

COMING FROM EAST AND WEST.

"Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." – Matt. 8:11,12.

Israelites were "the children of the kingdom," the natural seed of Abraham, to whom God had promised that Millennial kingdom whose power in all the earth shall, under divine arrangements, be instrumental in spreading truth and righteousness, and restraining evil, so that all the families of the earth shall be blessed. In the words above quoted, our Lord foretold the change of dispensation by which the natural seed of Abraham were cast into outer darkness – as outcasts from God's favor, and from the special light of prophecy which for eighteen hundred years had enlightened them and given them "much advantage every way" above the world in general.

Those from the east and west who come and sit down with Abraham and the faithful of the past age, are faithful ones from among the Gentiles, called to be the bride and joint-heir of the true and only heir of all things – Christ Jesus. The Jews in general, and even the disciples, could not have digested meat so strong, as this, and hence our Master left this among other of his "dark sayings," unexplained; merely saying to his disciples, I have many things to tell you, but you cannot bear them now; – the spirit of truth shall guide you into all truth and bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. The Jews resented sternly any suggestion, that any except their own elect nation could share the kingdom honors. Even when, after his resurrection, our Lord commissioned his disciples to go teach and baptize all nations (Matt. 28:19), they seemed to understand that he meant, – *every Israelite* scattered throughout all nations; and it was

not for some years after that they learned, that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs of the same promises. – Eph. 3:6.

As during the Gospel age honest Gentiles heard the "call," and came out of darkness into marvelous light and great privilege, by accepting and following Christ, so the Jews, because of pride, rejected Christ; and during this age they have been left with the heathen world, in darkness, shut out from divine favor. There they have had trouble, distress, perplexity and persecution, well described by the metaphor "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The elect Gentiles (chosen through sanctification of spirit, by a belief of the truth), are *coming* to the Kingdom; *coming* it is true, by a narrow thorny path of trial; but they are not downcast, "not in darkness;" because the light of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ hath shined into their hearts dispelling the darkness. Not with weeping and gnashing of teeth do they come; for though they suffer, it is as good soldiers – rejoicing in tribulations, and that they are counted worthy to suffer reproaches for the name of Christ.

And now the coming ones have nearly all passed over the "narrow way:" a few more are to come by the same route, and then all shall sit down in the Kingdom, with Abraham and all the faithful of the natural seed of the natural Abraham, – as sharers in the joys of the Lord, and in the promised work of blessing all nations. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the faithful prophets, will share in that blessed employment as well as Christ Jesus and his bride, – "his body." But there are last which shall be first, and first which shall be last. Those first called will receive all that was promised them, and more doubtless than they ever appreciated or expected, when they obtain the earthly phase, or human department, of the Millennial Kingdom. But the Lord, the heir of all things, and his chosen faithful bride and co-heir, will inherit what Abraham and the prophets never knew of; that which was not even made known until the Gospel age (2 Tim. 1:10), namely, the spiritual phase or department of the Kingdom; "God having provided some

better thing for us [the "last" called – the Gospel church], that they [the "first" called, and all others] without us should not be made perfect."
– Heb. 11:40.
