “the end of the *kosmos*,” because the *kosmos* does not end. It has an eternal state, as described in Revelation 21-22. The five times the phrase “end of the world” is found in the New Testament, with the word correctly translated “age(s)” are:

1. Matthew 13.39: “The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the **age**; and the reapers are the angels.”
2. Matthew 13.49: “So shall it be at the end of the **age**: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just.”
3. Matthew 24.3: “And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the **age**?”
4. Matthew 28.20: “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the **age**. Amen.”
5. Hebrews 9.26: “For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world (*kosmos*): but now once in the end of the **age** hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

A “Secret Rapture”? No!

Will there be a “secret rapture” of the church, as the Arminian world everywhere teaches? No. The Bible does not teach such a thing.

First, the word rapture or its equivalent is not found in the Bible. The concept is a foreign to the Scriptures as the word itself. Men concocted the idea of a secret rapture in the mid-nineteenth century and began trying to fit scripture verses into their new scheme.

One of their favorite passages of Scripture men use to teach a so-called “rapture” is found in Matthew 24.40-41 and the parallel passage in Luke

17.34-36. I quote from Luke: "I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; *the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left*. Two women shall be grinding together; *the one shall be taken, and the other left*. Two men shall be in the field; *the one shall be taken, and the other left*."

Those who teach a secret rapture all say the ones who are *taken* are "the saved," taken at the "rapture" into heaven, and those who are *left* are left on the earth to go through the great tribulation, **all of which is exactly the opposite of what Christ said**: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather **out of his kingdom** all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them [the ones who are **taken!**] into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous [those who are **left!**] shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matthew 13.41-43)." And that "kingdom of their Father," Jesus has explained, is "the kingdom of **heaven**."

Objection: I see a contradiction. Matthew 24.31 says it is the elect, not the tares, who are to be gathered by the angels.

Reply: This is only a different emphasis and viewpoint. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, **to meet the Lord in the air**: and so shall we ever be with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4.16f)." The air is the meeting place of Christ and His saints, and not their permanent dwelling place.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3.4)." "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself **as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast**. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain. In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked ser-

pent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea. (Isaiah 26.19-ff)." The saints will be temporarily removed to the air above the earth while Christ and His angels do their house-cleaning at the battle of Armageddon (Revelation 19.11-20.3), preceding the one-thousand year reign of Christ on the earth (Revelation 20.4-6) with His saints (Revelation 5.9f).

There are two groups of people in the parable of the wheat and tares: (a) the children of the kingdom, who are the children of God, represented by the wheat; and (b) the children of the wicked one, represented by the tares. *One group is taken and the other is left behind*. Those who teach a "secret rapture" insist they want to be taken and not left behind when Christ returns.

Who is taken when Christ returns, according to His own words? "They [God's holy angels] shall gather **out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity**; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." The ones who offend and them that do iniquity are the ones to be taken (out).

Who will be left behind? "Then shall **the righteous** shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (verse 43)." The righteous ones are left behind. Since there are none righteous in their natural birth, these righteous ones are those who have been made righteous by the imputed righteousness of Christ Jesus their Lord. Why are they left behind? What will they then do? They will shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, the kingdom of **heaven**. Where are they left? On earth!

Conditionalists would love to say the tares are the "unfaithful children of God" and are to be removed from the **kingdom of God**, which they insist is identical to the **kingdom of heaven**. Consistent with their Arminianism foundation, some Conditionalists are now challenging the doctrine of the preservation and perseverance of the saints. Given a while longer, if the Lord does not restrain them, there will be no difference between Conditionalist "Primitive Baptists" and Wesleyan Methodists. To make the kingdom of heaven equal the kingdom of God in the parable of the wheat and the tares, Conditionalist doctrine plainly forces the conclusion that children of God, elect from all eternity, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and regen-

erated by the Holy Spirit, can lose their salvation and be damned eternally.

THE TREASURE HID IN THE FIELD

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field (Matthew 13.44). Jesus has already identified the field as the world (verse 38).

Those who read the church into everything suppose this treasure hid in the field is the church. The church—Christ’s elect, His bride, His body—is surely to be identified with the righteous ones of verse 43 preceding, and with the pearl in the next parable following (verses 45-46). But the Lord has another treasure in the field (world), truly hidden, which must be addressed.

