

The Nazarene Fellowship Circular Letter No. 131

July August 1991

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Editorial

Dear Brethren and Sisters and Friends, Greetings in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Many are those who pray "Thy Kingdom come" so that "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," and yet it seems surprising so few of them expect the Jesus to return for this very purpose. The Church of England, for example, used to commonly teach that Jesus Christ will come to this earth when Christians have made it a fit place in which to receive their august and mighty King of kings, and only when this earth is at peace and everyone, everywhere worships the God of heaven will He be expected to return. But what an unrealistic view of human nature this presents. Is it not human nature that is the cause of all the troubles in the earth, and is it not man's fault the world is in such a terrible state? Is not man's inhumanity to man the biggest problem of all? But the blame for all this is placed on a personal, supernatural devil who entices people to do what they don't really want to do and thereby excusing human nature and supposing it will yet overcome the devil and make this world a good place to live. But John, in his epistle, warns us that it is the "lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and pride of life" as being the problem with mankind, for these things are of the world and not of the will of the Father. (1 John 2:16).

And now the latest thing we hear of the Church of England is that they have published a "Non-Sexist Prayer Book" in which the Lord's Prayer has "undergone a feminine facelift" and from October this year "congregations will be invited to pray to a woman God who gave birth to heaven and earth." Also, the revised Lord's Prayer is named "the prayer of Jesus" to eliminate the chauvinist title." The apostle Paul, in writing to Timothy warns, "for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Once again we can compare the modern church leaders to the Pharisees to whom Jesus Christ said, "By hearing they shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this peoples heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed..."

"The world passeth away and the lusts thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." 1 John 2:17,18.

With sincere Love to all, in the Master's service, Russell Gregory.

The Holy Spirit

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Many strange concepts have accumulated on this subject over the centuries. The object of this article is to get down to what the Scriptures do and do not teach on the subject.

The holy spirit is not a person. On this we are all agreed. The idea of the holy spirit being a person stems largely from the doctrine of the Trinity. Now we notice that the terms “Holy Spirit” and “Holy Ghost” are used interchangeably, and in some modern versions the latter has often been replaced by the former, and one feature stands out at a glance. While God’s spirit is mentioned countless times in the New Testament, the term “holy spirit” twice only* in the Old Testament, close together in Isaiah 63:10 and 11 - “But they rebelled and vexed his holy spirit... Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him?”

Now a look at the Authorized Version shows that “Spirit” is spelt with a capital “S” but you may be interested to know that the Hebrew has no capital letters. It has only one set of 22 letters. So those who edited the Authorized Version took the liberty to spell “Spirit” with a capital, obviously biased with the Trinitarian idea of the “Holy Spirit” being a person.

Another point worth noting is that in all languages other than English, a noun has not necessarily its natural gender. For example the Hebrew word for “wisdom” is “*chokmah*,” feminine gender. This is why wisdom in the Bible, especially in the Book of Proverbs, is spoken of as “she.” As a further two illustrations, the Latin word for “moon” is “*luna*,” feminine gender, so spoken of as “she.” The German language is the most peculiar in this respect. The German word for “girl” is “*Maedchen*,” and surprise, surprise, its gender is not feminine but neuter and therefore a girl in German is referred to by the pronoun “it.” To the writer’s knowledge, English is the only language where a noun representing a male is masculine, a female, feminine and any object or abstract concept is neuter, with the exception of a ship or an engine which are spoken of as “she,” as in “start her up.” So when we read a text in a foreign language we must be careful of how to interpret a pronoun.

Coming back to the holy spirit, the word “spirit” is masculine gender in Latin. It is “*spiritus*,” and it was the Latin Vulgate which was used at the time when the doctrine of the Trinity got its first foothold. So this is why the holy spirit came to be referred to as “He.”

For the same reason, by the way, the word, “logos” also masculine gender in Greek is referred to as “He.” If this was understood properly, many Trinitarian misconceptions could be cleared up. (John 1:1-18).

Now let us get down to what the holy spirit is. It is the influence or force emanating from God and pervading all space. By it God controls everything. By it He created the universe, made the earth habitable for life as we know it, including mankind. He set in motion the laws of nature including Physics, Chemistry, Biology, etc. On the spiritual level God gave man laws to keep, inspired the prophets, caused Mary to conceive and later raised Jesus from the dead, to mention only a few examples.

The Spirit of God is first mentioned in Genesis 1:2 - “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” And again in Genesis 6:3 - “And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man...”

God, through His spirit or force, directed history from creation onwards. But His spirit was manifested in various modes. First, there was the patriarchal period from Noah through Abraham to Moses. During this age God, through angels, spoke to chosen men such as Noah, Abraham, etc. They were always faithful individuals who carried God’s message. Then beginning with Moses the age of

the prophets began which lasted up to the time just after the Jews' return from the Babylonian captivity, coming to its end with Malachi. During this age God again through the holy spirit manifested Himself much more openly. Prophets were commissioned to demonstrate publicly through signs and wonders that they were appointed by God. It was God, by means of the holy spirit that enabled the prophets to perform miracles and so identify themselves as God's envoys. Very different from the patriarchal age where God dealt with single persons. Now the prophets showed themselves to the public at large by signs and wonders.

Then comes the greatest of all signs of the action of God's holy spirit, as foretold in Isaiah 7:14 - the miraculous conception in Mary through the holy spirit, of the Saviour Jesus. Enough has been said of the reason for the necessity of this birth, God having given His Son with a life free to buy us back from bondage to sin. The fact that God has had mercy on us to give us this understanding is alone an example of the holy spirit working on our intellect. Jesus of course had more of the holy spirit than anyone else "for he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him" (John 3:34). And for this reason He did more miracles than any before Him, so many that they won't go into a book if all were mentioned (John 21:25). He was the truest ever replica of the Father, and a further most powerful manifestation of the working of the holy spirit occurred at His resurrection.

