

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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A NEW DISPENSATION

The mind of man is not competent to grasp the present misery of the greater part of the human race. Many live in the serene atmosphere of a fool's paradise, and the hideous nature of the present times makes no impression on their shallow minds. A thousand tragic conditions now existing could easily be pointed out, but the simple fact that two of the most powerful nations upon earth are preparing to hurl at each other the most lethal weapons that man has ever devised is sufficient evidence of the frightful nature of the times in which we live. If another war comes, no spot on earth will be a fit or safe place for man to live.

Earnest and thoughtful men face the realities of the present situation. Mankind has degenerated to a place that he can no longer control his passions, his hates or his desires. He does not know the way of peace. He is so far off the track that unaided he will never find it. To all this there is only one answer. Reasonable men everywhere are agreed on this. GOD MUST INTERVENE! He must positively inject Himself into the affairs of men, both individually and nationally. He must take control, and impose His will, His laws, His judgments upon the world.

Those who know the Bible know that God has declared that He will do this. "He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained," is the bold declaration of Paul to the Athenians on Mars' hill (Acts 17:31). "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth," is the word of the Lord through Isaiah (42:4). This will never be accomplished in this the dispensation of the grace of God. If it is ever a reality it will have to be by God bringing in another dispensation, a new order, a different set of circumstances than those, which have existed for 1900 years.

The body of truth concerning that coming period of time is one of the largest to be found in Scripture. In other words, there is more Scripture, which is definitely related to this theme than to any other single subject in the Word of God. I well know that the entire Bible testifies of Christ, but there are portions that deal with specific truths such as creation or the second coming of Christ; and **it is my conviction that the passages which deal with this coming time of**

worldwide blessing are greater in number and extent than those dealing with any other subject.

I have designated this coming period by the title "**the pre-millennial kingdom of the heavens**," in order to emphasize the fact that there is to be an aspect or phase of the kingdom of heaven that precedes the millennial form of the kingdom. In dealing with this great truth before the company of believers to whom I minister the Word in Los Angeles, I have already given seventy-five different studies, each one about one hour in length. This gives us some idea of the vast amount of material that needs to be considered in dealing with this subject. It will take years to get this into written form and then into print. This has led several friends to suggest that I present this truth as fully as possible in compact form in one study then add the details and proofs in studies that will follow. This seems to be a wise procedure, and I will do this as best I can in this study.

I would emphatically state that I do not claim to have reached any degree of finality concerning this great truth. Its recovery and development is now in progress, and I am working every day upon the Scriptures, which have a bearing upon it. Many details will need to be revised and clarified as progress is made. **However, the main truth, that God will bring about a time of universal righteousness and blessing upon the earth in advance of the second coming of Christ is fully established by the Scriptures, and this truth will never be overthrown by the Word of God.**

I make no claim to be the first who has taught that there will be a period of universal blessing before the return of Christ. Many have held that this would be the result of gospel efforts put forth during this present dispensation of grace. These are the postmillennialists, who hold that the millennium precedes the second coming. Some have felt that there should be a time of universal blessing before the Lord returns, others have said there might be, and there have been still others who have settled the matter emotionally and have declared that there would be. My message has no connection with all this wishful thinking and speculation. What I set forth in these studies did not come to me from the writings or thoughts of any man. If others have presented these truths either directly or incidentally, I am not familiar with their writings. However, I do know that many have approached this great truth, then having seen some of it, have seemed to back away.

The writings of Dr. C. I. Scofield, Editor of the *Scofield Reference Bible* afford an example of this. Dr. Scofield held that the next great event to take place would be the sudden removal of all believers by a rapture as set forth in I Thessalonians 4:16, 17. He called this "the coming of the Lord *for* His church," this to be followed later by "His return to earth *with* His saints." But, he believed that the seed of God's Word, which has been sown throughout this present time would suddenly spring forth after "the coming of the Lord for His church." Here are his words concerning Revelation 7:

"It is easy to keep missionary statistics now. Here is one of the mighty motives to missions now. We see in Revelation VII the full fruition of this time of seed sowing. That tremendous ingathering would probably be impossible but for the preparation of the minds of the people of the earth through present-day testimony. In other words, were the Lord to take away His church today, and the seal judgments to begin tomorrow, the translated laborers in home and foreign lands would be transported and amazed by the results of their now so discouraging toil. This chapter gives every warrant for the belief that between the coming of the Lord for His church, and His return to the earth with His saints, the overwhelming majority of living humanity will be saved." Quoted from the *Scofield Bible Correspondence Course*, (Volume 2, pages 344, 345). One of the correspondence Courses of *The Moody Bible Institute*.