This hidden treasure of verse 44, yet to be revealed and acknowledged as His own, is His people among the nation of Israel: “Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a **peculiar treasure** (Hebrew, *cegullah*; Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary #5459) unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine (Exodus 19:5).” The one Hebrew word *cegullah* is here rendered by two English words, *peculiar treasure*; **peculiar**, not in the sense of weird or odd, but in the sense of **special**, as Paul refers to the redeemed in Titus 2.14. The word actually refers to an important, valuable treasure that is “closed up” or “shut up,” as protected in a safe or a vault. It is rendered by the English words **peculiar treasure** here and elsewhere; by **special people** in Deuteronomy 7.6, **peculiar people** in Deuteronomy 14.2 and 26.18; **peculiar treasure** in Psalm 135.4, and **jewels** in Malachi 3.17. Of these verses, more follows later.

Objection: God said here, “IF ye will obey...and keep my covenant, THEN ye shall be a peculiar treasure....” But national Israel did not obey and keep God’s covenant, so they forfeited this promise.

Reply: (a) A negative doctrine cannot be correctly built on a positive statement such as Exodus 19.5, but free-willers have never been known for correct argumentation. When one says, “if you do X, then I will do Y,” it in no way says what the speaker will or will not do if you do *not* do X. To say

the speaker will not do Y presumes to build a doctrine by mere speculation. In this case, such presumption is adding to the Word of God.

(b) Under the conditional (law) covenant, certain things could be forfeited, by disobedience; but Israel’s disobedience could in no way nullify the eternal, unconditional promises God made to Abraham over four hundred years earlier. “And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect (Galatians 3.17).”

(c) The truth is, there are many other Scriptures, mentioned above, that plainly mark the nation of Israel as God’s peculiar treasure:

1. “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a **special people** (*cegullah*) unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth (Deuteronomy 7.6).” There is nothing conditional about that.

2. “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a **peculiar people** (*cegullah*) unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth (Deuteronomy 14.2).” There is nothing conditional about that.

3. “And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be his **peculiar people** (*cegullah*), as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments (Deuteronomy 26.18).” There is nothing conditional about that.

Objection: It says, “that thou shouldest keep all his commandments.”

Reply: Some people will challenge God to His face. The Lord has avouched (“to declare as a matter of fact or as a thing that can be proved.”—Webster) two things here:

a. Israel (“thee,” “thou”) is His *cegullah* as He hath **promised** (thee); and,

b. Thou shouldst keep all His commandments.

The second in no way nullifies the first, which is an unconditional promise of God to His chosen people Israel.

Anyone having a problem with this principle is again referred to Galatians 3.17.

4. “For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his **peculiar treasure** (*cegullah*) (Psalm 135.4).” There is nothing conditional about that.

5. “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my **jewels** (*cegullah*); and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him (Malachi 3.17).” There is nothing conditional about that.

This may be accurately translated, “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my **peculiar treasure**; and I will spare them,” *etc.*

This latter text might be applied to the church, in a certain sense; I have tried to so apply it in times past; but the truth remains that God is speaking to national Israel through Malachi, and the text is to be so understood: He speaks to Levi (Malachi 3.3), to Judah and to Jerusalem (verse 4), and to Jacob (verse 6).

We’ve probably all heard Malachi 3.17, and the verses around it, discussed somewhat as follows:

Verse 8, “Robbing God in tithes and offerings,” that’s **Old Testament Israel**. The whole nation is cursed. See, in verse 9?

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, verse 10; that only applies to **the Jews**, not the church; the church doesn’t tithe.

In verse 10 and 11 God says, “prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.” That’s obviously **the Jews**, all under the conditional law covenant. [Note: Conditionalism says the text applies equally well to the elect’s earning blessings and rewards by their obedience—CCM]

Verse 12, “And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts”; that’s *spiritual Israel*, **the church**. We know that because God is through with the Jews.

Verses 13-15, “Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD,” *etc.*, that’s **the Jews** again. Verses 16 and 17, that’s **the church** again....”

Strange how so lame an approach can find the agility to play such biblical hopscotch! All this jumping back and forth, applying all the curses to the Jews and all the blessings to the church, raises many questions. Here we mention only four:

1. Does not this entire passage pertain to *Levi, Judah, and Jerusalem*, of whom the Lord says, “**Then** shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the LORD [Jehovah], **as in the days of old, and as in former years** (verses 3-4).” Has the offering of Judah and Jerusalem ever, from Malachi’s time until now, been “pleasant unto the Lord”? If not, then which is it: Is Malachi’s prophecy wrong, or does he refer to a yet future time?

2. Does “in the days of old” (olden days from Malachi’s day, around 400 BC), and “as in former years” (prior to 400 BC) apply to “*spiritual Israel*” (the church), or to *national Israel*?