We now come to the apostolic period which began with the outpouring of the holy spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Nothing like this ever happened before or after. It was however, another sign which God gave. It was a momentous occasion from the then Jewish point of view, for it was the first time that salvation was to be extended to the Gentiles, an extremely hard pill to swallow for the apostles' contemporaries. The Jews nurtured a pride in being children of Abraham. They thought of themselves as having the monopoly in access to God and His promises while the Gentiles were disdained as dogs. An attitude prevailing among some Jews to this day. The Gentiles having a part in God's blessings was a great sensation and so required an unusual sign.

But apart from this, the apostles, like the prophets, were God's ministers endowed with a limited power to work wondrously with the sole object of demonstrating publicly their divine authority. After the deaths of the apostles there is no further record of any miracles performed openly and publicly, but the holy spirit never ceased to work in some form or another.

So what about this age? Well, the last apostle, John, died after about 96 AD. But thanks to the action of the holy spirit the Scriptures have been preserved, and does not God, through His spirit, guide us in every decision, if we earnestly pray to Him? And was it not through God's guidance that the knowledge of the truth has come to us? And does not God's spirit control world history? How many battles have been won or lost through weather conditions? And what power controls the weather? To mention only Joshua chapter 10 verse 11 when the Lord sent great hailstones upon His enemies.

It was quite recently that I visited a Bible exhibition showing replicas of the Dead Sea Scrolls where we find that their contents agree nearly word for word with our Bible. So how can we say that the holy spirit was withdrawn? The power to do miracles, yes, but the power of the holy spirit, no, only it now takes a different form.

However, it certainly will manifest itself in its most powerful aspect on that blessed day when the Lord returns and those who sleep come forth, and those alive and worthy will experience that sudden change to immortality. Let us all endeavour to be among them.

I will conclude with two examples of our time that demonstrate how God's spirit intervenes in history. End of June 1940 France had fallen. Why did Hitler not invade us then? He missed his best chance from the human point of view - one of those great mysteries of history. But we know why - Hitler was destined to lose the war. What better example of the unnoticed, unobtrusive working of the holy spirit. Then a little later in September the same year, battle of Britain. Hitler assembled his invasion fleet. All was poised ready. Then severe gales dispersed the boats, but the weather did not

stop the RAF from finishing what the gales had started. I still vividly remember the announcer reading this, from the loudspeaker inside the internment camp where I was at the time. Similarly, favourable weather conditions helped the allies on D-day in June 1944.

Brother Leo Dreifuss

P.S. My attention has been drawn by Brother Russell Gregory to John the Baptist who was filled with the holy spirit from birth, but did no miracles. Yet Jesus said of him (Luke 7:28) "...among them that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist." So possession of the holy spirit does not necessarily imply the working of miracles but it is evident that this work was imparted by God as and when the necessity arose.

Leo.

* The "holy spirit" also occurs in Psalm 51:11 where David pleads with God, "Take not thy holy spirit from me", after his adultery with Bathsheba. - Editor

"CHAT SECTION"

Compiled by Brother Harold Dawson.

Again Brother Phil Parry writes at length in response to comments in the "Chat Sections" of recent issues of the Circular Letters:

"Dear Brother Russell, Thank you for the Circular Letter No.130 May/June 1991. There are a few things in it I would like to comment on, and also correct the impression some readers may have on what I said about the "key" to the parables. At the foot of page 10 you draw attention to my full stop at leaven as though I were saying that the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven only and not to the ultimate working and outcome of its power. The intention of my wording was to be brief, and not to give this incorrect impression. This would be seen from page 9, "Chat Section" second paragraph, referring to the "earthly act of women putting leaven in meal, and point to the Heavenly outcome of the "Good News" of the Kingdom of God." If our readers look again on page 5 of the C/Letter No. 128, Jan/Feb 1991, they will understand that I likened the Kingdom of Heaven to the result of the leaven of Christ's doctrine - the wholly leavened - a completion of its working constituting the inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.

"The second comment you make is regarding my reference to Exodus 19:6, and which Peter quotes in addressing the remnant and converts to Christ, 1 Peter 2:9. I did not say they were actually engaged in what will be a future work when Jesus has returned, but that they had been chosen and called to qualify for this work and should show forth the praises of Him who had called them from darkness to light, that others might glorify God by their good works. You appear to deny what Peter says, but I emphasise that if the people referred to, do not qualify in this probationary period, it will be no good them waiting for the coming of Christ to endow them with power from on high in order to qualify, they know the words of the song and exactly why Jesus was worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, and also the time when they had been redeemed to God by His blood, as confirmed Exodus 19:6, and 1 Peter 2:9. I hope I have made myself clear on this point, but we must also realise that the Holy Spirit was also in operation in Peter's time upon believers. Please note: The song is reference to Revelation 5:8 - 10.

"The third point is what I said on 1 Corinthians 5:7,8, page 5 of C/L 128. You comment thus: "It seems unlikely to me that Jesus Christ should wish us to be leavened and the apostle Paul say we should not." The fact is that two kinds of leaven are being considered and this is the very thing I was drawing attention to. Why should Paul say that they were unleavened, and tell them to purge out the old leaven that they may be a new lump? Is it not obvious that being unleavened, or new creatures in Christ, they still retained in their minds some of their old traditions which Paul was telling them to purge out? I fear that this is what we are also failing to do. The leaven of Jesus was a new doctrine of sincerity, truth and righteousness not that Pharisaic doctrine of leaven He told his disciples to beware of, which was old leaven of tradition and which gendered malice and wickedness. The Corinthians had not received, in my view, the harlot doctrine of leaven and which you apply to the Church of Christ, for in fact, Paul informed them "Ye are the Temple of God" - and that God dwelt in them.

"I am still convinced the parables of the leaven, the mustard seed and the tares relate to the future Kingdom of God which Jesus said would be taken from those who regarded themselves as the children of the Kingdom. (Matthew 8:12).