From this it is evident that Dr. Scofield held that God would remove all living believers, and after this the "overwhelming majority" of those left on earth would be saved, after which Christ would

return to the earth. If this should be true, then instead of Christ coming to an unconverted world, He would come to a converted world; instead of coming to an ungodly world, He would return to a world in which the overwhelming majority of men are saved.

Some of this parallels my teaching. However, I do not believe that it is logical to hold that God removes all living believers then does a work which produces a greater number of believers than the world has ever seen at anyone time before. Why take the present-day believer away from this blessed experience? I, for one, could only feel keen disappointment if after my departure from this scene the overwhelming majority of humanity would turn to the Lord. It is my feeling that Dr. Scofield only approaches near the truth here, then having given it a nod of recognition, he walks away. Nevertheless, I believe he is right in teaching that when Christ returns to the earth the "overwhelming majority" of men will be believers. But this will not be because of the Word which is being preached now. Neither will it be the result of any gospel activity in the future. These believers will be produced through a unique work of the Spirit of truth when He enlightens every man on earth in regard to sin, righteousness and judgment. As a result of this light the overwhelming majority of living humanity will come to know God. Those who do not will be eliminated from among the men of this earth. See Psalm 1:4-6.

Another example of one who sees promise of great spiritual blessings before the second coming of Christ is found in a book by Dr. Harry A. Ironside, under title of *The Lamp of Prophecy*, published by *Zondervan Publishing House* in 1940. In chapter 10, Dr. Ironside takes up the question, "Will there be an age of righteousness ere the closing of time?" He answers this in the affirmative, pointing to the millennium after the second coming of Christ. In chapter 11 he considers the question, "Will there be a millennium before Christ comes?" This he answers in the negative. Finally in chapter 12 he takes up the question, "May we expect a great revival before the coming of Christ?" This he answers in the affirmative saying: "I take it as one of the signs of the times, one of the evidences that the Lord is preparing His people for His return, that all over "this" and other "Civilized lands, and in every land where missionaries are carrying the gospel to a heathen people, there seems to be a growing sense of the need of a special arousing, an awakening, and a revival. It is unthinkable that when tens of thousands of God's beloved people are crying from the depths of earnest hearts, 'Revive thy work in the midst of the years, that God does not intend to bring revival and blessing.'" The postmillennialists hold that we are steadily advancing toward a millennium, which will be brought about as a result of present gospel efforts, and they believe that the second advent is to follow the setting up of a man-made millennium. This theory was at one time very popular, but two world wars have so badly shattered this dream that there is hardly a voice to uphold it today. However, there is a definite element of truth in their expectation of a period of righteousness and blessing before the second coming of Christ. Their mistake was that they failed to

Realize that this period of blessing is not the millennium, that it precedes the millennium, and that it is not the result of any present gospel effort. It is brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit, a work, which is not now in operation.

Dr. Scofield believed that a time would come when the "overwhelming majority" of living humanity would be saved. I believe he was right about this, but I feel he was wrong in placing it after the removal of all present believers from the earth. He was also wrong in basing this great work upon the delayed germination of seed sown before the "coming of Christ for His church."

Dr. Ironside expects a worldwide revival before the second coming. There is an intimation of truth in this. When the Spirit of truth enlightens the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment it will bring about a renaissance the like of which man has never experienced before.

I have quoted from the writings of Dr. Scofield and Dr. Ironside in order to show that my teaching in regard to a coming period of worldwide blessing is not as fantastic as some seem to think. Truth

such as I am setting forth has been intimated by a number of prominent teachers. However, the teaching in regard to this truth has been indefinite and confused. It has remained in the realm of wishful thinking and emotional declarations. It will be part of our task to clarify all this and get it upon the solid ground of Scripture.

