

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM AND ITS WORK

DIVINE foreknowledge is one of the great lessons which God will impress. God would have us know that every feature of his plan was premeditated, forearranged from before the foundation of the world. He would have us recognize the fact that he is working all things according to the counsel of his own will, according to fixed rules, and principles which are unchangeable. This lesson is one of the principal objects served by a Divine revelation; a secondary object is the blessing of a certain class in sympathetic accord with God by giving them in advance such information respecting Divine purposes as would enable them to rejoice therein and to cooperate therewith.

THE SCROLL IN THE DIVINE HAND

A beautiful word-picture of this Divine foreknowledge and prearrangement is given us in the fifth chapter of Revelation. There Jehovah, the Emperor of the Universe, is pictured upon the throne, and in his hand a written scroll, sealed with seven seals. That sealed scroll represents the Divine plan which God purposed in himself from before the foundation of the world, but which he had revealed to no one, no, not to the angels, neither to the Son. (Matt. 24:36.) In a word, all that has occurred since creation – the permission of sin, the fall, the Covenant with Abraham, the Law Covenant with Israel, the coming of Jesus, the Pentecostal blessing, the gathering of members of the Church – all these things were foreknown to the Father and provided for. Additionally, that scroll contains a record of all that is happening now, and all that will occur throughout the Millennial Age, down to its very close – down to the time when every creature in heaven and in earth and under the earth shall ascribe praise, honor, glory

and dominion to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever. – Rev. 5:13.

In the picture John notes a proclamation made throughout heaven and earth, inquiring for anyone worthy of the great honor of having this scroll of the Divine purpose committed to his care – to be opened, to be executed in harmony with the Divine purpose. He looked to see who the worthy one might be, but none was found worthy. Then he wept. It seemed to John too bad that God should have some great, wonderful purposes which might come to naught because no one was worthy to be the Divine executor in respect to the plan. But his tears were checked by the angel, who said, "Weep not: Behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." And John said, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne...stood a Lamb as it had been slain." And to the Lamb was given the scroll. Then all the angels of God worshiped the Lamb, saying, Thou art worthy to receive glory, and honor, and dominion, and might, and power, etc.

Applying the picture, we see the signification. Until our Lord was slain, until he had given his life as man's redemption price, there was no being in all the universe worthy to be the executor of the Divine purposes. By our Lord's loving obedience to the Father's will – even unto death, even the death of the cross – he proved himself loyal to the last degree. Him the Father raised from the dead, and when he had ascended up on high the proclamation went forth, Let all the angels of God worship him. He is the Lamb of God who was slain, and by his death redeemed a condemned world of mankind, and merited the Father's confidence that to him might be entrusted every feature of the Divine program. "He is worthy." From that time on, every feature of the program would be under his supervision and he would open the seals and see to the execution of every feature of God's gracious purposes. He had promised his Church that whatsoever

things the Father would reveal to him, he, in turn, through the holy Spirit and by his providences, would reveal to his faithful ones, to those walking in his footsteps of full consecration.

THE GOSPEL BEFOREHAND

St. Paul speaks of the Gospel's having been preached beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Here was a vague statement of the Divine purpose, relating to the blessing itself as an acorn would be related to an oak tree. Similarly, seed-thoughts respecting coming blessings had previously been given, though with much less definiteness. Directly after the fall God had declared that the Seed of the woman should yet bruise the Serpent's head. In other words, he foretold that evil should not always triumph. Again, through the Prophet Enoch a seed-thought had been given in his prophecy, "Behold, the Lord cometh with his holy myriads, to execute judgment." But to Abraham the message was so much more explicit as to make it worthy to be termed a part of the Gospel, a part of the good tidings now more fully made known unto us who are in Christ Jesus.