3. Verse 18 says, “**Then** shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.” Who is the “ye” that is to *return*—the church (which had never *left*), or *national Israel*, which did leave, and which is and has been Malachi’s subject since chapter 1?

4. Malachi 4.4 says, “**Remember ye the law of Moses** my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb **for all Israel**, with the statutes and judgments.” Did Moses receive the commandments of God for spiritual Israel/the New Testament church, or for **national Israel**? Does Moses apply to “*spiritual Israel*” (the church) or to *national Israel*?

These are all legitimate questions, and they demand sober answers from anyone who (a) claims to present a well-balanced, complete exposition of the Scriptures, and yet (b) denies that the nation of Israel has an eternal future as a literal, national entity, guaranteed by God’s unconditional promises to Abraham.

THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it (Matthew 13.45f). A pearl is a beautiful picture of the church. A pearl is the product of a shellfish, and the best shellfish for pearl production is the oyster.

Shellfish are unclean animals, according to the Levitical law (Leviticus 11.9-12). Israelites consider a pearl to be unclean because of this. Jewish merchants would certainly stock pearls for their Gentile customers, but an orthodox Jew would not wear a pearl, no matter how expensive and beautiful it might be, because of its inherent uncleanness. Therefore, the pearl is that much more a beautiful picture of the church among the Gentiles, since the Jews think of the Gentiles as being greatly unclean sinners. Because of her Levitical uncleanness, the church is a treasure distinct from Israel, the treasure hid in the field.

The pearl is the fruit of suffering. It forms around a grain of sand or some other irritant that has gotten inside the oyster's shell. To protect itself, the oyster secretes a material that coats the irritating impurity with a smooth covering.

Like the oyster, Christ was adjudged to be unclean in order to be identified with His people.

Like the pearl, His people were chosen *in Him*, and yet they have an irritating impurity in their innermost being (heart). Christ covers them with a protective covering that comes from Himself, His own righteousness, which covers their impurity. Like Christ, the oyster must die in order to deliver the pearl (His people) to glory. Pearls are even associated with the twelve gates of that eternal and blessed city, the new Jerusalem of Revelation 21.21. Like the redeemed church, the pearl is the fruit of a life of suffering and death. Together with the pearl it produces, an oyster is a fit and well-nigh perfect picture of Christ and His church.

THE NET CAST INTO THE SEA

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away (Matthew 13.47-48).

Following the reign of Christ as described by nearly every Old Testament prophet and as summarized by John in Revelation 20, Satan is released, God proving a point in finality: Without the direct intervention of divine, sovereign grace and mercy and the inner regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, mankind is truly, totally depraved, incurably wicked, and instant as ever in rebellion, even after a thousand

years of Eden-like conditions under the benevolent government of Jesus Christ. Satan "shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle (Revelation 20.8)." The result, as pictured in this parable, is described in Revelation 20.9-15.

There are two comings of the Lord Jesus Christ and two aspects of His coming prophesied, which are His **sufferings** (fulfilled at His first coming), and **the glory that should follow** (to be fulfilled at His second coming): "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand [a] the **sufferings of Christ**, and [b] **the glory that should follow** (1 Peter 1.10f)." "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have **suffered** these things, and to enter into his **glory**? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself (Luke 24.25-27)."

National Israel was looking for a conquering king at His first coming. They missed entirely the prophecies that He would be wounded, striped, and pierced, and would suffer, die, and rise again the third day according to their own Scriptures.

Many today make an equally bad mistake of *not* looking for Him to come as the prophets said, the conquering and reigning king of Israel. Every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue will confess Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. He is presently glorified with the Father, with the glory He had before the world was (John 17.5); but He has another glory of His own, rightfully His as the greater Son of David, which is yet to be displayed before all creation.

He is coming to be glorified in His saints: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled [recompense] rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with

everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day (2 Thessalonians 1.6-10).” These latter verses perfectly describe the time Christ spoke of in Matthew 13.41-43.

In this age the church is suffering with Him, awaiting glorification with Him: “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we **suffer** with Him, that we may be also **glorified** together [with Him] (Romans 8.17).”