"Incidentally, I find no better interpretation of the parable of the "Wedding Garment," than what we read in Matthew 8:11,12. In Luke 14:15 we read of one who sat at meat with Jesus expressing his feelings thus, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." Jesus then taught him by parable of a certain man who made a great supper and bade many: and sent his servant to say to them who were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready. But they all with one consent made excuses and refused the invitation and the master of the house was very angry and said to the servant. None of those men which were bidden (and refused) shall taste of my supper." (Verse 24). We have the same parable related in Matthew 22:8, but also the mention of the wedding garment - the casting out into outer darkness, with the weeping and gnashing of teeth, at a time when many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. That this refers to the Jews who refuse their Messiah's message from God, there can be no doubt, from the admission that they had eaten and drank in the presence of Jesus, - that he had taught in their streets; see Luke 13:24 - 30, also Titus 1:16. Does this not prove that the man with no wedding garment in the parable represents the Jewish class of people who knew Jesus and heard his teaching and refused the means of acceptance into the Kingdom of Heaven? They are now resurrected and witnessing Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, and they themselves weeping and gnashing their teeth because they are about to be cast out into outer darkness, speechless, with no covering for their sin and about to taste "death for sin" - see Luke 9:27. This is how I have seen it for many years. See also John 15:21- 25, and Matthew 21:40 - 44.

"It should be plain to see that the Kingdom of God which Jesus said would be taken from the nation and people who rejected Him, is the Kingdom of God in which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are seen after their resurrection from the dead. It is inheritance in this Kingdom which was taken from Christ's rejecters, and it is inheritance that is given to the nation who bring forth fruits meet for that Kingdom, not the Kingdom itself, for this has not yet been established, so how could it have a righteous beginning and then for the most part fall into corruption as suggested by Brother Russell in C/L 130, page 9, last paragraph? I think in this case he is speaking of the Church of Christ as the spiritual aspect of the Kingdom, where grace reigns through righteousness in those whom sin hath no more dominion, - see Romans 5:13 - 21, but this is not the Kingdom of God Jesus told his disciples to pray for - it is not the Kingdom which Abraham looked for in the ultimate sense of its fulfilment. Therefore it cannot be the Church or Body of Christ, as some have suggested, though grace and truth through Jesus Christ is being allowed to reign in the hearts and minds of the believers, who are in covenant relationship with God. In the same sense Israel under Moses and the Judges, were under God's rule. But significantly, in the book of Judges, chapters 17, 18, 19 and 21, it is said that "in those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes;" and of Moses it is said, "And he was king in Jeshurun, when the heads of the people and the tribes of Israel were gathered together" (Deuteronomy 33:5). This teaches us that God was the supreme ruler over all the earth but that His laws were for the benefit of His covenanted people directly, and that apart from this He had sole right as Creator to set up kings and remove them, whether over Israel or over other nations, and though the kings of Israel and

Judah were anointed by God's Prophets in some cases (not necessarily all), yet it is also said of Cyrus, "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him..." Isaiah 45:1. But God does declare Himself the Lord, the King of Israel and that at the time that He appointed them, they were His witnesses that there was no God beside Him - Isaiah 44:5 - 8; but they rebelled against Him in worshipping images and rejecting Him as King by asking for an earthly one like other nations, one whom they could see with the naked eye and would lead them. God therefore no longer reigned directly over them, it even became a divided state of affairs which does not answer to the Kingdom of God, as Daniel expressed in chapter 9, verses 8 to 14. However, at this point I will not pursue further or I may encroach on another's ground who may also be dealing with it. In conclusion let us take to heart chapter 1 of Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians and pray, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Brother Phil Parry.

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I thank Brother Phil Parry for his erudite comments on the subject of the "Leaven." Let us not forget the "simplicity that is in Christ" and not appear to split hairs, or to be groping to know "what" to believe. Jesus reminded Martha of this pitfall, did He not?

And in reply to Brother Phil's letter, Brother Russell responds as follows;

"Dear Brother Phil, I feel I must enlarge on what I said in the last issue of the C/L regarding 1 Corinthians 5:7,8, for it is important we look at the chapter from verse one in order to see the context of Paul's reasoning with reference to the leaven. May I take the liberty of paraphrasing the first eight verses in a very brief fashion, in this way? - 'One among you has taken his father's wife, and you are not sorrowful for this immorality among you but condone this man's action in allowing him to meet with you as though no wrong had been done, whereas he should repent of his deed that he might yet be saved. Why do you not see the need? A little leaven of such wickedness, if not removed, will spread through the whole congregation. Ye are unleavened in Christ Jesus, so remove the leaven now so that you may continue in the unleavened principles of sincerity and truth.'

The leaven in this case is not doctrine, but the wickedness of immorality, and if my understanding is correct on this point, then I believe I am right in saying there remains no instance in the Scriptures of any reference to leaven being symbolic of anything good, and therefore there can be no such thing as "the leaven of Jesus." It seems to me that in every case where you refer to the work of leaven "in the good sense" it is, in fact, the work of the Holy Spirit; as Paul expresses it in Ephesians 3:2: "according to the power that worketh in us."

Brother Russell Gregory.

* * *

I have also received the following letter from Brother Leo Dreifuss:

"Dear Harold... Many thanks for your helpful remarks about the parable concerning the wedding feast, and, only God having immortality. They are very good. Since then two editions of the C/L appeared which dealt with each subject and I am satisfied now.

"Your last paragraph in your letter about the Gulf War coming to such an unexpected end is interesting. Just as I am writing, there seems to be more fighting in the offing, over the concealed nuclear bomb factories. It may yet work towards the end of the age, when Jerusalem will become a burdensome stone to all nations. I was always wondering, and still am puzzled, like many more, why - the American President did not finish Saddam Hussein properly. But it is God who controls history, not

always by spectacular intervention. We shall find out in time, either this or the other side of the resurrection.

Brother Leo Dreifuss.