The Present Dispensation

The time in which we now live is the dispensation of the grace of God. Ever since the moment of Adam's sin our God has been dispensing grace. He has ever been dealing with men in unmerited favor. Any careful reader of the Bible can confirm this truth for himself, and he can also confirm the fact that from Adam to the close of the Acts period, grace has not been the only thing that God has dispensed. At times he dispensed justice and severe punishment. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, but at the same time the rest of mankind perished in the judgment of the flood. Even in the thirty-three years of the Acts period, a time when more grace was being dispensed than ever before, severe punishment came upon some because of their sins. See Acts 5:1-10; Acts 12:20-25; Acts 13:11; I Corinthians 11:30.

Since the close of the book of Acts our God has dispensed nothing but grace. This explains why the present time is the dispensation of grace and the Acts period is no part of it. For 1900 years God has dispensed naught but grace, and His messengers have had the message of grace to proclaim. If at the present time, God were dispensing absolute justice to any man, if at the present time any man's "disobedience or transgression received a just recompense of reward," then this would not be a dispensation of grace, even though grace were still shown to men. But God is not rendering to any man his due or his right. He is dealing with the world and with His own in the world with a love and a favor that they do not deserve. Grace is His sole method today in dealing with men; therefore, this is the dispensation of the grace of God. This is so absolute in its character that all that any man has received from the hand of God since the close of the Acts period has been unmerited favor. All temporal judgments against sin are in abeyance. God has dispensed nothing but grace for 1900 years in order to demonstrate and establish before men that He is the God of grace. God's present dealings with men will stand as a memorial, a witness, and a testimony to His grace through all eternity.

We can know for certain that God's great act of dispensing naught but grace will never bring about a righteous world. This was declared by God long before the dispensation of grace began.

Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Ecclesiastes 8:11.

Let favor be showed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Isaiah 26:10.

Favor is grace. For 1900 years God has done nothing toward the wicked but show them unmerited favor. He has not dealt with wicked men according to their sins, neither has He rewarded them according to their iniquities. Without deviation, without change He has shown them grace. Men have taken advantage of this and have been all the more bold in their sins. This was also anticipated.

When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness. Isaiah 26:9.

Therefore if God should continue to deal with the world in grace for another 1900 years, mankind will still be in the same pitiful wicked condition that he is today. A righteous world will never be brought about by God manifesting grace, or by you and me preaching the gospel of grace. But this is not God's present purpose in grace. It is now His purpose to demonstrate the graciousness of His

character. When the time comes for God to bring in the prophesied times of righteousness, He will use entirely different methods, Isaiah the prophet declares.

This passage is a declaration and a promise. It tells us that someday God's judgments will be in the earth, and that when this is a reality the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness. And since favor showed to the wicked does not cause them to "learn righteousness," but when God's judgments are in the earth the inhabitants will "learn righteousness," it is evident that God will need to bring in a radical change in His methods of dealing with men. He must bring His judgments into the earth. God's Judgments

The entire truth of this passage will be missed if we misunderstand the word *judgment*. We are so prone to think of this word as signifying punishment, curses, plagues, etc., that we often miss the truth of Scripture altogether. We constantly confuse *judgment* with *condemnation*, but these are two very different things. Emotional preachers like to use the adjectives *fearful*, *frightful*, and *terrible* before the word judgment, and they confuse the matter still further. The Hebrew word here translated judgment is *mishpat*, and I do not believe that it ever means punishment in a single one of its more than 400 occurrences in the Old Testament. I do not know of any single English word that expresses the truth contained in this Hebrew word. In some occurrences the translators have used manner, fashion, custom, form, and order, in the hope of expressing the meaning of this word. I believe these translations provide the clue to its real meaning. We also have in this word the idea of judicial administration. Therefore, we can say that when God's judicial administration is in the earth, meaning a manner, fashion, or order that is fixed by God, the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness. It may impress the truth of this on our minds if we ask ourselves these questions. If God should today establish His fashion in the earth, would you and I be out of style? If He should bring in His manners, how would our manners compare? If He should bring in His order, how long would it be before we were charged with disorderly conduct?