SUMMARY

Below, point for point and in the proper order, the fourteen events in Matthew 13 are followed (in parentheses) by the parallel historic and prophetic points they signify:

1. Pharisees blaspheme, Matthew 12.24-32 (Israel rejects their Messiah)
2. Jesus leaves the house and sits by the sea side, Matthew 13.1 (Jesus sends His apostles to the Gentile nations)
3. Parable of the sower, Matthew 13.3-9 (Gospel proclaimed to the Gentiles; only the elect hear and believe it)
4. Disciples' question, Christ's answer, verses 10-17 (Christ's explanation of sovereign election and blessings)
5. Christ's explanation of the sower parable, verses 18-23 (the unregenerate [bad ground] and the regenerate [good ground] hearers of the gospel)
6. Parable of the Wheat and Tares, verses 24-30 (Satan's counterfeit church-members infiltrate Christ's church)
7. Parable of the Mustard-seed, verses 31-32 (The evil ones, false professors, lodge in the Gentile church)
8. Parable of leaven hid in meal, verse 33 (The godly doctrine is corrupted by the leaven of sin)
9. Reiteration of why Christ spoke in Parables, verse 34-35 (sovereign election and God's blessing His people to hear and believe)
10. Christ sends the multitudes away, and He returns into the house, verse 36 (The church age being ended, Christ turns to national Israel and saves them, Romans 11.25-26)

11. Christ explains the Parable of the Wheat and Tares, verses 36-43 (Armageddon; The end of the church age and the beginning of the literal kingdom age on earth)

12. The treasure hid in the field, verse 44 (National Israel is revealed as the Lord's treasure hid in the world)

13. The pearl of great price, verses 45-46 (The church, as the glorified body and bride of Christ, the pearl of great price, rules with Him on the earth, Revelation 5.9-10)

14. The Net with good and bad fish, verses 47-50 (The final destruction of Gog and Magog; the Great White Throne Judgment, Revelation 20.7-15)

The doctrine of the yet future, literal, earthly, one-thousand year reign of Jesus Christ on the throne of His father David, known as Premillennialism, is not widely preached among Primitive Baptists currently, but historically it is and always has been held to by some. As the Arminian Scofield and his brand of dispensationalism gained momentum in the early twentieth century, Premillennialism fell into disfavor among many Old School Baptists (but by no means all) who were loath to be associated with the Premillennial Arminians; therefore many of them threw out the Premillennial baby with the Arminian bath-water. Others, including J. C. Philpot in his day, and closer to our time, Elder H. H. Lefferts, former Editor of *Signs of the Times*, proclaimed the restitution of the Jews to a position of favor with God and the restoration of the creation to the pristine purity it enjoyed before the entrance of sin. May God bless His truth and pardon any error I may have set forth in this writing.

For now, I conclude to leave room for an article entitled “Restitution” by Elder H. H. Lefferts, former Editor of *The Signs of the Times*. Originally published therein in April, 1931, this article was republished by request in the February, 1954, *Signs of the Times*. It was almost immediately reprinted by Elder W. J. Berry in the *Old Faith Contender* in May, 1954. In his article, Elder Lefferts reaches back to J. C. Philpot in 1854, and yet he is as current as today's Mideast turmoil. Not one of his words needs to be “updated.” Would that we could print every word in bold, italicized, capital neon letters! In 1931, he wrote exactly what this writer believes.

—C.C. Morris

RESTITUTION (Acts 3:21)

A sister whose address is Harding, West Virginia, wrote asking as follows: "In the restitution of all things, what will be the 'all things' that are to be restored? I have never heard any views on this, neither have I been enabled to grasp its full meaning."

We cannot tell why our ministers of late years have been silent on this subject of "restitution," unless it has been simply because their minds have not been exercised to speak and to write of it. In looking back over the writings of Old School Baptists years ago, one occasionally comes across references to this subject, which shows that our people of former generations accepted and believe the doctrine of "restitution." Nowadays, however, when this subject comes up, it seems to strike many as something they never heard of before. Thus, it may be good for us to be reminded of those things which we have let slip through not having been taught them. Restitution simply means restoration; the act of giving back what had at some former time been taken away. In this connection, it means restoring to the Jews what God had deprived them of. It means restoring the Jews to their own land and giving back to them the land taken from them. Not only, however, does restitution apply to giving back to the Jews their former land, but it means restoring the Jewish nation to covenant relationship with the Almighty through his Son Jesus Christ, whom they rejected and crucified; but whom at his appearing again they will believe in as their Messiah and Redeemer. This can take place only when the Gentile church has been brought unto completion; and from the signs now among us, we believe this is about at hand. Religious organizations, that is, the form of religion, may continue on for some time to come, but the true body of Christ, which is his church, seems to be about finished. Already, and for some years past, the world has been witnessing the steady movement of the Jews toward their own land. The World War of 1914 to 1918 gave this movement a great impetus, and since then it has been growing by leaps and bounds. "He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of