I thank Brother Leo Dreifuss for his letter and would add a few remarks of my own. Jerusalem became a burdensome stone to the nations long before the recent Gulf War with Iraq. Hitler claimed they were so to Germany during 1939 to 1945, and to the Western interests commercially - but this was only his excuse to make a bid for world domination. But like Napoleon, he was beaten by the Russian winter (and in the process England was saved from invasion and defeat, had Hitler pressed his other intention to occupy the U.K. after Dunkirk). Russia took the full force of the staggering might of Germany and all its armour; the Allies did not, and had Germany not invaded Russia the outcome of the war could have been very different, and if victory (?) had ultimately been with the Allies it would have taken far longer than September 1939 to May 1945. The hand of God was undoubtedly at work to save "Spiritual Israel." God saved all in this country from what invasion and occupation would have meant. Hitler was in too much of a hurry, and it cost him the war. He thought he could take the USSR in 6 to 8 weeks, but the winter set in and destroyed the German army. In my opinion, "Jerusalem," i.e., the Jewish people, became a burdensome stone to the nations more so in about 1972, when, because of U.S. and Britain's backing and supportive attitude towards Israel, the Arab nations increased the price of oil by four times. This destroyed the profitability of Western industry very widely and has resulted in a tremendous increase in the price of almost everything as a result ever since. We see now the hope of a patched up deal between Israel and the Arab nations. Perhaps therefore, the "Peace and Safety Cry" is not far away, for Israel is tired of being kicked around and is armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons.

When "the balloon goes up" again, the words of Jesus will come true - "Unless those days be shortened" all flesh will perish. Jesus was here speaking of A.D.70 AND of the end of the age.

The question. Why did the Allies not go in and finish the job in Iraq? The answer is purely political. The Allies were permitted under the U.N. charter to liberate Kuwait and do what was necessary to do that and nothing more. To actually invade Iraq would have been beyond the franchise the Allies actually had - especially as the objective would have been to kill Saddam Hussein. This man has survived it all and now the Allies hope that he will be deposed by his own people and by the continued sanctions against Iraq.

Finally I would like to thank all who have written and would urge all to write and support the Nazarene Circular Letter. Please write in and ask questions, and in the process encourage us all.

Brother Harold Dawson.

* * *

'For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.' Isaiah 62:1,2.

A letter to Christadelphians:

From Whence Come Wars Among You? (James 4:1)

The brotherhood's divided and contentious history is excused on many grounds concern for Truth; - too much tolerance (or too little); - and human nature's perversity, which makes perfection unattainable. But we would suggest there is an underlying cause which we have failed to recognize; and that, until we do, God's full blessing, and sweet fellowship, are things we can talk and dream about, but not experience.

With the death of Brother Thomas, the brotherhood became organized in its present form by brother Roberts. The personal influence which he exercised can be judged by documents of his, which became binding on us: "The Instructor", "Ecclesial Guide," "Declaration," "Bible Companion," and of course our present Statement of Faith.

Any errors, or excesses, we have readily excused on the grounds of his ability, and his total commitment; and also because he considered apostasy as inevitable before Christ's very imminent return.

Division became rife, and was accepted almost fatalistically. As it still is today! His insistence that his own definitions and hypotheses be used as the touchstone of Truth caused a particularly sad and unnecessary division – the Suffolk Street. The proof of this lies, of course, in the "reunion." And yet, our loyalty to brother Roberts would admit no fault on his part, and little in the way of repentance at a grievous wrong.

A similar division - which still subsists - was caused by equally futile differences of definition on the matter of "responsibility," between brother J.J. Andrew and Brother Roberts. To not agree with Brother Roberts' definitions was to be branded a heretic.

Another division came about when Brother Roberts labelled Brother Turney, "Renunciationist" (one who denies Jesus was of our nature). Now the sad irony of this lies in the fact that brother Turney held the same views of Jesus' nature as brother Thomas, (and the brotherhood in general) until brother Robert brought in the view (rejected by brother Thomas in 1869) of sentence implanted corruptibility, and bias to sin. (See note below). This view we still (supposedly) hold (Clause 5). A view which was a matter of disfellowship in 1869, became a matter of fellowship in 1874.

The truth of what I write is fully evinced, making Brother Robert's definition. ("a sentence which defiled") a "vital truth" (?), which excluded not only brother Turney, but would exclude brother Thomas (who had firmly rejected it).

Objective Bible study, effectively ended with the advent of Brother Roberts' study becoming that of expositions: e.g. Eureka was elevated to the status of an inspired interpretation of Revelation. And the writings of brother Roberts became "the standard works of the Truth." (?) Any gaps in our knowledge we have been loathe to admit - thinking it devolves upon us to pronounce on every subject, seeing we "have the Truth."

"Those who cause divisions" stand condemned (Romans 16:17), and yet where is the brotherhood's recognition, and repentance, of these wrongs? Can such a divided household use the expression "Our Father"? And can it claim, in taking the bread, to be "one body" - the "Lord's body"?

Our plea is that we should get back to our very roots as a community; and that we get "back to the Bible" in direct, objective study; and that we freely admit the wrong turns which led, (and are still

leading us) into divided bitterness: in which the words “love one another” are becoming a mockery and a condemnation of those who profess “fellowship” in Christ.”

Dennis Hayward

Note:- Brother Robert’s definition, “A sentence which defiled...” (Clause 5) implies:- Because Adam, in his “very good” state, sinned voluntarily, God planted a bias to sin in him which made him (and us) “very bad.” And so he was made to sin further, and was punished for breaking laws which God had made it impossible to keep. I.e. A ‘devil’ planted in us prompts us to sin, according to this view!!

THE TWO SONS OF GOD

Chapter Thirteen

The Old Millennium

From the day that Moses stood before the burning bush on “the mountain of God” to that day on which Nebuchadnezzar put out the eyes of Zedekiah was nine hundred and forty-three years, if the generally received chronology be correct. The period is so near upon a thousand years that we have styled it a millennium. Jeshurun was toiling in “hard bondage” in the heavy clay on the banks of the Nile and over him stood the rigorous “taskmaster” with his stick, urging the completion of the appointed “tale.” Moses, away in the desert, stood trembling with wonder, “afraid to look upon God,” yet anxious to see why “the bush was not consumed.”