The declaration in Isaiah 26:9 is not just a statement of what would happen if God should bring His judgments into the earth. It is a direct statement that He is going to do this, and we are also told what the results will be. As a rule this passage is interpreted as referring to the seals, trumpets and vials of the book of Revelation. This confuses God's wrath with judgment. Furthermore, it is expressly declared that the frightful experiences through which men pass as set forth in Revelation do not bring them to repentance and righteousness. Read Revelation 9:20, 21 and 16:8, 9. In regard to God's judgment we must not be like those described in Proverbs 28:5, "Evil men understand not judgment."

We can rest assured. God's judgments will yet be imposed upon this earth and its inhabitants. When this takes place the inhabitants of the earth will learn righteousness. This world is going to experience a change in dispensation. This dispensation of grace is going to be superseded by a dispensation of divine justice. God's judgments will then be in the earth. The inhabitants will then either learn righteousness or will be eliminated from among earth's inhabitants. Psalm 15.

This change is to come about in an orderly manner. I repudiate altogether the false idea that a change in dispensation must be accompanied or marked by some explosive and spectacular event. This dispensation of grace will end when God decrees that His purpose to demonstrate the graciousness of His character is complete. We do not know when this will be. However, we have been told of the peculiar character of the last days of this dispensation. When this character is unmistakably seen, we know we are near its end.

This dispensation will end by God returning His salvation to the people of Israel. This reverses the decree set forth by Paul in Acts 28:28, and it will mean that a special divine activity and operation will begin upon and in behalf of the Jewish people. This activity is described in Hosea 2:14.

Therefore, behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. Hosea 2:14.

It seems apparent that when the salvation of God returns to His people Israel, that the first reaction will be one of great distress. The Jews will be the first to be enlightened in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. This could hardly result in anything else but anguish of soul and spirit as God turns His light upon their thoughts and deeds. But the outcome of this is clearly predicted. .

I will go and return to My place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek My face: in their affliction (distress) they will seek me early (quickly). Hosea 5:15.

I would emphasize again that all this is the work of the Holy Spirit, and it is not done through any human agents. This activity will produce human agents that God will use greatly. Even as at the conversion of Paul, no human agent was used, but the work of God produced a human agent whom God used mightily.

It can be expected that this divine activity in behalf of Israel will stir up much latent anti-Semitism, which seems always to exist among the Gentiles who know not God. The world will not understand what is happening to the Jews in that day, but Satan will know that God is lifting the veil from the heart of His ancient people. This will cause him to again hurl his fiery darts, thus bringing about one of the tribulations through which Israel must pass as they advance toward the kingdom of God. See Acts 14:22. In this passage "much tribulation" should be "many tribulations."

Jehovah a Husband to Israel

The figure used by Jehovah to set forth the relationship that existed between Him and the people of Israel was that of husband and wife. At Mount Sinai He had entered into covenant relation with them as His nation. "I was a husband unto them," is His emphatic declaration. Jeremiah 31:32. But Israel was a wife who "played the harlot," so she was disowned and divorced by Jehovah. This is the plain teachings of the first two chapters of Hosea. At the time of the Babylonian captivity, Israel became "Lo Ammi," meaning, "not My people." "My people" means "My nation." It is an expression used in the Old Testament exclusively of Israel the nation, and it is never used of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

When the nation became "Lo Ammi" it does not mean that there were no further dealings or relationships between God and the descendants of Jacob. They, as individuals, were still related to Him, by the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, so they were ever the object of His solicitude and care. The history of the captivity is proof of this. Christ Himself declared that He was not sent "save to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24), and Paul declares Christ to have been "a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers." Romans 15:8. Nevertheless, the "Lo Ammi" condition of the people of Israel that began at the time of the Babylonian captivity (about 600 years before Christ) was still the same at the close of the book of Acts (thirty-three years after: the Cross). It is impossible to point to a place where, after Israel's divorce by Jehovah, that she was restored as the wife of Jehovah again. However, this relationship is to be restored. Jehovah has pledged Himself to Israel in a coming marriage relation. This is emphatically declared in Hosea 2:16, "Ishi," means "my husband."

