

"THE BRIDE, THE LAMB'S WIFE."

(SPECIAL ATTENTION AND CAREFUL STUDY OF THIS SUBJECT IS REQUESTED, FOR REASONS EXPLAINED FURTHER ALONG. – EDITOR.)

"I have espoused you as a chaste virgin unto one husband, even Christ." – 2 Cor. 11:2.

The letter of the Apostle Paul in which these words occur was addressed to the Church of God at Corinth and to all the saints in all Achaia (2 Cor. 1:1), and together with the other epistles was designed by the Holy Spirit for the instruction of the whole Church, during the entire Gospel age. Therefore when the Apostle says, "I have espoused you as a chaste virgin unto one husband, even Christ," it is evident that the entire faithful Church is meant – all who as "wise virgins" will continue faithful to the espousal vows. Such will, in due time, be accepted of Christ as his glorious bride without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

This beautiful figure of the Church's relationship to Christ is made very prominent in the Scriptures. See the invitation to become the bride in Psa. 45:10,11, and the promised joy and gladness of those who accept it and prove themselves worthy of it. Then read Paul's counsel to the husbands and wives who are truly wedded in the Lord: they two shall be one flesh – as one person, having but one mind and one common interest, purpose and aim. And for this purpose, to this end, each is to forsake the former ties which united them to parents and brothers and sisters. Then says the Apostle, "This is a great mystery" – it is something rarely seen, even among Christian husbands and wives – "but I speak concerning Christ and the Church," the Bridegroom and Bride between whom the union will be *perfect*. – Eph. 5:22-33.

Isaac and his wife, Rebecca, furnish a striking type of Christ and the Church as bridegroom and bride, to which we will refer later; and the Revelator points to the heavenly Jerusalem, the glorified Church, as the bride, the Lamb's wife.

The teaching of this oft-repeated and beautiful symbol, by which the Lord would have us understand and appreciate his great love and tender care for us as his Church, is so plain that it seems strange that any should fail to comprehend it; yet through a misapplication of a type some few have reached erroneous conclusions on the subject. Two of the dear friends of the truth think they have found new light on this subject, though their views differ somewhat, and both cannot be right.

One holds that the patriarchs and prophets of the past dispensation, mentioned in Heb. 11, will, in their resurrection, constitute the bride; and the other holds that the bride of Christ is to be composed of the living Israelites now regathering to Palestine, who, as we have seen, shall be the first to be blessed and restored to human perfection under the new Millennial dispensation. While dissimilar in some respects, these views are sufficiently alike to be examined together.

We reply (1), It would be impossible in God's order to call the bride before the bridegroom. It pleased the Father that in the **[R1386 : page 100]** Anointed One all fulness should dwell – that in all things he should have the pre-eminence. (2) It would be an incongruous and impossible union for the bridegroom to be spiritual, and the bride to be human. It would be out of harmony, too, with our Lord's prayer, "Father I will that they also whom thou hast *given me* be *with me* where I am, that they may behold my glory;" and again, with his statements – "I go to prepare a place for you," and "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." How could Bridegroom and Bride have fellowship and union, joint-heirship and joint-

inheritance, if one were of the spiritual and the other of the human nature?

Both of the objecting friends recognize the force of the type to which we long ago called attention – that Abraham, Isaac and Rebecca represent Jehovah, Christ and the Bride. But both seem to have forgotten that a *type* must not be used to teach a doctrine, but merely to *illustrate* one that is already taught in plain terms.

Both proceed to claim that Isaac represented the entire Gospel Church – head and body – and that Rebecca, his bride, *must therefore* represent some other class. They claim that as we have shown, or rather as the Apostle has shown, that Sarah, Isaac's mother, was a type of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 4:24,31), and as Sarah died before Eliezer was sent to seek a bride for Isaac, *therefore* the Gospel Covenant must come to an end before the call of the Bride; and hence that the calling of the Bride will be deferred until this Gospel age is ended. The fact that the servant is instructed not to take a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites, but to go to Abraham's own kindred for her, they interpret to signify that the bride must be of the *natural seed of Abraham*, claiming accordingly that she could not be selected from Jews and Gentiles as the Gospel Church has been selected, but must be Jewish exclusively.

We have stated thus fully and clearly their position, which we believe to be erroneous, so that the answer may be the more conclusive to these friends and to all.