Such were the elements out of which was elaborated the most splendid kingdom under the whole heaven. And of this kingdom we can say what cannot be said of any other, - it was a great prophecy as well as a grand historical fact. Moses found it as difficult to consolidate this human clay into a political constitution as the Israelites did to mould the natural clay of Egypt into bricks, which clay often required a mixture of straw to give it the proper consistence,

The kingdom passed through an experience more or less common to other kingdoms. From barbarism to conquest, from conquest to untold wealth; then came internal discord, faithlessness of treaties with neighbouring powers; decline, invasion, and overthrow. So-far all seems in accordance with the ordinary course of events. But the kingdom was founded upon a Divine promise, and we may still trace the letters of that promise upon those parts of the mighty wreck which time has cast upon our shores. Differing from all other nations in religion, Israel was monotheistic in worship; and for her one God she claimed greater power than was possessed by all the vaunted gods of the nations round about. Her faith in this respect rested on facts seen with her own eyes, but when their repetition ceased for any considerable period, the remembrance of those things on which her confidence was built quickly faded. Hence she may be truly said to have walked by sight, and not by faith. In this millennium we behold the kingdom of God historically displayed. God Himself governed the affairs of His own kingdom; for although Moses is spoken of as “king in Jeshurun,” this was not to the exclusion of Jehovah, nor was Moses king in the modern acceptance of the word. We know him as Moses, “the servant of God.” We regard him as the visible administrator of the Divine will; but acting in no way as if the kingdom appertained to himself. Moses represents the era of legislation, or law-making; hence he is commonly referred to as the law-giver. He belonged more especially to the foundational period of the kingdom, while his successor, Joshua, is the great representative of conquest.

When the time came for God to establish His kingdom on the earth, the territory on which He had determined to erect it was occupied by strong and numerous idolatrous nations; and we are told that the primary reason of their removal was their abominable practices. So that God did not deal harshly or

arbitrarily in setting up His kingdom in the land of Palestine, but took advantage of the opportunity thus afforded for making room for His own government. No person who is ignorant of the history of Israel can form just ideas concerning the kingdom of God, for, apart from that history there is neither reality in relation to the past, nor certainty as respects the future. The period of the Judges, who succeeded Joshua, was the time of teaching and consolidation in Divine law. But the nation grew tired of this simplicity and dependence upon an invisible Ruler; and in the days of the prophet Samuel "asked a king like unto the nations round about." This provoked the displeasure of the Almighty, "who was their king."

It was equivalent to rebellion and deposition, had deposition been possible. Nevertheless, God permitted it, commanding the grieved and protesting prophet to listen to the nation's desire. But God retained priority. He selected Saul, and after him David, and for ever established the royalty in David's family. When we come to the reign of Solomon, we have the plain declaration that "Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord." This makes David's throne the throne of Jehovah. All thrones are indeed His; and heaven is called His throne, but not in that particular sense in which He claims the throne of David.

Solomon stands before us as the builder of the Temple of God, where, from between the wings of the cherubim, the Deity uttered His voice; "dwelling," though invisible, "with men." During this era, the kingdom of God enjoyed unrivalled prosperity and peace; the period, as well as the king, is usually considered typical of a time when it will be said "a greater than Solomon is here." Then we have the division of the kingdom of God into two hostile monarchies, followed by the Assyrian invasion, and the carrying of the Ten Tribes, of whom there has yet been no return. Judah's captivity came next and, strictly speaking, the Kingdom of God retained after that downfall, no proper existence. The subsequent period of five hundred years was one of "overturning," until settled desolation set in like a long dark winter's night, which, after the lapse of nearly two thousand years, is only faintly relieved by a glimmer of dawn - happy herald of the rising sun. Israel's sun went down blood-red, in a dark and angry sky, leaving behind a mass of inky clouds unlit by a solitary star. But, hark! The murmuring voice of the returning waters breaks upon the ear. The sound comes creeping, like the tide, rustling, and sighing as it lifts and sways the sea-weed-beds, and climbs among the giant rocks. Yes, Israel lives, though scattered, and He who scattered will surely gather.

The kingdom of God in the past exhibits nothing akin to the fancies of the multitude concerning a kingdom of God in the present, or even in the future; it was not some undefined, unsubstantial sacred thing, veiled in flimsy drapery and dreamy adoration. No: it was a politico-religious constitution, comprising millions of human beings; a fine army; a noble hierarchy, a splendid temple, and a more splendid ritual; a vast and varied territory stretching along the Eastern border of the Mediterranean Sea, and far back towards the Arabian Desert; its fruitfulness, its richness of scenery second to none upon our beautiful globe. Here was a kingdom of God, truly solid and brilliant. From this magnificent kingdom of the past, ideas equally just and exalted ought to be formed of the still more glorious kingdom of the future. This is the Christian's guiding type. Though "not the very image" of the promised "rest," it is a bold clear outline, the leading characteristics of which the prophets and apostles enable an intelligent mind to fill in with tolerable accuracy. But nothing is more certain than that neither it nor they point in any other direction for the attainment of the life and inheritance to come. This kingdom was the glory of God who founded it - the pride of the rulers and subjects who possessed it; the admiration and envy of contemporary nations; and the restoration of it was the hope of the enlightened apostles and disciples of the Lord. The best laws of all civilized peoples have been borrowed from its code, and so sure as the prophets are true, will that same code yet become the main feature of "the law which shall go forth from Zion" when there shall be one law and one king.

The Old Name

We come now to speak of "the kingdom of Israel," not as so much territory, but as composed of millions of human beings incorporated into a grand politico-religious name. It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that name which was written upon the nation of Israel was the name of Jehovah. This inscription took place at their passage over the dry bed of the Red Sea. They, by that act, "were

baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;" and, as Moses stood in the relation of God to them, they thus 'took upon themselves "the glorious and fearful name." In looking at Israel after this event we recognise the name of God in a material sense. It is no longer an abstraction or a motto; it lives and moves to and fro in the wilderness of Sinai, and afterwards takes up a long settled abode in the Land of Promise. The consideration of the Divine Name in this aspect we shall find to have been instructive when we turn our thoughts in a future, to another view of the same subject, - a view which is connected with our own personal relation to God, both now and for all time.

The politics of Israel, their worship embracing prayer, song, and offerings, were things pertaining to the then existing kingdom of God, and to His name. And here we observe a vast array of imposing realities constituting the civil and religious life of a great people. Now, if these were the shadows, as we are apostolically taught, of good things to come, the substance must surely be as real as that which foreshadowed it. This reflection will throw, perhaps, a useful light upon the substance itself.