Abraham no doubt expected that Isaac, the son of promise, would be "the Seed," or the offspring, through whom the blessings would come; but when Isaac was grown and nothing wonderful was accomplished through him, God confirmed to him, and subsequently to Jacob, his son, the same Abrahamic promise, assuring them that "the Seed" was still future, and implied that the promise meant a nation instead of an individual – a nation of Abraham's Seed, Abraham's children. And this feature of the Divine arrangement was made manifest at Jacob's death, when the blessing was passed on from him, not to only *one* of his children, but to *all of* [R4451 : page 244] *them* collectively. There he pronounced them a nation of twelve tribes, and indicated that to them as a whole descended

this Abrahamic promise – that they, as the Seed of Abraham, inherited the promise, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

This promise held that nation together for all the centuries down to Christ – yea, it still holds them together as a peculiar people, separate from all the other nations of the world. St. Paul and the other Apostles refer to this repeatedly. St. Paul says, Our twelve tribes instantly (incessantly) serving God, hope to come to the fulfilment of this Abrahamic promise – the blessing of all the families of the earth through them. – Acts 26:7.

THE LAW COVENANT WAS ADDED

As St. Paul points out, the Law Covenant was added to the Abrahamic Covenant so far as the nation of Israel was concerned – to continue until the promised Seed should come. He is particular to add that the Law Covenant itself did not disannul or make invalid the original Covenant, which was of Grace and not of Law. (Gal. 3:17.) He was particular also that we should see that the Law Covenant "made nothing perfect" – it accomplished no real reformation or restitution. It did, however, set forth in types and allegories some wonderful lessons illustrative of great Divine principles of truth and righteousness – lessons which were beneficial to the Jewish nation, natural Israel, and also to the Gospel Church, which constitutes spiritual Israel.

During the period from the death of Jacob to Christ, while the Law made nothing perfect, a few of that nation, exercising faith above and beyond the Law Covenant, were blessed by the *underlying* Abrahamic Covenant. These the Apostle enumerates in Hebrews 11. They had this testimony, that they died in faith, and that thus "they pleased God," although they did not by obedience to the Law Covenant secure the blessing which it proposed. Those faithful ones will get through Christ what the Law Covenant could not give them, for, because of inherited

weaknesses, they were unable to fulfil the requirements of the Law Covenant.

THE PROMISED SEED

Let us keep in mind that the Law Covenant was *added* to the Abrahamic Covenant because of transgression – to show to the Israelites and to all the impossibility of an imperfect man's keeping the Divine Law, and also to manifest in due time our Lord Jesus, who, born under the Law Covenant, kept its provisions faithfully. By so doing, says the Apostle, Christ "magnified the Law Covenant and made it honorable." Previously it might have been claimed that the Divine Law was too rigorous and that nobody could possibly keep it; that it would be impossible for a man to love God with *all* his heart, *all* his mind, *all* his being, *all* his strength, and his neighbor as himself. But when Jesus did this, and did more in sacrificing himself, the just for the unjust, it demonstrated the fact that God had not given an impossible Law; it demonstrated that the fault lay with mankind; that they had lost the original perfection with which the Creator had endowed them.

We read that our Lord was born under the Law Covenant "that he might redeem those who were under the Law" Covenant. So far as other peoples were concerned, he might have been of any other nation and redeemed Adam and the remainder of the world, but in order to preserve equitably to Israel the special blessing of God's Covenant with Abraham it was necessary that Christ should be of that nation, "born under the Law, that he might redeem those who were under the Law." That nation had been separated from the other nations of the world for the very purpose of giving the illustrations already referred to, and God would see to it that they should not be disadvantaged by reason of his having used them thus. The blessed opportunities offered them under the Law Covenant through the typical sacrifices, etc.,

lifted them above the other nations and gave them, as it were, a *second trial* for eternal life. In common with the remainder of mankind as children of Adam they had one trial and one [R4452 : page 244] condemnation through him; and then, under the Law Covenant arrangement and its mediator, Moses, another trial for eternal life was granted to that nation; but it was lost because none of them did keep or could fulfil the requirements of that Law Covenant. The day was saved for that nation as respects that Law Covenant, by which they were bound, by the fact that Christ became a Jew and by obedience to the Law Covenant gained all of the rights which it held out.