Let us see to it, beloved, that we are of those who hold the Head (Col. 2:19), who acknowledge in every thought and doctrine the preeminence of our Redeemer. He is the antitype of Isaac – not we. He, alone and apart from us, was the heir of all things. We were strangers to him and afar off, like Rebecca, when Christ (Isaac) became Lord of all and was highly exalted and given a name above every name, and when in consequence he could say,

"All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." Ah, yes! "Of the people there was none with him."

It is since he is thus Lord of all, and our Lord, that we or any have received an invitation from the Father to become his bride and joint-heir. To us the spirit of truth declares, as Eliezer declared to Rebecca and her family concerning Isaac – His Father is very rich, and all that he hath he has given to his Son – "He is Lord of all" the estate, and fully his Father's representative, and the Father now seeketh for him a bride and joint-heir.

And as in the type certain gold ornaments were presented to Rebecca from the moment that she entertained the good tidings, so with us: from the moment that we first gave ear to the Father's invitation or "high-calling" we have been blessed. The ornaments, being of gold, symbolize *divine* blessings, gold always symbolizing divine things. The golden adornments were first, earrings, representing the blessed effect of hearing the call; and secondly, bracelets for the hands, representing the blessed effect of the divine call upon all our *doings* thereafter.

And so these blessings came merely from the attentive hearing of the high call; and yet greater blessings followed when we accepted that call and said that we would leave our father's house (the human nature) and our own people (earthly friendships) and go to our Espoused One. (Psa. 45:9-11.) So in the type – when the decision was reached and Rebecca was "betrothed" or "espoused" to Isaac, whom having not seen she loved, the servant presented her with vessels of silver (symbolizing *truths*), and with further jewels or ornaments of gold (divine blessings and graces), and with *new* raiment, symbolizing her newness of life and relationship to the Father and the Son whose call she had accepted. – Gen. 24:22,53. **[R1386 : page 101]**

And as Rebecca's mother and brother also received some valuable presents from the servant of Abraham when she received

her greater blessing, this symbolizes the fact that not only are the *fully consecrated* ones blessed when they leave all to accept the "high-calling," but others of the sympathizing ones of the household of faith (the justified, but not fully sanctified) also receive spiritual blessings through the betrothed class, even before the union with the Bridegroom.

It should be noted, then, that our friends are building their theories upon several misinterpretations. (1) Sarah's death before the Bride of Isaac was called would show that the promised "Seed" mentioned in the Abrahamic Covenant was *fulfilled in the person* of our Lord Jesus – the heir, and the only heir under that Covenant. (Heb. 1:2; Titus 3:5-7.) This the Apostle expresses clearly, saying – "He saith not, 'And to seeds,' as of many; but as of *one*, 'And to thy seed' – which is Christ." (Gal. 3:16.) That the Apostle here uses the name Christ to refer to our Lord Jesus personally, exclusive of his Church, is shown clearly by his further use of the word in the succeeding verses of this same chapter. See verses 22,24,26 and 27. In verses 28 and 29 he brings in the name Christ as applicable to all the Church, but in such a manner as to show that it is our coming into betrothal and union with him that gives us a share in that name and in the honors and glories future which it implies. "If ye be Christ's [if ye, like Rebecca, the type, have accepted the Father's offer to become joint-heirs with his Son, if ye have joyfully accepted the calling presented to you by the servant, the Spirit of Truth, and have forsaken all, and are fully betrothed to your Lord] *then* [not by being, like your Lord, natural heirs of those covenant blessings, but by your *union* with Christ] ye are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise" [children of God, whom Abraham typified; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with, by and through Jesus Christ, our Lord].

In Eph. 5:28-30, the Apostle shows that for Christ to love his bride is to love *himself*, for in accepting the Church as his Bride

the Lord [R1387 : page 101] accepts her as his own body, even as in the type of this (Adam and Eve and the human union), the wife is accepted as the very flesh of her husband and her body as an addition to his members – and the husband as her head. Thus, now, the consecrated, espoused ones while in the flesh represent Christ in the flesh; and in their daily sacrifices they are filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ (Col. 1:24); and by and by, when glorified, when made spirit-beings like their glorious Lord, they will be his glorified spouse and joint-heir, and still loved *as himself* – as members of his body.