The dissolution of "The Old Name" resulted from rebellion against God. It had been formed by obedience to His will. When the chosen people forsook Jehovah, His wrath was kindled, and He spake, saying, "The Lord God shall slay thee, and call His servants by another name." This dreadful threat was fulfilled in the overthrow of the kingdom. It is not unreasonable to conclude that the Old Name would have remained undisturbed to this day but for disobedience which mocked at mercy.

This municipality consisted of various orders and ranks of men, from -the king down to the porter at the gate. It was a name written in the foreheads of all, from the prince to the beggar. Those who came into it, not of the seed of Abraham, were called proselytes. At the time of the exodus a number of persons joined themselves to Israel in this-capacity. The building up of this great and mighty name was not the labour of a day. The energies and patience of Moses and Aaron were many times all but exhausted in the work. From the chronicles of the different prophets we observe the successive steps by which it declined, and the causes of its ultimate destruction. By Jeremiah it is likened unto a rotten linen girdle; its binding and cleaving force wasted away, and that which had once been an encircling zone of power became "marred" and "good for nothing." Such, in brief, is the composition, the history, and the end of the nation designed by God "for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory: but they would not hear."

Chapter Fourteen

The Age of Peace

"In the mythology of the Greek and Roman poets the history of the world was divided into four ages, the golden, the silver, the brazen, and the iron; as, for instance, by Hesiod, in his poem, entitled 'Works and Days,' and by Ovid, in his 'Metamorphoses' (Book i). The golden age, when Saturn reigned, is represented as having been that of perfect innocence and happiness, from which the others have gradually degenerated - the Iron Age, or that which now subsists, being the most wicked and miserable of all." According to other accounts "the golden age is represented as the triumph of civilization over previous barbarian; whereas the former version seems intended to indicate that the primeval state of man was that in which he enjoyed the greatest felicity. The two statements, therefore, may be taken as expressing two opposite theories or opinions, which have divided speculators upon this subject even to our own day."

Such is the yearning expression of the heart of mankind in regard to the Age of Peace. One great division found it in the far-off past; the other expects it in the wished-for future. Speculation, conducted without the aid of God's utterances, is not of much value upon this interesting subject; it tends, however, to show that man sustains a relation to a better constitution of things, faintly shadowed out in the universal desire for a permanent era of undisturbed tranquillity and happiness; but it entirely fails to give any reliable information as a guide for faith, and as an anchor to hope.

There is a very ancient tradition that, as the creation of the world occupied six days and the Creator rested on the seventh, so the world of humanity was destined to labour and fatigue for six

thousand years, and then to enter upon the enjoyment of rest and peace for a thousand years more. This analogy is both natural and pleasing; it appears also, according to certain texts of Holy Writ, to combine the immense advantage of being true, so far as it relates to the thousand years of rest. Revelation 5:10; and 20:6. The same conclusion might be arrived at by inference from the divisions of time by the Mosaic Law, and the Divine injunctions with respect to those periods. Every reader will understand that we allude to the jubilees. The idea of a Heavenly Millennium pervades the New Testament, especially the discourses of Christ and the letters of the apostles. "Come unto me, all that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Again, "the rest that remaineth for the people of God." While of the wicked it is written, "there is no rest for them." The words of Jesus goes straight to the heart. There is hardly a son or daughter of Adam in whose breast they have not, at one time or another, met a responsive throb; so admirably adapted to the necessities of the case are the means of the Restorer and Comforter.

From the last to the first of the prophets the golden age is portrayed as a time of material blessedness on earth, not of immaterial "bliss" in heaven. The order in which the Hebrew seers describe what they see begins always with their own people, the Jews; from them they pass to the nations, in one or two instances specifying a certain order of rank in which Israel invariably has the pre-eminence. The character, therefore, of the golden age is not left to imagination and fancy. Whoever will be at the trouble to study the prophets - with whom Christ and the apostles are in harmony - will perceive clearly what is the nature of that promised happiness, though we are not sufficiently informed of its details to be able to follow the occupations of the world in the future age, from day to day; neither can we do this, except in a very limited degree, with regard to great nations that are past: their history, as it has come down to us, only furnishes a few of the salient features of their life. It is probable, if not indubitable, that the golden age will, in certain respects, resemble the state of things in the days of Christ and the apostles: that is, it will be a time of the miraculous inter-mingling with the natural; the lame will be healed, the blind will receive their sight, and even, what seems greatest of all miracles, the dead, perhaps, will be raised to life again. If there was a need, as all will admit, for the performance of wonderful works in the era of Christ's first sojourn among men, will there not be a greater need for the same benefits upon a scale as wide as the world itself when He returns to take up His final residence with men? The Prophets and the New Testament also conduce to this expectation.

The Position of the Jews. "He (Messiah) shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering of righteousness. Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former (margin, ancient) years" (Malachi 3:3,4). The last words of this prediction mark the period. "Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of Hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein; and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts" (Zechariah 14:21). The concluding part of this prophecy goes beyond the present condition of the land and city, which are full of Canaanites, or enemies of Jehovah. "Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth" (chapter 8, verse 3). "My cities, through prosperity, shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (chapter 1 verse 17). This language finds no adequate response in the history of Israel since the time the prophet wrote: "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The Lord hath taken away thy judgements. He hath cast out thine enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more" (Zephaniah 3:14,15). "Behold, upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows, for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off" (Nahum 1:15). "They shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them; and I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (Amos 9:14,15). As the testimonies are numberless foretelling the material blessedness of Israel, their holiness, and political greatness, we need add no more; but will proceed to cite several other prophecies, which point out the respective status of Jews and Gentiles in the age of peace.

