

**AN INTERESTING QUESTION.
THE SPIRITS OF JUST MEN MADE PERFECT.**

Question. – How should we understand the statement of Heb. 12:23, respecting "the spirits of just men made perfect"?

Answer. – To appreciate this we must take the statement in its connections: The Apostle is contrasting the introduction of the Law Covenant with the introduction of the New Covenant; and let us remember that altho the Church is justified by the blood of Christ, which seals the New Covenant, nevertheless, the New Covenant itself is not considered as having gone into effect during this Gospel age; it is a covenant for the world of mankind, and the putting of it into effect brings the times of restitution of all things at the Second Advent. The Church, altho justified by the sacrifice which sealed the New Covenant, is really accepted under the Abrahamic covenant – accepted as the Seed of Abraham – members of the body of Christ – through which Seed all the families of the earth are to be blessed under the New Covenant, sealed at Calvary, during the Millenium.

The Law Covenant, of which Moses was the Mediator, and which was given at Mount Sinai amid the thunderings and lightnings and voices, etc., was typical of the New Covenant of which Christ (Head and body) is the Mediator, and which is to be introduced to the world of mankind after the whole body of Christ has shed its blood and been completed and glorified. – Acts 3:22; Col. 1:24.

The Apostle draws a parallel between the marching of Israel from Egypt and the Red Sea, up to Mount Sinai, where, under the leadership of the priesthood, they came under the Law Covenant with all who hope to become God's people, marching under the lead of Christ and the "royal priesthood" toward another mountain, – to Mount Zion, the Kingdom of God, the Millennial Kingdom, following under the banner

of the antitypical Mediator, will come all of God's Israel, all who are willing to be delivered from the power of the antitypical Pharaoh, *viz.*, Satan.

When we consider how the Israelites approached Mount Sinai as a host, and that they did not all get there at the same moment nor the same hour, nor even in the same day, we find the parallel of this in the fact that the Lord's people throughout this age have been gradually approaching this Kingdom – not all at once, but one after another throughout the age. The last members of the Royal Priesthood are only getting close to the Kingdom, Mount Zion, now; and are to be followed in turn by all the hosts who *will become* true Israelites during the Millennial age, when light and knowledge shall be freely granted.

With this picture before the mind, and reading the Apostle's words as translated in the *Diaglott*, we see a beauty in the expression: We have not approached the natural mountain with the terrors of the Law, the smoke and the clouds and thick darkness and lightnings and voices of words that spoke condemnation and death to any who erred; but we are approaching, and all of the Church throughout the age have been approaching, the glorious Mount Zion, the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of blessing.

And what shall we find in this Kingdom when we have fully reached it? We shall find the heavenly city, God's Kingdom of power and great glory. We shall find ourselves introduced to a new company of brethren – the heavenly host; and we shall find our loved ones who have traveled with us in the narrow way, in that first general assembling of the Church of the First-borns, whose names are written in heaven. There we shall find our Heavenly Father, the great Judge of all; there we shall find the spirits, the new natures of the justified ones fully perfected in the likeness of their Lord and Head – "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." There we shall find in due time perfected human beings fully restored to the divine likeness in which father Adam was created; and there we shall find Jesus, who mediated the New

Covenant; and there we shall ever appreciate the blood of sprinkling which cleansed us and presented us faultless before the Father in love.

But altho we are approaching these grand and glorious things, we are not to expect that they will all be ushered in in a peaceful manner; on the contrary, as the Apostle points out (vss. 26,27), there will be a correspondence between the great time of trouble, with which the Millennial age and its New Covenant for mankind will be ushered in, and the way in which the Law Covenant to the Jews was ushered in – only that the New Covenant will be ushered in on a much grander and antitypical plane. There will be a shaking here, as there was a shaking there; but instead of its being the physical earth that will shake, it will be the symbolical earth, – society. And not alone the social structure, but also the heavens, or ecclesiastical structure, is to be shaken here. As the Apostle's words clearly intimate, the shaking will be a much more wonderful one than was its type, even as every antitype is much greater than its type. He explains that the shaking here is to be so thorough that it will shake everything that is shakeable, and that only the fixed, permanent, righteous things shall ultimately remain. And those things that shall be permitted to remain, he declares (vs. 28) pertain to the Kingdom of God, which is immoveable, unshakeable.

It is this Kingdom toward which all of the Lord's people march throughout this Gospel age, that will then be fully attained amidst all that great shaking and confusion of the great day of trouble which is just before us. And as Moses went up into the quaking mountain, and was lost to the sight of the people below, so at, and in conjunction with these mighty manifestations of the time of trouble the entire Church will be "caught up," gathered to the Lord, changed to his likeness – passing through the portals of death, tho they shall not sleep, but be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.