The rights gained were earthly rights – human perfection, an Eden home, fellowship with God and the dominion of earth; as recited by the Prophet, "Dominion over the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air." Had Christ kept these rights, which were properly his through obedience to the Law, he could indeed have brought a great blessing to the Jews, instructing them along the lines of health and morals; and through Israel these blessings and instructions might have been imparted to all other nations. But as the race was under Divine sentence of death, it would not have been possible for Jesus to give mankind perfection of mind or body. The blessings of the Seed of Abraham in that event would have been very limited indeed, and then only to such as would exercise faith and obedience similar to the faith and obedience which Abraham exercised.

MESSIAH THE REDEEMER

Instead of keeping the earthly rights which his special birth and obedience to the Law made possible to him, Jesus, in harmony with the Father's program, sacrificed these earthly rights at once – as soon as he reached manhood's estate, 30 years. He gave up all *earthly rights* and interests and privileges. His consecration was complete; he symbolized it by a water

immersion at Jordan. The Father accepted it, and forthwith gave him the begetting of the holy Spirit to a new nature. For the three and one half years of his earthly ministry our Lord persistently sacrificed his earthly life and every earthly interest, finishing the sacrifice at Calvary when he cried, "It is finished." On the third day thereafter the Father raised him from the dead to a newness of life – again on the spirit plane of being. This was the reward for his obedience to the Father's will in the sacrificing of his earthly rights and privileges as the perfect man.

So, then, as the glorified one in his resurrection, Messiah was a spirit being, "partaker of the Divine nature," and had at his command all those earthly rights and privileges which he had sacrificed, which he laid down in death in obedience to the Father's will. He had these now as a possession, as an *asset* which he might dispense, which he might *give* to others.

Let us not lose the thread of the thought: The Law Covenant promised earthly life and earthly blessings and earthly dominion – *those which Adam had lost*. Whoever would keep the Law should have these. Christ Jesus, as the keeper of the Law, had the right to these and laid them down. And now, being exalted, it is these *earthly blessings* and earthly rights which he has to dispense – to the Jew, or to all mankind, or to such an elect or select number of mankind as he may please, and as will be in accord with the Father's program outlined in the scroll sealed with seven seals.

When the Israelites found that Moses could not give them eternal life, and that even under David and Solomon they did not reach the pinnacle of power and influence in the world to bless mankind, they might well have been discouraged. Hence God, through the prophets, sent them further enlightenment to the effect that they could never accomplish the Divine purpose of blessing the world except as he would send them a Messiah, an

Anointed One, a King and Priest after the order of Melchizedek. When Messiah should come as the great Priest, and the great King, he would be able to do for [R4452 : page 245] them under a New [Law] Covenant what Moses and Aaron had not been able to do for them under the old Law Covenant.

It was in connection with this promise of Messiah that God told his covenanted people that he would replace the Law Covenant under Moses by a new and better Law Covenant under Messiah, the antitype of Moses. He said: "It shall come to pass, saith the Lord, after those days, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the [Law] Covenant which I made with them when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, but I will make a New Covenant with them, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more, and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh, and I will write my Law in their inward parts." – Jer. 31:31.

Israel was looking for this glorious Messiah greater than Moses, who would introduce to them and put them under a better, a New (Law) Covenant, and under more favorable conditions by which they would more fully accomplish the Divine purposes in their own hearts, and be prepared, qualified, to introduce those blessings to all the families of the earth, as they had been expecting to do from the beginning.

THE HIDDEN MYSTERY

We can see a reason why the Lord kept secret from the Jews in general his identity; for, as the Apostle Peter says, "had they known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." They did it in ignorance. (Acts 3:17.) We can see it was necessary that Christ should die; that he should lay down his earthly rights and earthly life and receive of the Father the higher life, and a spiritual realm, in order that he might have the *earthly blessings to give*,

to dispense to Israel and to the world. We can see that otherwise no blessings of a permanent and eternal character would have been possible; hence, as our Lord explained to the disciples after his resurrection, "It was necessary that Christ should suffer and (then) enter into his glory."