Again, the view that the Bride must be of the natural seed of Abraham is a mistake. Rebecca *was not* of the seed of Abraham. If it had been the design to represent the Bride of Christ as being taken from among the Jews, the natural seed of Abraham, no doubt a daughter of Hagar, who represented the Jewish or Law Covenant, would have been chosen. On the contrary, when studying or applying a known type we should be sure not to *mix* type and antitype. Abraham as a part of the type represented God, and hence Abraham's own people represented God's people, as contrasted with the Canaanites, who represented the wilfully wicked. This feature of the type points out to us the fact that while God does call sinners to repentance, he does not call sinners to become joint-heirs with Christ, his Son and heir. To this close and glorious relationship he invites only those whom he recognizes as friends of righteousness and truth. In a word, this type confirms the teachings of the Apostles, that it is *after* we have been "justified by faith, and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, that we have access into this grace [this call to joint-heirship with the Only Begotten Son and heir] wherein we stand – rejoicing in hope of [sharing] the glory of God." (Rom. 5:1,2.) Then we shall be fully united to him, and see him as he is, receive his name, which is above every name, and enter into (*his* mother Sarah's tent) the privileges and opportunities for

blessing the world promised in the Abrahamic Covenant, represented by Sarah. – Gal. 4:24.

So, then, we have shown Scripturally (1) that [R1387 : page 102] Isaac primarily represented our Lord, the "heir of all things," personally, and no others; (2) that the joint-heirs were represented in Rebecca, his bride, who was his only joint-heir; (3) that Rebecca typified a class selected from among *justified* believers – believers in God (Abraham) and in Christ (Isaac) – which is true only of the household of faith and surely not true of the Jews; (4) that the Abrahamic Covenant, represented by Sarah, bore only *one* seed, which is Christ Jesus, and that it died or ceased as a mother when he had finished his course and become *heir of all things*; (5) that if we would become joint-heirs of the opportunity and honor (of being God's seed through whom the blessing of the world will come) contained in that Abrahamic Covenant, typified by Sarah, there is no other way than by becoming Christ's – by giving ourselves to him according to the Father's invitation by the spirit of the truth – losing our own name and taking his, and forgetting our father's house (earthly hopes and ambitions) and our own people and becoming wholly *his* – his Bride, whom he loves and will cherish as "his own body."

Next, let us look at the objection which seems to have led into the misinterpretations which we have here sought to correct. It is claimed that because the Church is sometimes called the *body* of Christ, of which Jesus is the head, it could not also be the Bride. Therefore, say the objectors, the Bride must be one class and the Body another class.

This at first has a show of logic, but we must not trust our imperfect minds to reason straight, if we wander away from the Word and forget that "*thus it is written.*" We must *compare* spiritual things with spiritual things, as the Apostle directs, and let the Word of God be its own interpreter. Just as

unreasonably might we say that if Christ is the "Good Shepherd" and we members of his Body, we could not also be "his sheep," or members of the "little flock" to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom, and that the little flock could not be the Bride, because no shepherd ever marries his flock. Just as unreasonably we might say, too, that when Christ is termed the Captain of our salvation, and we "good soldiers," the soldiers must be another class; because it is said that we are the *body* of Christ and members in particular. Just as unreasonably might we argue that those whom Christ is not ashamed to call his "brethren" must be a different class from those called the Bride and the Body of Christ, because naturally a man does not marry his brethren, nor are they his own body. Just as unreasonably might we proceed to argue that a captain never marries his soldiers, and that hence the Bride, the Body, the Good Soldiers, the Brethren and the little flock of Sheep must be different classes. The same reasoning would also apply to the relationship of Christ as our great High Priest and ourselves as the Royal Priesthood under him; to Christ the Pearl Merchant and the Church the pearl; to Christ the Sower of the "good seed," and "wheat" the children of the Kingdom; to Christ the Chief Corner Stone and the overcoming Church the living stones builded up into him unto a holy temple of God; to Christ the vine and his people the branches.

A little reflection upon these facts will surely convince all that our friends were mistaken in concluding that because the Church in some places in Scripture is called "the body" she could not also with equal propriety be called "the bride" of Christ. Perhaps, indeed, their error may result (under the Lord's overruling providence) in bringing clearer views on the subject, not to themselves alone, but also to others of the Church.