The position and esteem of the Gentiles in relation to Israel - “Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying. We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you” (Zechariah 8:23). “Ye shall be named the priests of the Lord; men shall call you the ministers of our God; ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers” (Isaiah 61:5,6). “The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted” (chapter 60 verse 12). This fore-shadows universal subjection to God’s chosen nation, a state of things partially carried out in ancient times, so long as they obeyed the Divine commands. This political order will abolish all modern ideas concerning “the balance of power,” an equilibrium which it is impossible to maintain. “Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth and lick up the dust of thy feet” (chapter 49, verses 22,23). It is not unreasonable to infer that proud reflection on texts of this class induced arrogance and self glorification, and led the Jew to despise the Gentile. It was not the wealth of Israel that was designed to operate their exaltation and refinement. The Spirit said, “Behold I have refined thee, but not with (margin-for) silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction” (chapter 48 v. 10).

The rank of several principal nations.- “In that day, Israel shall be reckoned a third, together with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom Jehovah of Hosts hath blessed, saying, Blessed be my people Egypt; and Assyria, the work of my hands; and Israel my inheritance.” Chapter 19, verses 24, 25. (Lowth’s translation). Although Israel here “reckoned a third,” or as in the common version “the third,” the meaning is not that the other two stand higher in rank, for she is immediately spoken of as “mine inheritance;” and in another prophecy it is said “she shall have the first dominion” (Micah 4:8), which agrees with the texts before quoted from Isaiah, and with others, to the effect that she will be “the head and not the tail” among the nations of the earth.

The Peace and Prosperity of the nations.- “All the earth sitteth still, and is at rest” (Zechariah 1:11). “And He shall speak peace unto the heathen; and His; dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth” (Zechariah 9:10). Part of this is a quotation from the seventy-second Psalm. “Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with His people” (Romans 15:10). “O Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him all ye people. For His merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.” (Psalm 117:1,2). “The mountains shall bring peace to the people.” (Psalm 72:3). That is, peace shall be proclaimed from the top of the mountains; or empires and kingdoms shall speak peace to their subjects. “Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end” (Isaiah 9:7). And on earth peace, good will toward men (Luke 2:14).

Religious worship and the nations:- “For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent” (Zephaniah 3:9). “All kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him” (Psalm 72:11). “Every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year (to Jerusalem) to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts” (Zechariah 14:16). “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen saith the Lord of Hosts” (Malachi 1:11). “Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people” (Isaiah 56:6,7).

Feasts and Ceremonies:- “O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts: perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee” (Nahum 1:15). They shall “go up to the feast of tabernacles” (Zechariah 14:16). This is a feast of offerings by fire seven days, during which the people live out of doors, in

booths of canvas, decorated with the boughs and branches of trees, a time of great enjoyment after harvest. This universal feast on the hills and in the valleys round about Jerusalem will eclipse everything of the kind attempted hitherto. Men of every nation and tribe will be there; every shade of skin, from the fair white European to the inky Nubian; with all their varieties of costume and manners; and the ministers in the services will be able, like the apostles at Pentecost, to address every man in his own tongue wherein he was born. We may imagine in some degree the general effect of this scene, and the feelings and impressions the visitors will carry away with them to their homes, where they will tell of having seen the King in His beauty, and of hearing the speech of Him, who, two thousand years before, was betrayed and murdered in the same city. Many hearts will swell, and eyes fill, as they hear the stories of their friends. And thus the years will roll away, till the sound and art of war are forgotten. Man will rest and brighten in the peace and light of Him who is the true Light, and the Prince of Peace; he will pass the boundary that now separates this moral wilderness from that stainless Eden, and hold fellowship with the “morning stars” and all the sons of Deity.

The New Name

The highest aspiration of the disciple of the Lord is the attainment of what is styled in the language of Holy Writ the New Name. Some slight knowledge of this would be foreshadowed by our article in the proceeding chapter, entitled the Old Name. A multitudinous aggregate of people bearing the Name of Jehovah was briefly shown to be the idea contained in the writings of Moses and the Prophets. But as that name has been cast off for many centuries, it becomes a question whether it is designed to be restored, and in what manner. Before entering upon the consideration of an answer, it will be in order to say a word about the meaning of Jehovah’s name.

First, then, let it be observed that man could not have known by what name to designate the Deity unless the Deity had communicated to him the knowledge of its name. Moses anticipated this when he was about to go to the Israelites sunk in bondage and barbarism. “They will say, What is His name?”

We remark, also, that up to a certain epoch the Deity had been revealed to Abraham and others, by the name Almighty; and that, thenceforth. He desired to be known by the name Jehovah. No person, who is really interested and thoughtful in his perusal of the Scriptures, could pass over this passage without pausing to enquire and reflect. He would naturally ask himself, What is the meaning of the word Almighty, and what is the meaning of the name Jehovah, and why was the change made from one to the other? It would, probably, occur to the reader’s mind that in God’s dealings with men - with idolaters who trusted in their false deities - the first object on the part of the true God would be to impress them with a due sense of His infinite power. He was, therefore, during a long period known to a select and obedient few as the Almighty - “able to perform all He had promised;” “Is there anything too hard for the Lord?”

This primary and essential lesson being taught and well fixed in the mind of His children. God next proceeded to reveal, not all at once, but “at sundry times and in divers manners,” His future purposes; and He chose to do this partly in the significance of the name by which He “would be known. It is no new, but yet no unimportant observation, that the name Jehovah points to the future. The Jews, to this day, profess deep awe, and, to some extent, ignorance too, concerning the name Jehovah. They never attempt to utter it, on the ground that they have no tradition as to the proper pronunciation; how their high priest pronounced Jehovah they know not, and so they give to it quite another form and sound, viz. Adonai, the Hebrew word for Lord. But this explains nothing; it leaves the earnest investigator as much in the dark upon the subject as the rendering given by our translators of the name Jehovah, which is, “I am, that I am;” for neither the word Lord, nor the phrase, “I am, that I am,” conveys the true sense of the word Jehovah, which signifies “He who will be.” The mere confident assertion, “I am,” could satisfy no one, nor does it appear that any benefit could accrue from the change if that were all, or if that were indeed what was intended; for the name Almighty clearly carried the idea of existence in the most forcible manner. But “I will be,” or “He who will be,” is very different, and would produce as different an impression on the minds of those to whom it was made known. Instead of resting vaguely in the present, their eyes would peer towards the future, and the

general query would be. Who is this “I will be?” “I will be” what, and when? While this new announcement would keep the watchful anxiously and diligently searching, none would be able to furnish-, a correct reply until the light of the fulfilment of the assurance broke upon the world; and even then not all who were professedly vigilant perceived that the promise was fulfilled, or rather that the fulfilment of it had begun.