Now the question arises, What disposition will the risen and glorified Jesus make of these *earthly rights* which in his death he had secured by his sacrifice of them? The most reasonable, the most natural thought to us would be: Surely having consecrated the *earthly rights* he will confer these upon Natural Israel: He will at once become King and Priest to that nation, and in harmony with their hopes cherished for more than sixteen centuries he will exalt Israel as a nation. He will open their eyes. As the prophets have declared, "They shall see out of obscurity"; and "They also that pierced him shall mourn," and he will "pour upon them the spirit of prayer and supplication." – Zech. 12:10.

But Jesus did nothing of the kind. Instead of so doing, he cast off the nation of Israel, saying, "Your house is left unto you desolate." He did not establish for them the New Covenant; he did not bless them at all. They have been the most outcast nation of the world for the nearly nineteen centuries since they crucified him. No wonder the Apostle asks, Has God cast away his people whom he foreknew? – the people to whom he made the promises and covenants? – the people whom he encouraged in every way to believe that they were his special people and would be specially used by him in carrying the blessings of the Divine Law and instruction to all nations? Has God set aside all his promises?

We shall see presently that God has not in any degree abandoned his original program as respects the nation of Israel – "the seed of Abraham" according to the flesh and according to the Law Covenant. Here comes in "a Mystery," as St. Paul explains. This Mystery he declares was hidden from previous ages and

dispensations, and is now made manifest only to the saints, to the holy ones taught of God. It is still a *Mystery* to Israel after the flesh. It is still a *Mystery* to the world of mankind in general; for the world knoweth us not, even as it knew not the Master. The world does not perceive that God is selecting a "Little Flock" to be with Christ, members of his mystical Body – members of the spiritual Seed of Abraham.

THE MYSTERY SHALL BE FINISHED

In his last symbolic message to the Church, the Lion of Judah, who received the scroll of the Divine purpose, informs the saints, to whom it is "given to know the *Mystery* of the Kingdom of Heaven," that the *Mystery shall be finished*; but not until the days of the voice or sounding of the seventh trumpet – in the end or close of this Gospel Age and the dawn of the Millennial Age. Whoever is interested may profitably search the Word respecting this Mystery class, its calling, its selection, its testing, its completion, its glorification; but only those who are begotten of the holy Spirit will be able to *understand* in the sense of fully appreciating these "deep things of God" which "God has revealed unto us (the Mystery class) by his Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God." – 1 Cor. 2:10.

This Mystery class is composed of such as have the faith of Abraham and the obedience of Abraham – beginning with our Lord and continuing from Pentecost down to the close of this Gospel Age. It is upon these that Christ's blessing of forgiveness, reconciliation, and earthly favors lost by Adam and redeemed by himself were conferred.

Call to mind that he has something to give away – *earthly rights* and privileges which were his by virtue of his keeping the Law Covenant. Those were not spiritual rights and privileges which he secured through keeping the Law, but earthly ones only. He got his spiritual and higher privileges and honors as a reward

for the sacrifice of himself. What he has to give to *us* therefore is not spiritual life and honors and dominion, but the earthly. These come to us in the nature of a bequest. The earthly life and the earthly rights which Jesus sacrificed are willed or bequeathed to all those of the faith and obedience of Abraham. But here comes another feature of this Mystery. It is not enough that we have the faith of Abraham and his loyalty to righteousness; an additional matter is necessary. All who would become sharers of this gift of Christ must now, in addition to faith and obedience to righteousness, take up their cross and follow Christ as the Captain of their salvation; [R4453 : page 245] they must walk in his footsteps in the narrow way of self-sacrifice, even unto death. Any who do not thus will and thus covenant cannot be his disciples now, whatever blessing they may obtain by his grace later on. He is now, during this Gospel Age, making a special selection of a special class, "elect, precious." These he styles his Bride, members of his Body, the Royal Priesthood, his Jewels. These various names indicate his high appreciation of this specially called class.