The above figures, while very different, serve, each better than any other, to illustrate some peculiar feature either of the character of the Lord or of the Church, or of the relationship

between them. For instance, as sheep the Church must be *meek*, willing to be led – not wayward, headstrong and perverse like goats; they must, however, not only be meek and docile and peace-loving like sheep, but like soldiers they must "fight a good fight" and overcome the world and its influence, conquering self and overcoming obstacles put in the way of their service for the Lord by the world and the devil. Sheep are not overcomers and overcomers are not sheepish; two opposite truths [R1387 : page 103] were to be taught and two opposite illustrations were necessary: as "sheep" we follow our Shepherd and gladly obey his word, and as "soldiers" of the cross we fight against all opposition that would hinder our following and obeying our Captain; but we fight the *good* fight – for truth and right and love, and not selfishly and with carnal weapons.

The figure of a body beautifully represents the intimate relationship existing between our Lord Jesus and his Church. He is the Head – he plans, directs, supervises and cares for the various members of his body, the Church, and all real members are dependent upon each other and upon the Head and are bound together by the ties of spiritual love and common interest. And although the Head has been actually absent for over eighteen hundred years, he has yet been present in his care and by his spirit, and representatively through certain members of the body upon whom he, in his absence, confers certain gifts representing his qualities and office as the head of the Church – the *eye*, the *mouth*, the *ear* members. (1 Cor. 12:15,21.) We should have missed much had the illustration of the Lord as the Head and the Church as his body been omitted. We are glad that no good thing or illustration helpful to those who would walk uprightly has been omitted.

And when once clearly seen and fully appreciated, we feel sure that none will regret the use by the Spirit of any figures used to show the Church and her relationship to her Lord – especially that representing her as the chaste virgin espoused to Christ and

soon to be made one with him in nature and likeness and glory and work. As the figure of head and body represented the care of the Lord in and over the Church during his actual absence in "a far country," the figure of the *betrothed* or espoused virgin, longing for the coming of the Bridegroom and the consummation of her hopes and his promises, represents the *actual* state of the case far better. Like Rebecca we were already virgins, pure ones, whose sins had been pardoned (by the grace of God through the atoning sacrifice of Christ), and therefore of the household of faith, before we were called of the Spirit to go to him to become his Bride and joint-heir. Like her we each (and all of the faithful little flock from the first) have been *betrothed* to our Lord and are following on to know the Lord and to see him as he is and to share his glory – under the lead of the Spirit. Already we have exceeding great and precious promises, gifts and graces of the spirit, but we are not satisfied: we prize them and treasure them, but we think of them only as foretastes of the greater blessings to come when we shall enter fully into the joys of our Lord. We shall be satisfied only when we shall *see him* as he is – when we shall awake in his likeness. – 1 John 3:2; Psa. 17:15.

All along the journey, like Rebecca, the Church has been on the look-out for him whom, not having seen, she loved, and in whom, though she saw him not, yet she rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory at the thought of the coming union. (1 Pet. 1:8.) And now, oh, blessed vision! our eyes of faith, like Rebecca's, are keen and we see one in the field (the world) approaching us. Like Rebecca, we ask our guide (the Spirit of truth) who it is – half surmising from the first that it is our Beloved, as we see his stately steppings among the nations and note the promised signs of his *presence*. The Spirit of the Lord through his Word is even now assuring us that what we see is "the sign [or manifestation] of the Son of [R1388 : page 103] Man," and that the hour of our rapture is near at hand. Soon we shall pass beyond the veil of death and be with him (See Gen. 24:64,65) and

be accepted with him into the work and office of fulfilling the Covenant represented in Sarah. This in the type is shown by the entrance of Rebecca with Isaac into Sarah's tent.

When it is remembered that the Apostle refers to mother Eve as a likeness of the Church and father Adam as a figure of our Lord Jesus; and when we remember that in order to the development of Eve a deep sleep fell upon Adam and she was formed from his wounded side, we see a beautiful harmony between this type and the facts. In order that we should have a being at all and be capable of receiving a call to be the Bride of Christ, it was necessary that our Lord should die for us – the deep sleep of death came upon him, his side was riven [R1388 : page 104] as the price of our life, our existence – and being thus justified by his death we were acceptable to him as his Bride. When all the chaste, wise virgins (*i.e.*, the "overcomers," the "good soldiers," the faithful, fruit-bearing members or "branches" of the "Vine," the obedient "sheep," the sacrificing royal "priests") have been selected and prepared and made ready for *union* with the Bridegroom, the marriage or glorification will be accomplished; and then the *regeneration of the world* will follow.