all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Just exactly as the word here says, God the Father will send to the Jews his Son Jesus Christ. This Jesus was before preached unto them in all the types and shadows of the Mosaic covenant. He was declared by all the prophets unto them. It is perfectly true that the Mosaic covenant was disobeyed by the Jewish nation, wherefore they were cast out; and since their being cast out, God through Christ by his grace has brought the Gentile church in. When this body of Christ is completed from among the Gentiles, then will be brought to light the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jewish remnant in the land of promise. The covenant made by God with Abraham was before the law four hundred and thirty years, and the law which was afterward cannot by any means disannul the promise which preceded the law. But the Jews, as well as the Gentiles, cannot come in by the works of the law; they cannot possibly come into the kingdom by flesh and blood: it must be by promise, and wholly by God's grace. It will not and cannot be by their own might and power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. This is why the present world movement of Zionism has about come to a standstill on account of England's refusal to execute vigorously the mandate over the land of Palestine assigned to England by the League of Nations. England is afraid to antagonize the Arabs who are opposed to the Jews coming back to Palestine. Thus, the movement of Jews in that direction has been slowed down, but it is with almost breathless interest that we look for the next development in world affairs which will speed it up again.

Jesus Christ is at the present time in the heaven and has been in the heaven ever since his disciples with their own eyes beheld him ascend out of their sight; he will appear again at the fullness of the times of restitution, will appear to the Jews, and when they see him next time they will not say, "Away with him, crucify him. We will not have him rule over us." No, they will say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." They will gladly hail him as their King and Messiah. There is no spirituality in them as yet, and will not be until they are circumcised in heart, and that will not take place until they are back in the land, as Moses says in Deuteronomy 30:6. there is not a single one of the prophets but who declares this restoration of the Jews to their own

land. As Acts 3:21 says, "The mouth of all his holy prophets" has spoken it. Moses, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Jeremiah, and Isaiah all say so. Had we space, we would quote them all. "Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel." (Hosea 1:11) "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." (Ezekiel 37:21-22) Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones refers entirely to this time of restitution, and not to the Gentile church at all, though it is often made to apply that way. You will note in this vision of the valley of dry bones, that the bones came together while there was still no life in them; flesh and sinews came upon the bones and yet there was no life there.

What an amazing picture is this of the coming together of Israel which we are witnessing today! In all this world—union of Jews everywhere for the purpose of returning to their own beloved land, there is no spiritual life from God yet. Nevertheless, the bones are coming together and the flesh and sinews are coming upon the bones. Never since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus in 70 A. D. has there been such a world movement of Israel toward their own land as in this present time. We are today seeing the verification of Ezekiel's vision, and the breath of spiritual life will be breathed into this restored remnant some time following their restoration to the land; just when, God alone knows. They are coming up out of their graves now, and the "graves" in this instance mean the different nations of the earth where the Jews have been scattered during their dispersion from their land. These graves are now opening and the dry bones are coming up out of them and are coming to their fellow-bones, and are receiving flesh and sinews, yet are still spiritually dead. The time of their awakening, which will take place when the Lord from heaven appears to them, may be much nearer than we think. Remember, it comes as a thief in the night and none of us will know

of it until it is a matter of full realization. Read Amos 9:14-15; also Jeremiah 31:10-14. Indeed, search through all the prophets and then stand amazed at the declared wonders of prophecy you see revealed there. The marvelous workings of God's eternal plan and purpose are nothing short of stupendous. The present distresses among the nations of the Gentile world are plainly of the Lord, and plainly the fulfillment of his written word. Economic depressions, droughts, famines, wars, pestilences, earthquakes, floods and all their kindred ills, are vials of the seven last plagues being poured out from heaven, all to wear down the political and world supremacy of the Gentiles to prepare the way for the kings of the East, to usher in the kingdom of heaven among the restored Jews, and when that is done the whole world will realize such a blessing flowing to all nations because of the kingdom of heaven, such an age as the world has never yet seen. Then, that which missionaries have been trying to do for one hundred and fifty years by proselyting and money raising will be done instantly, because it is expressly declared in the prophets that even the heathen shall know that God is the Lord and that Israel is his people, when the Lord shall set up his kingdom to reign; in that day when he shall take unto himself his great power and shall reign. Prior to this coming in of the kingdom, there will be some kind of world-federation, a last and most desperate effort on the part of Gentile world-power to retain their hegemony over the world which they already feel slipping from their grasp. When this world-federation is an established fact, we shall expect to see the "man of sin" at the head of it. But it will all go for naught. The final act of this "man of sin" with the world league backing him up, will be to move against the helpless restored Jews in the holy land; and that move will be the last desperate act of the Gentiles to regain their hold on world power. It will be nothing short of suicide for them.