THROUGH THE SPIRITUAL TO THE NATURAL

Let us keep in memory the Apostle's words that "God hath not cast off natural Israel whom he foreknew" and to whom pertained the promises, the giving of the law, etc.; he has merely turned them aside temporarily during this Gospel Age, that in the interim he may develop a spiritual Israel, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People, to be the Bride of Messiah, or otherwise his "Members." This "*Mystery*" is working no disadvantage to the Jew, but really is a further step in the Divine program in fullest accord with the original Covenant made with Abraham. The seed of Abraham was to be of two parts: (1) As the stars of heaven and (2) as the sands of the seashore. The Mystery class developed during this Gospel Age are the Spiritual Seed, symbolically pictured as the stars of heaven, while the

natural seed of Abraham is yet to become as the sand of the seashore. The Apostle refers to both of these seeds (Rom. 4:16) – "Not to that only which is of the Law, but to that also which is of the *faith* of Abraham; who is the father of us all." The old Law Covenant brought not forth the seed to Abraham, but the New (Law) Covenant will bring forth many children – as the sand of the seashore. The only children of Abraham thus far developed [**R4453 : page 246**] are those who are the Seed of Abraham according to faith.

As we have already seen, all of Christ's blessing goes to this faith class, the "Mystery" class, according to a program which the world does not understand, but with certain conditions attached which obligate all who receive this blessing to become *dead* to earthly aims and hopes and ambitions, and thus as members of the Body of Christ to have fellowship in his sacrifice of the *earthly things* that they may have fellowship and share with him in the heavenly part of the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him; if we be dead with him we shall also live with him." "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." – 2 Tim. 2:11; Rev. 3:21.

THE DEATH OF THE TESTATOR

The Apostle explains that no will or testament or bequest is of validity so long as the testator liveth. Whatever covenant or agreement may be had, it awaits a final sealing or completion by the death of the testator. The Apostle applies this to Christ. By his death Jesus passed on to us, the Church, the benefit of his merit; namely, the *earthly rights* or "justification" to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by the precious merit of Christ's sacrifice finished at Calvary. In accepting these earthly blessings we, as his members, agreed to the terms: namely, that we also surrender our rights to these as servants or "ministers of the New

(Law) Covenant" – that these earthly blessings secured by our Lord's obedience and death should thus pass through us and still be the Redeemer's asset to be given to Israel, under Israel's New (Law) Covenant.

The fact that Israel is still outcast from God's favor is merely an evidence that the Body of Christ is not yet completely sacrificed, for bear in mind that the Covenant is of no validity until the death of the testator. The Lord Jesus, the primary testator, has accepted believers, as "members of his Body," and he is working in them by his holy Spirit to will and to do the Father's good pleasure – that they may lay down their lives in sacrifice, filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Messiah. As soon as the last member of the Church shall have died as a member of his Body, the New (Law) Covenant with Israel will be sealed – sealed with the blood of the testator, *the death of the testator*, the death of the Christ, Head and Members.

Meantime the resurrection change of the Church as the Body of Christ will have brought the Testator as a whole to the plane of glory, honor and immortality. On this plane the Christ, Jesus the Head, and the Church, his mystic Body, will be in antitype the great Prophet, the great Priest, the great King, the great Judge, the great Mediator between God and mankind in general. Then will come the time promised in the Scriptures when this Great One, this Glorified One, the Seed of Abraham on the spiritual plane, will begin the work of blessing all the families of the earth, under the conditions of the New (Law) Covenant, to be made with Israel first.

THE BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT

Our Lord when discussing his sacrificial sufferings, referred to them as his "Cup." In the Last Supper, the memorial of his death, referring to this Cup symbolically, he said, "This is the blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the

remission of sins: drink ye all of it." (Matt. 26:27,28.) That **Cup**, which symbolized our Lord's death, our Lord's sacrifice of his earthly rights, was sufficient of itself to have sealed the New Covenant. He needed not to ask the Apostles, or us, or anybody, to become his disciples and to share his sufferings, to share his Cup, and to share the rewards of these – his glory, honor and immortality. But he passed the Cup along, passed the merit to us; or, rather, passed the merit of his sacrifice **through us**, his disciples, his followers. He did this because it was a part of the Divine program; for, as St. Peter declares, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten us." He who foreknew Jesus foreknew us also by Jesus. This was no change of the Divine program. It was surprising to us merely because it was a **Mystery** not previously made known – that we should be made fellow-heirs with Christ in the sufferings of this present time and in the glory that shall follow.