According to God's prophesied order of events it was reasonable to expect that at the close of the Acts period that God would receive Israel as His people (nation) again, then begin upon them that great work which would in due time fulfill every prophecy He had made concerning them. But instead of receiving them at that point, He further widened the breach by sending His salvation to the Gentiles. See Acts 28:28. This was wholly unexpected as no such thing had ever been predicted. A

judgment such as that had never once been threatened. Nevertheless, it fell, and with it fell Israel's hope of becoming God's nation until such time as the salvation of God returns to them. Like a severed telephone wire ends all conversation, even so all conversation between God and Israel came to an end. It will never be resumed until this link is restored. His salvation must return to them as the first great step in His future dealings with Israel.

It must be carefully noted that when the salvation of God returns to Israel, it does not heal the breach that came between God and that nation at the time of the Babylonian captivity. This is only the first step, and it will accomplish only part of what our God has declared will be accomplished in Israel. According to Hosea 2:16,17, Israel is brought first to the place where she says "My Lord," then to the place where she says "My husband."

And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi: and shalt call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth. and they shall no more be remembered by their name. Hosea 2:16. 17.

Paul, the Pattern

Since we are dealing here with the conversion and restoration of Israel, it will be well to consider the man whose conversion is the pattern or preview of the future national conversion of that people. Paul declares that he was "one born out of due time." I Corinthians 15:8. The facts of his experience are easily arrived at. His rejection of and opposition to Christ knew no limits. He was a blasphemer and a persecutor. On a journey to Damascus: (1) there shined round about him a light from heaven, (2) he fell to the earth (indicative of his distress), (3) he heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me, (4) he called the speaker Lord and said "Who art thou Lord?", (5) the Lord answered I am Jesus whom thou persecutest, (6) he still in great mental and physical distress asked, "Lord what wilt thou have me do?", (7) the Lord said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it will be told thee what thou shalt do," (8) when he arose he was still blinded by the light but through the help of others he went to the city, (9) for three days he was without sight, but spent the time praying, (10) God sent one Ananias who laid hands on him and restored his sight. See Acts 9:1-18. **I have numbered these steps, as I believe they are symbolical of the things that will occur at the conversion of Israel.**

Without being dogmatic and subject to clarification that further study may bring, I believe that when the salvation of God returns to His people Israel, every Jew on earth will be simultaneously enlightened in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. This corresponds to the great light out of heaven that flashed upon Paul. This will result in the greatest distress of spirit that any company of people have ever experienced, a distress that is all the more troubling because it is upon all Israel. They will recognize this as supernatural and will cry out in their distress, "Who art thou, Lord?" The answer that the Spirit of truth will bring to them will be, "I am Jesus, whom your fathers crucified, whom you have persistently rejected, and whose name you have refused to speak?" I do not mean that this will be by audible voice. The word of the Lord came to men more often without audible voice than it ever did with.

To this there can be only one reply of the Jewish people, "Lord, what will you have us do?" And His answer to their request for specific guidance will be, "Arise, go back to your country, and it will be told you what you must do."

A man blinded by light is blind to everything but the light. This will be Israel's condition in the day that they will arise at God's direction to return to their land. Their eyes will be single to the light that God has given them. They will be blind to all they have ever valued or treasured. The world will be

amazed in that day to see the Jews turning their backs upon all material possessions, closing their businesses, locking their doors, and setting their faces toward Palestine. If I am here when this takes place, they can have every possible help which I can offer, even to the last cent I own, for in that day all who bless them will be blessed. They must return to their land, for it will be *that in the very place* that it was said to them, "Ye are not My people, there shall they be called the children (sons) of the living God." Romans 9:26.

When this takes place, when God again calls them "My people," the second great step will have been realized. God will have received them as His people again. Israel will again be the wife of Jehovah. They will then cease to call Him "Baali" (my Lord), and they will call Him "Ishi" (my Husband).

And I will betroth thee unto Me for ever; yea. I will betroth thee unto Me in righteousness and in judgment, and in lovingkindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto Me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord. Hosea 2:19, 20.

This is God's faithful promise. A promise, which Jesus Christ came to earth to confirm. Israel is yet to be restored to Jehovah.