In confirmation of this fact revealed in Holy Writ, read Ezekiel thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters. There you will find, just exactly as God has predestinated it, the assault of allied powers against the restored Jews, which will not only be fruitless, but absolutely fatal to Gentile supremacy: they shall die by thousands upon the mountains of Israel and be buried there, not because the Jews will

be able to defeat them by themselves but because the Lord will himself appear and fight against them with the fire of his own wrath and indignation. This “day of the Lord: shall not come until the world shall first witness the rise and supremacy of the “man of sin”, whose number is 666. So Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

Strange as it may seem, the very day we received the request from this sister for information upon this subject, we received the February number of the **Gospel Standard** from London. To our amazement, we found in that number an article written by Mr. J. C. Philpot in 1854, over three-quarters of a century ago. We cannot forbear letting you have part of it, but wish you could read all of it. It comes from out of the past as a startling confirmation of what we believe, but which we find few people at the present time do believe. Here it is:

“The restoration of the Jews to their own land seems to us as clearly revealed as their dispersion. (Deuteronomy 30:1-5) It seems evident from the words, ‘that the way of the kings of the East may be prepared,’ that there will be a gradual preparation for their return, and that it will come to pass, not as a sudden miracle or unexpected event, but will take place as a matter long anticipated.”

Now, this is amazing when you consider that when Mr. Philpot wrote these lines Zionism was not heard of as yet, and there was not yet any world organization of the Jews in 1854. Mr. Philpot bases his assertions entirely on the Bible, and not on the events of his time: a most wonderful proof of the spiritual insight of Mr. Philpot into these hidden things. Not one single word of what Mr. Philpot has written needs changing in the light of what we know today: events as they have come to pass show clearly that Mr. Philpot was entirely right. Let us quote him a little further:

“Most clear and distinct are the promises that the ten tribes thus carried into captivity, called in the Word of God from their leading tribe, ‘Ephraim’, and sometimes termed ‘Israel’, as distinct from the tribe called ‘Judah’, will be restored to their own land. We will not multiply quotations. It will be sufficient to refer our readers to the following passages: Isaiah 11:11-14; Ezek. 37:19-28; and to one which, from its distinct mention of the ‘house of Joseph’, that is, the ten tribes (Joseph being the father of Ephraim), we can hardly forbear quoting: ‘And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon

them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them.’ ‘I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them.’ (Zech. 10:5-10). The drying up of the river merely prepares the way for the return; but years may intervene before the event is accomplished, and there appears every reason to believe that Babylon will be destroyed before it takes place. See Isaiah fourteenth chapter.”

So wrote the able Mr. Philpot seventy-seven years ago. All that has transpired in these seventy-seven years does not make necessary the change of a single word of his prediction. “Years may intervene before the event is accomplished,” he says. Well years have intervened and it is being accomplished under our very eyes. As events come to pass day by day, they reveal what has been in the Divine Mind from eternity; history is nothing more or less than the unrolling of predestination. The Bible will interpret these events as they come to pass, if only we are given to understand them in the light of the Spirit. It is good for us to watch, and to pray as we watch.

May the Lord give us ever more and more of his light and not leave us to sleep on in darkness; that is, ignorance of his wonderful purpose.

A final note on Elder Lefferts’ article: What Elder Lefferts said in 1931 of J. C. Philpot’s 1854 remarks may equally be said in 2003 of Elder Leffert’s remarks. “So wrote the able Mr. Philpot seventy-seven years ago,” and so wrote the able Elder Lefferts seventy-two years ago. We paraphrase him in closing:

This is amazing when you consider that when Elder Lefferts wrote these lines in 1931, Israel had not yet been recognized as a sovereign nation, and would not be until May 14, 1948, after another seventeen years and another World War. Elder Lefferts bases his assertions entirely on the Bible, and not on the events of his time: a most wonderful proof of the spiritual insight of Elder Lefferts [as well as that of Mr. Philpot] into these hidden things. Not one single word of what Elder Lefferts has written needs changing in the light of what we know today: events as they have come to pass show clearly that Elder Lefferts [and Mr. Philpot] was/were entirely right.

—CCM

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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 condemnation; 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.