However some may oppose this and claim that we do not drink, do not partake of the sufferings of Christ, the Scriptures leave no doubt about the matter. They declare of the symbolic Cup that Jesus, after he had supped, gave it to his disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of it" – not only must all partake of my Cup who would be my disciples, but **drink all of it**, leave none of it. The drinking of the Lord's cup, the sharing of his sacrifice, must all be accomplished during this Gospel Age; none of it is to be left for the future. There will be no **sufferings of Christ** during the Millennium; there will be no drinking of this Cup. By that time "the glory to follow" will have been ushered in, and under the reign of righteousness thus instituted there will be no sufferings for righteousness' sake, but only for evil doing, because the reign of righteousness will have commenced.

Let us remember, moreover, the Lord's words to the other disciples who made special request that they might sit with him in his throne, the one on his right hand and the other on his left.

He said, "Ye know not what ye ask; can ye drink of the Cup that I drink of?" Only those who drink of his Cup may sit with him in his throne; only those who share in the sufferings of Christ will share in his glory, honor and immortality; only those who are thus partakers with him are members of the Spiritual Seed of Abraham, through which the blessings will pass to the Natural Seed in due time, and through them to all the families of the earth. "If ye be Christ's (his disciples indeed), then are ye Abraham's Seed and heirs according to the promise" – according to the highest feature of that promise, the spiritual feature. – Gal. 3:29.

"MERCY THROUGH YOUR MERCY"

We have already shown from the Scriptures that it is part of the Divine program that the natural seed of Abraham shall receive its blessings through the Spiritual Seed – Messiah the Head, the Church his Body. We have already shown that this Great One is to be the Mediator of the New (Law) Covenant, which will bring to Israel actually the blessings hoped for under the old Law Covenant, of which Moses was the mediator. We have seen how and why this Spiritual Messiah, Head and Body, will be able to do for Israel and all who come under that New (Law) Covenant far better things than Moses, mediator of the old Law Covenant, could do. We have seen that the New Mediator has something to present to Justice on behalf of Israel – something to give to Israel; namely, *earthly* blessings, *earthly* rights, *earthly* restitution to all that was lost in Adam. We see that these were secured by Jesus through keeping the Law; that he surrendered them, or sacrificed them in his obedient death, and that he gave them to the household of faith during this Gospel Age *on condition that these earthly blessings should not be retained but sacrificed by all whom he would accept as his members*. Now we see that it is these same *earthly* blessings that are to be dispensed during the Millennial Age, first to Israel and, secondly, to all people under the New (Law) Covenant.

Notice how the Apostle Paul states this matter clearly and concisely in few words in Romans 11:25-36. There he tells us that we should think not of Israel as being cast off forever, but merely disfavored of God for a limited period – during the time of the calling and approving and acceptance of the elect number of spiritual Israel, whose first members were gathered from the Jewish nation and whose completeness is to be made up from amongst the Gentiles. He tells us that when this elect number of Spiritual Israel is complete, God's favor will return to Natural Israel, "Jacob," and then "All Israel shall be saved" – recovered from the blindness and stumbling which came upon them when God thrust them aside until first Spiritual Israel should be gathered. The Apostle explains that then God will fulfil his promise to Israel: "For this is my Covenant unto them, when I [R4454 : page 247] shall take away their sins." Thus the Apostle shows that the New (Law) Covenant promised to Israel, in which their sins will be cancelled and remembered no more, comes at the close of the Gospel Age and not at its beginning.