THE REGENERATION OF THE WORLD.

But here again some are inclined to err: comparing spiritual things with natural, they fall into the error of expecting that the world will be *re*-generated somewhat after the manner of the first generation or natural birth; and consequently they begin to wonder and speculate as to how the Bride of Christ will conceive and bring forth children during the Millennial age, and point to Adam and Eve and their offspring as an illustration of Christ and the Church and the *re*-generation of the world.

All this is a mistake, and comes from carrying a *figure* further than God intended, and further than the *plain* statements of his Word authorize. The expression *regeneration* does signify to *give*

life again, but it in no way implies that it will be given in the same way as now. Adam was the first generator of his race: Christ is prepared to be the *second* father, the *re*-generator to such of the race as will accept the life he offers in his way and upon his conditions. The time for this offer of regeneration to the world will be in the Millennial age, as our Lord clearly shows. (Matt. 19:28.) He will then cause all to hear the good tidings that as they lost human perfection (mental, moral and physical) in Adam they may have their inherited condemnation blotted out, and may regain those blessings and favors lost, at the hands of Christ their Redeemer, by proving their desire to be at-one with God through him.

As during the Gospel age the Church, the Bride, is regenerated and begotten to a *new* nature by faith in and obedience to certain exceeding great and precious promises limited to this age, so in the next age other precious promises of earthly restitution will be the begetting influence by obedience to which, under God's arrangement, they shall be re-generated and restored to the original likeness and harmony with God.

The figure of the Bridegroom and the Bride is at an end when they twain are made one. To carry this figure further and talk about children of the Bride is unwarranted by the Scriptures, and is unjustifiable speculation. We would have just as much right to speculate further about the Lord's "sheep," and to say that sheep are cared for in order to get their wool and finally for the shepherd to sell off or to kill and eat, and that, therefore, after a while all the Church will be so dealt with by our Good Shepherd.

If the type of Adam and Eve and their union, representing the union to be accomplished between Christ and his Church, did not *end* at that union, but continued and included the bearing of children, then the sin of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from Eden must also be parts of the type, which must be fulfilled on a

still more awful scale than the type. But, we repeat, the type *ended* when Adam accepted of Eve as his wife – when they became *one*; for this final union or oneness and joint-heirship, between Christ and his faithful followers, is all that was intended to be typified.

Just so, too, with the type of Isaac and Rebecca: it ends where Isaac receives his espoused into his mother's tent, and does not extend to the long-time barrenness of Rebecca; nor to the two kinds of twin sons (who figure in an entirely different type, as the Apostle shows); nor to the blind old age of Isaac, and his deception by Rebecca and Jacob.

The majority of the *figures* used apply to and illustrate matters of the present age, and terminate with this age; being finished, they are either dropped or merged into other figures which better represent the changed condition of affairs beyond the present age. When the new conditions have been ushered in, there will no longer be use for the symbols which now serve so well to illustrate the true Church, such as "good fish," "wise virgins," "good soldiers," "vine-branches," "sheep," "wheat," [R1388 : page 105] etc. In connection with the parable of the harvesting of the "wheat" class the Lord clearly shows this change of illustration; for, instead of speaking further of glorified wheat, he changes and uses the sun as a more appropriate figure, saying: "*Then* shall the righteous shine forth *as the Sun* in the kingdom of their father." Just so with the figure of "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." It is used repeatedly in reference to the Church during the period of her espousal, but ceases and is merged into another symbol or figure with the end of this age.