This prophetic and once mysterious name, “I will be,” may now, by the clear light of history, and, in consequence of that history, the less obscure light of still unaccomplished prophecy, be paraphrased as follows: - “I, Jehovah, will be to Israel and the nations a Saviour.” The rays of this ancient promise streamed through the long pre-adventual darkness, struck upon the manger and the cross, passed shaft-like through the tomb, shot upwards to the heavens, hereafter to burst in one luminous flood over all the earth, ever to remain for the perfect guidance of mankind. In their first transit the benignant rays revealed from deepest shade one figure - Jesus of Nazareth, - in their final diffusion, a star-like multitude will be beheld, resembling the soft and brilliant canopy of light,

With the advent of Jesus, the time came to begin the manifestation of the name of the Deity to men; not to all, but to His brethren, as David had said: “I will declare thy name unto my brethren.” Psalm 22:22. Accordingly, He of whom this was written, spake thus, “I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.” John 17:6. This declaring and manifesting were one and the same work. In the teaching of Jesus, the restoration of His nation, the punishment and ultimate destruction of the wicked, the resuscitation and immortalization of the righteous dead, the government of the world by Himself and His disciples, were the burden of His word. These things were, at best, but darkly conjectured in the ages before His proclamation; but by His preaching and that of His apostles, the Father’s name, or purpose, was “declared,” “manifested,” or made easy of comprehension.

The intent of declaring and manifesting the Father’s name may be distinctly seen from the context of the words above quoted: “And they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.” What those words were which the Father gave to His well-beloved Son, may be certainly known from two passages, the one in Isaiah 61:1 - 3, and the other in Luke 4:16 - 21. Let the reader peruse and re-peruse this declaration of the prophet, by the light of the gospel narratives, and he will not be ignorant of the name or purposes of the Deity in Christ.

Immediately after Saul’s conversion, Ananias was told by the Lord that He had chosen Paul to “bear His name before the Gentiles.” Christ’s preaching was the manifestation of His Father’s name; Paul’s ministry was bearing the name before the Gentiles. “When the fullness of the time was come,” the purpose of the Most High was to be looked for through that Son who had proceeded from Himself; made of a woman, Jesus took hold of the humanity He was sent to redeem and rule; so that in a visible substantial way the Increase, the Invisible, He whom men could not even hear without one to intervene, was seen and heard in the person and voice of His only begotten Son. The Son, therefore, was the visible, tangible attestation, the “Surety” for the fulfilment of the great and precious promises concealed in the self-imposed Name of the Creator of heaven and earth.

From these remarks it appears that the name of the Deity and of Christ is presented in the Word under two aspects - doctrinally and substantially. The doctrine refers to the intentions of the Creator revealed from time to time in their gradual development; the substantial refers to the agents through whom those intentions are to be carried out to the predetermined consummation. It is this latter view of the great design which agrees with the apostolic labours of “taking out a people for the name.” Here it becomes evident that the name is not for ever to be only an abstract purpose, but that it is to be Deity Himself manifested to the world through material, solid, deathless, human forms. The foundation of this was the begetting of Jesus, who was an actual manifestation in flesh of Him that begat, and like unto the “First-born,” by faith and obedience are to be made all those “who are called according to His purpose.” Whence it follows that the assumption or putting on of the New Name is perfected through the two-fold action of mental change and bodily transformation. In Jesus Christ the Jehovah-Name

began in the flesh common to man; it terminated in spirit, the essential property of God. Thus it will be with the members one and all; they have partaken of the earthly, and they will also partake of the heavenly. So that when men and women who understand and affectionately believe the proclaimed Name, in other words, “the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ,” are baptized into His name, they do not merely declare their adhesion to a certain form of doctrine, they take up a position for “the world to come”- life and incorruptibility organised into a ruling power, the head of which is Christ, whose invisible head is God.

We have said “organised into a ruling power.” The terms with which the name is coupled, the work assigned to those who are its constituents, all point clearly to such organisation; hence it is plain that the glorified saints are not to spend their time in vague, self-absorbing enjoyments, but that they will be engaged in regular and benevolent, yet “tireless labour.” Turn to a few passages, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God; and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him, the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem” (Revelation 3:12). Here are the terms “temple,” “city,” “New Jerusalem.” These denote religious and political arrangement. “Temple” points to the ecclesiasticism of the saints, “city” to their municipality, “New Jerusalem” to their metropolitan eminence. Let these things be considered, and it will be seen that there is a real life in the “world to come” far more analogous to this present existence than many religious persons are inclined to believe. And this accords with reason, and the necessity of the case. It is not a question of government or no government, one of wise rule or misrule. Human authority is unavoidably very imperfect at best. The exaltation of Jehovah’s name in all the earth will inaugurate the divine, and, therefore, perfect government of the world.

Reader, art thou in the great Name; has it been written on thy forehead, or intellect? Hast thou put it on in baptism? Hast thou been adopted from the family of the first into the family of the second Adam? If thou hast, then there is “Now no condemnation” to thee, thou art passed from death unto life; by faith thou hast been translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son, and if thou continues! to walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, thou wilt find thyself endowed with wisdom, and honour, and immortality in the society of God’s “jewels” of every age, to go no more out, to cease from every ill which afflicts the flesh, and exult in an unending career of happiness and power.

Edward Turney

To be continued...

All the great conceptual discoveries of the intellect seem obvious and inescapable once they have been revealed, but it requires a special genius to formulate them for the first time. The Jew had this gift. To them we owe the idea of equity before the law, both divine and human; the sanctity of life and the dignity of the human person; of the individual conscience and so of personal redemption; of the collective conscience and so of social responsibility, of peace as an abstract ideal and love as the foundation of justice, and many other items which constitute the basic moral furniture of the human mind.”

Extract from “The History of the Jews” by Paul Johnson.