THE DELIVERER MUST BE BORN

The Apostle explains (vs. 26) that before the New (Law) Covenant with Israel could become effective the Deliverer must come out of Zion; for it will be he that shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. Zion is another name for the New Jerusalem, of which the Apostle says, She is the mother of us all. Zion was typically represented in Sarah, Abraham's wife, who was the mother of Isaac. Isaac was a type of Christ – of Jesus the Head and the Church his Body; as the Apostle declared, "We, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise" – the Seed of Abraham. (Gal. 4:28.) Zion was again typified by Rachel, Jacob's wife, and the two classes of the Church were represented in her two sons, the first of whom, Joseph, was a child of promise, the second the child of tribulation – Benjamin. Joseph, who came to the throne of Egypt through much tribulation, typified the Christ,

Head and Body. Benjamin, his brother, born of the same mother, the same Covenant, did not reach the throne, but typified the "great company" class, who will have a special relationship and nearness to the Deliverer. Benjamin's name, "Son of my pain," (Benoni), shows his identity with the "great company"; his mother died in the travail of his birth.

This is again expressed by the prophecy which says, Before she (Zion) travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to birth (the Head) and not cause to bring forth? (the Body) – Isa. 66:7-9.

Zion brought forth the Lord, the Head of the Church, the Head of the Great Deliverer, eighteen centuries ago. Very shortly all the members of his Body will come forth, similarly born from the dead in the "first resurrection." ***Thus shall a nation be born at once to the spirit plane***, "a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a Peculiar People" – distinctly separate from all others of God's creatures, partakers of the divine nature, higher than angels and men. Then in a great time of trouble the "Great Company" will be born to the spirit plane, though not to the throne and not to the divine nature. Thus the spiritual children of Zion will be complete, and the blessing will turn to natural Israel.

The Deliverer born out of Zion, the Christ, with the "Great Company" as servants or ministers of the great God, shall begin the work of blessing "Jacob" – natural Israel. Discerning these things, it is for all who have named the name of Christ, for all who have been accepted as members of his Body and inducted into this "***Mystery***," to be earnest, to be zealous, in making their calling and election sure, that they may not only come into the Body of Christ, but by obedience to the instructions of the Head

they may abide in him and grow in grace and in his character likeness, and be prepared for birth to the plane of glory, that they may have a share in the work of the Kingdom, making effective to Israel and to the world the New (Law) Covenant for the blessing of all the families *of the earth*.

THEY ARE NOT ALL ISRAELITES

The blessings of the New (Law) Covenant are distinctly shown to be Israelitish. But this will not hinder these blessings from extending to all nations and peoples and kindreds and tongues. By circumcision of the heart, all who will may come into the Holy Nation which Israel will then be. Thus it is written in the prophets, "The Law shall go forth of Zion (the heavenly Kingdom), and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (the earthly phase of the Kingdom). "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." (Micah 4:2.) Thus all through the Millennial Age Abraham's seed will be increasing, in harmony with the prophecy, "I have constituted thee a father of many nations."

But it would be a mistake for us to suppose that God's blessing under the New (Law) Covenant will come to the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, merely along fleshly lines. On the contrary, we are to suppose that the blessing of the New Covenant will apply first to Abraham and his natural seed who had his characteristics of faith and obedience, and who were developed or proved in the past. St. Paul refers to these, saying, "These all died in faith, without having received the things promised them, God having provided some better thing for us (the Church, Spiritual Israel), that they without us should not be made perfect." – Heb. 11:40.

"They shall obtain mercy through your mercy," as the Apostle explains. (Romans 11:31.) It will, of course, be God's mercy, but through Jesus Christ, and it will of course be the mercy of Christ Jesus, but through the Church – "*your mercy*." Thus will the blessings of God be passed on. The blessing coming to the Ancient Worthies will not be for themselves alone, but be passed on by them in turn to all who will come to the faith and obedience of Abraham. Undoubtedly at first this class will consist chiefly of the natural Israelites, but later, as we have shown, it will consist of many people, of many tongues, and of many nationalities. All of these, enlightened by the great Sun of Righteousness, will be brought to know the great Messiah, and to understand the principles of righteousness involved in the laws of the great Jehovah. These the new Mediator will most clearly set forth, until every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, until "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep, and until there shall be no need to say to the neighbor or to the brother, Know thou the Lord, because all shall know him from the least unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."

THE NECESSITY FOR THE NEW COVENANT

If the Abrahamic Covenant was all-comprehensive, and included all the blessings which God intended, why was it necessary or expedient to add either the old Law Covenant or the New (Law) Covenant? We have already considered the value of the old Law Covenant as an addition to the Abrahamic Covenant, hence now we confine ourselves to the consideration of the advantage gained by the addition of the New (Law) Covenant.