Those who have but an imperfect knowledge of the old Jewish usage in marriage, which is the basis of the illustration, might suppose that the Church could not be appropriately or properly likened to the Bride or wife until the marriage. This

would be true according to present custom; but the Jewish custom fits the facts much better, and was doubtless so arranged of God as a type. This old custom was for the father or some friend of the man to make a contract, arrange terms, etc., for him with the one to be invited to become his wife and joint-heir. Such a one was called "the friend of the Bridegroom." With them this contract constituted the real *marriage*, but the contracting parties lived apart usually for a year, after which came the wedding feast celebrating their union, and thereafter they lived together. John the Baptist at our Lord's first advent occupied the position of "friend of the Bridegroom" toward the Jewish nation – seeking to have them accept of Christ the Bridegroom and become his Bride. (John 3:29.) The nation as a whole rejected the offer, but a small remnant of them (the apostles, etc.) accepted, and also became in turn the friends of the Bridegroom, the mouthpieces of the Spirit to seek among God's people – believing Gentiles included – for the chaste, wise virgins and to *espouse* such to Christ – telling them of "the riches of grace in Christ Jesus." While the Church as a whole is sometimes spoken of as one virgin, because the marriage to be *completed* soon will be with one Lord, yet each faithful individual of the Church is recognized as a wise virgin, and really, each is individually and separately espoused to the Lord. This is clearly stated by the Apostle in Rom. 7:4. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the Law by the body [sacrifice] of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead."

So then the work of espousing "wise virgins" to Christ as to a husband has been in progress throughout the entire Gospel age; and each espoused one is in turn permitted to serve in another capacity – as a "friend of the Bridegroom" to tell others of the great privilege and, co-operating with the Spirit of the truth, to say, "Come," to whomsoever will. (See Rev. 22:17,20.) And the living representatives of this class at any time have constituted, properly speaking, the Bride or Church, although the Church or

Bride will not be actually complete without all the members. As in Jewish custom the espoused virgin was called a Bride from the time of her consent or contract with the Bridegroom, so the espoused virgin Church is called Christ's Bride – before the consummation of their union. Accordingly, the Scriptures speak of the marriage feast coming after the "*wife* hath made herself ready." – Rev. 19:7.

In Rev. 18:23, when speaking of Babylon's fall, it is declared that the voice of the Bridegroom and the voice of the Bride shall *no more* be heard in her: clearly showing that previously they had spoken in and through Babylon, the confused class, and that the names Bridegroom and Bride were applicable before Babylon's fall and before the marriage feast.

In Rev. 21:9 we are invited to "come hither" to the yet future standpoint and get a view of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, and see how she will *then* appear. "And he showed me the holy city Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God." This, it will be noted, is given to mark the change of the symbol from a *Bride* to a *City*; just as elsewhere the figure was shown to change from "wheat" to "the Sun." A city is a symbol of a government, and the calling of it the New Jerusalem city would signify – The new, antitypical government of peace. There has been no occasion for the use of such a symbol during the Gospel age, because the Church has not [R1388 : page 106] been in ruling power; and when glorified with her Lord the figure of a virgin-bride waiting for full union with the Bridegroom will no longer be appropriate as now; hence the change from the one symbol to the other.

"THY MAKER IS THY HUSBAND."

The Old Testament makes several references like the above to some union or Covenant between Jehovah and Israel. See Isa. 54:1-6; [R1389 : page 106] Ezek. 16:32; Jer. 3:14; Hosea 2:2-

7,14-20. The contracting parties are Jehovah and Israel, but the reference to a union is in a less particular sense than the New Testament references to Christ and the Bride, the Lamb's wife. Indeed, the word husband as above simply means *caretaker*. In another place Judah is represented as being the unfaithful *husband*. (Mal. 2:11-15.) In Isa. 62:3-5, in representing the future blessing of the land of Israel, the figure is changed, and it is said that *her sons* shall marry her, and that she shall be as a *lamp* and as a *crown* in the Lord's hand, and that he will rejoice over the restored land *like as* a Bridegroom rejoices over his bride.

Of all the references Isaiah 54 is the most explicit; and upon it God has given us light through the Apostle Paul. (Read Gal. 4:22-31 in the *Emphatic Diaglott* and in *Rotherham's* translation.)

Here we are shown clearly that the barren woman who is to be blessed and to bring forth children and to sing, and whose Maker is her husband, refers neither to the people of fleshly Israel nor to the people of spiritual Israel. The Apostle declares the whole thing "an allegory," a figure, a type; and he explains the figure. Abraham was a type of God and Abraham's wives were types of God's Covenants. The covenant first declared was the Gospel Covenant, by which God promised to bless the world through the promised Seed, which is Christ. This covenant was typified by Sarah. But this promise has been *barren* for a long time – all the families of the earth have not been blessed, although nearly four thousand years have elapsed since God recognized that covenant and swore by himself to bring forth such results. Meantime (430 years after recognizing this covenant – Gal. 3:17) God made another covenant – not so great, however, nor by any means so good a covenant as the former – the Law Covenant. This covenant was typified in Hagar, Sarah's servant.

