

## **SPIRITUAL PROMISES TO NATURAL ISRAEL**

IN THE Scriptures the word spiritual is generally used in a particular way referring to those who have been begotten of the Holy Spirit, as our Lord and all those who accept Him and consecrate themselves to do the will of God. All promises and all things which appertain to these are particularly classified and styled as spiritual promises and spiritual things. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. 2:14.) So, then, if God gave anything spiritual to the Israelites before the Spiritual Dispensation, they did not appreciate it, since none could do so except through spirit-begetting.

Nevertheless, there were spiritual things given to Natural Israel, which they were unable to receive. The Apostle says, "The *Law* is spiritual, but *I* am carnal, sold under Sin." (Rom. 7:14.) That Law given at Sinai came from the Spirit Being of the highest order – God Himself. It did not take hold merely of the fleshly instincts, and control the body alone, but it took hold of the heart, the mind, the will. None of the Jews could keep that Law because they were sold under Sin. It was a spiritual Law that could be kept only by a spirit-begotten person or a person in the image of God.

## **SPIRITUAL LESSONS IN THE LAW**

Certain of the lessons of the Law were spiritual, also; as, for instance, the rock in the wilderness, which, when smitten, gave forth water abundantly, and the manna, each afforded a spiritual lesson. But Israel did not understand anything about the Spiritual Rock or the Spiritual Water of Life. So of the Law that was given to them: they could see only the outer part, or shell. Nor could any see further until the due time for the begetting of the Spirit. We may

say, then, that a great many spiritual things were given to Israel, but only such of them as were Israelites indeed, and in harmony with God would be made able, in due time, to see these.

The spiritual things were in the Law all the time, but they were not disclosed, not manifest, not seen by the Jew, because of his own condition of mind; and the first Israelite who was permitted to see spiritual things was Jesus Himself, after He was begotten of the Spirit and able to appreciate these things. But the Jewish nation, not coming up to the required standard, was not able to appreciate them. Certain ones who desired to walk in Jesus' steps received through Him a covering, and they also were begotten of the Holy Spirit and could appreciate spiritual things. Thus the Apostle says that the righteousness of the Law is "fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." We cannot keep the Law in our flesh, but in our hearts, our minds. "With the mind I serve the Law of God." – Rom. 8:4; 7:25.

### **BASIS OF SPIRITUAL INSIGHT**

When God made a Covenant with Abraham, saying, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed," He said that Abraham's seed should be as the stars of heaven and as the sand of the seashore. This is a spiritual Promise, which, of course, the Jews at that time were not able to appreciate, as the Apostle Peter intimates. When realizing that as a nation they had crucified the Son of God, many said, What shall we do? St. Peter said, "Repent...for this Promise is unto you, and to your children." (Acts 2:38,39.) It was a spiritual Promise and belonged to them, but on condition that they would take certain steps.

Only a few of the Jews were in the proper attitude to meet this condition. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power [the privilege, the right] to become the sons of God. (John 1:11,12.) And these, coming into the relation of Spiritual Israelites, were enabled by this

begetting of the Holy Spirit to appreciate [R5295 : page 250] the spiritual things given to such Israelites. All the truths that we have are drawn from those things God gave to the Natural Israelites. And we can understand them, though the Natural Israelite could not. The Apostle says, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the Election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:7.) So then, they were seeking for the spiritual, whether they understood it or not. Except the few, however, they did not attain the spiritual, because of an improper condition of heart. But the spiritual must have been there for them to seek after, else they could not have sought it.

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