When we read that "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and that Abraham pleased God by reason of his faith, we may know assuredly that none could be acceptable to God as Abraham's seed except such as had similar faith to his.

Additionally, as God tested Abraham's faith, and obliged him to prove it by works of obedience, so we may be sure it would be with all who ever will be acceptable to God – that as Abraham's seed they also should have faith attested by works.

The comparatively few who exercised faith, and wrought righteousness in harmony therewith, up to the time of Christ, are reviewed by the Apostle in Hebrews 11. These were few indeed as compared with the millions of their time. These alone, therefore, could be counted as participants in God's favor because of Abrahamic faith and obedience. During the Gospel Age a similarly small class has been gathered out of every nation, people, kindred and tongue – called by the Gospel message, and tried and proved by the narrowness of the way of obedience. These consecrated ones, and no others, of this age could be acceptable to God for his blessing of eternal life, because these alone manifested the faith and the obedience exemplified in Abraham.

So, then, we see that if Christ, after redeeming the world, had merely sought out of it such as could exercise Abrahamic faith and obedience, and had blessed these with eternal life, the sum total of his work would have been comparatively small. He would have been on the spiritual plane and the others would have received from him the blessing of restitution, and nothing more. **[R4454 : page 248]**

LENGTH AND BREADTH

But note the breadth and length and height and depth of the Divine Wisdom and Grace, which provided a more stupendous plan. Under its provisions the "Little Flock" become joint-heirs with Christ in the heavenly Kingdom as the Royal Priesthood, and the "Great Company" become the spiritual assistants of that Priesthood – the antitypical Levites. And, additionally, by the New Covenant arrangement the great Prophet, Priest, King,

Judge, becomes the Mediator between God and the world of mankind in general. He will not deal with them merely on the basis of faith, because in their fallen condition few indeed could be benefited thereby, because few could exercise the necessary faith and obedience. Indeed, as we have seen, the majority of those *capable* of exercising faith and obedience have *already been found*. The New Covenant takes over Israel through the Ancient Worthies and incidentally all of that nation and all of every nation willing, under the enlightening influences of the Millennial Kingdom, to come into accord with the Mediator and to be taught of him. He will enforce obedience, to the intent that the fallen and degraded members of the race may learn what righteousness is and what justice and love are. He will exemplify to them the rewards of obedience and the penalties of disobedience, that they may learn the benefit of righteousness – and all come to a knowledge of God, not by faith merely, but by demonstrations. It will be after the Millennial Kingdom shall have lifted mankind out of degradation and sin, out of imperfection of mind and morals, that their final testing will come.

God's law will stand forever. Only the willing and obedient will be partakers of the grace of life eternal; all others will die the "Second Death." But we have every reason to believe that as a result of the Millennial Kingdom, the reign of righteousness, the restitution work, the enlightenment of mankind, the bringing of all to a knowledge of the Truth, many will learn righteousness and become servants thereof, and in full accord with the Divine Law: come to love God with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their being, with all their **[R4455 : page 248]** strength, and their neighbor as themselves.

Thus we see how much more can be accomplished by the Seed of Abraham, the Christ, Head and Body, through the method adopted by the sealing of the New (Law) Covenant, and the

establishment of the Kingdom, than could have been accomplished without the New Covenant, under the Abrahamic Covenant *alone* with its terms of faith and obedience.

Is it any wonder that after having pictured this matter of the rejection of natural Israel, the gathering of Spiritual Israel, and the subsequent giving of God's blessings through Spiritual Israel to reclaim natural Israel, the Apostle should become enthusiastic? Is it any wonder that he concludes with the exclamation, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Who knew of this wonderful, deep, hidden plan of Jehovah? Who counseled him to make it thus? The Apostle's conclusion is that such depths of wisdom and knowledge and grace prove that the plan of God is superhuman; that no man ever thought out this plan. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than man's ways! Of him, and through him, and by him, are all these things, and to him be glory forever!