For a time it appeared that the children of the Law Dispensation (fleshly Israel) were the full inheritors of the first promise or covenant, as Hagar bore Ishmael for Sarah and upon her knees as her representative. In the type, Ishmael passed for a time as Abraham's son and heir, just as Israel after the flesh for centuries appeared to be the promised children of God in whom all nations should be blessed. But not so was God's plan, according to which the offspring of Hagar the servant represented a *servant* class, while the offspring of Sarah represented a class of sons and heirs.

The Hagar Covenant, the Law Covenant, did bring forth some noble *servants* of the Lord – "Moses verily was faithful as a servant over all his house" [of servants], but few in all – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the holy prophets down to John. (Heb. 3:1-6.) There the Sarah Covenant began to bear: Christ our Lord was begotten and born of the Spirit and became Son and Lord and heir of all – Christ as a Son over his own house [also sons], whose house are we if we hold fast to our hope, firm unto the end of our trial.

As Sarah had but one son, so the covenant which she represented has but one "Seed, which is Christ," which, however, under God's gracious provision, is made to include all such as are accepted through Christ to be his "brethren." But the promise includes not only the development and blessing of the Seed, but also the *blessing of all* the families of the earth through that Seed, and hence, as the Apostle shows, it was the *whole gospel* in few words. – Gal. 3:8.

The Hagar or Law Covenant was again fitly represented by the rocky, barren Mt. Sinai, where the Law was given and where the Servant House was organized as a nation. It was also represented by the capital city of that nation, Jerusalem – which was continually besieged and in captivity. So says the Apostle: the

Sarah Covenant is represented in "the *exalted* Jerusalem" [R1389 : page 107] – the Kingdom soon to come into power to bless the world – whose offspring and heirs through Christ we already are. This is the city (*i.e.*, government) of which Christ shall be the head, the city of the Great King of which Jerusalem the literal was but an imperfect type.

Abraham and others of the ancient worthies believed God, that he would establish righteousness in the earth, and that under his righteous government they would fully realize all that God had promised them. It is under this perfect city or government from God, through Christ, that they shall find a country (*literally*, a home) which could never have come under the imperfect city (government) of bondage which was typified by Hagar. (See Heb. 11:16.) Nevertheless, these all have been waiting for the true seed and heir (Christ) to come, and until his Church, his Bride, shall be selected and united with him; because it is by and *through us*, "the Seed," that the Kingdom shall come and all their good hopes be fulfilled. – Heb. 11:39,40.

But much of the Sarah Covenant is still future. Christ has become heir of all things, but he has not yet used his great power and reigned; he has not yet entered fully into the glory of his high office. He has finished the sacrificial features of his work and all things are ready for the consequent work of blessing the world; but he waits, according to the Father's plan, until his "brethren," his "body," his Bride, shall be selected and have herself ready. And we, his espoused – what of us? We are coming to him and to the Kingdom which he and the Father have promised; we are running the race for the great prize of our high calling to joint-heirship in his divine nature and glory. We are not, filled with fearful apprehensions, approaching Mt. Sinai with its thunders and with its Law which none could keep, but we are approaching a very different condition of things, which should and does fill our hearts with rejoicing. We are approaching Mount Zion [the

Kingdom of Zion], the city [government] of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to [association with] an innumerable company of angels – a full assembly – and to the gathering together of the Church of first-born ones, having been enrolled in the heavens, and to a Judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to the Mediator of the New Covenant – Jesus – and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel [which speaks our pardon and peace instead of crying for just vengeance]. This, beloved, is what for eighteen hundred years and more we have been approaching, and which now, thank God, we are very near. But the world is approaching another manifestation of divine power, more terrible than that at Sinai, and of which that was but the illustration – a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation – no, nor ever shall be again – a trouble in which both the symbolic earth (society) and the symbolic heavens (ecclesiasticism) shall be shaken and utterly removed, to make room for our Kingdom which shall never be shaken, because founded by love and mercy upon principles of justice.