I would not be dogmatic about it, but I cannot help but feel that the three days of Paul's blindness has a symbolic relation to the statement made in Hosea 6:1-3. Here God gives the words that Israel shall say in the day she turns to God.

Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days will He revive us: in the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: His going forth is prepared as the morning; and He shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth. Hosea 6:1-3.

As Paul sat in Damascus for three days, blinded by the light, touching no food or drink, a divinely sent human agent entered upon the scene. When he laid his hands upon him, his sight was restored. I believe that this corresponds to the coming of Elijah. "Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things," is the specific promise of Christ. See Matthew 17:11.

The receiving of Israel as a nation again does not mean that they at once enter into the fullness of their blessings. A boy expelled from school is not granted a diploma the day he is restored to the student body. He merely becomes a student again. Even so it will be with Israel when they become "Ammi" or God's nation once again.

Light for the Gentiles

Every careful student of Scripture knows that God's promises of blessing for Israel never have Israel alone as His end in view. Any blessing, which God sends upon Israel is always for the purpose of providing a means of blessing for the world. The blessing of Israel is not God's goal. The blessing of the world through Israel is His goal.

When God receives Israel as His people it will immediately bring about a complete change in the world, that is, a complete change in the order, the system or the conditions under which men now live. This is the truth declared in **Romans 11:15**. An honest paraphrase of this passage, filling in the ellipsis of thought, would read as follows:

"For if their exclusion from God brought such a complete change in the world, what will their receiving be?"

The complete change that their receiving will bring about in the world can best be expressed by these words, It is life from the dead."

The nature of this change is set forth in an Old Testament passage:

Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun. and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His people, and healeth the stroke of their wound. Isaiah 30:26.

Thus in Romans 11:15 we learn that the receiving of Israel will result in a complete change in the world, and from Isaiah 30:26 we learn that one of the chief characteristics of this new order will be the light that is to be shed forth by God. When the Jewish people are brought to that place where they can in truth say to Jehovah "My Husband," the entire world will be living under a new dispensation. The long demonstration of absolute grace will be at an end, and a dispensation in which light is predominantly dispensed will be upon the world. In that day the promise of Christ in **John 16:7, 8** will be fulfilled to the letter:

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away. the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart. I will send Him unto you. And when He is come. He will reprove (enlighten) the world of sin. and of righteousness. and of judgment.

An accurate understanding of the character of the coming dispensation will be our portion only after we have carefully examined and considered every passage of Scripture, which bears upon this subject. These are so numerous that it may take several years before any progress is made. However, Bible study is our business, and it is good to know that there is enough work ahead to keep us in business for many years to come. Our labors along these lines are only beginning. Every chapter in Psalms, Proverbs, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hebrews, and Revelation must be considered carefully in order to see what testimony they give concerning this period of time to come. As a result of our studies to date, certain truths have become evident. These will sound so strange to those who may be hearing them for the first time that it will be well to keep in mind a passage, which bears upon this subject.

Behold ye among the heathen (Gentiles), and regard, and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you, Habakkuk 1:5.

Man's natural inclination is not to believe God. The Christian is inclined to be slow of heart to believe all that God has spoken. Some believe that He performed wonderful works in the past, but are slow to believe that He will do the same in the future. They believe that men lived as long as 969 years at one time, but will not believe that they will ever do so again. They accept without question the Biblical revelation that the animals were at one time subject to man, but they consider it fantastic to think that they will ever be so again. Many are willing to accept prophecy only insofar as it fits with their preconceived notions. In view of this I ask that no snap judgment be given the truths I now present, either for or against. A full year of study would not be very much to give to these matters before opinions are finally formed.

The Day of Christ

When the salvation of God returns to Israel it will mark the beginning of a period of "time in which Christ will have His day with Israel and with the world. The day of Christ must precede the day of the Lord even though there will be an overlapping when the day of the Lord begins. In the day of Christ, His expressed desire to gather Israel together as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings will be fulfilled. He will yet have the joy of seeing Israel take the place of dependence and security under Him. In that day He will have His rightful place in the hearts of His people Israel.

It is in the day of Christ that God will pour out His Spirit on all flesh in fulfillment of Joel 2:28-31. This will mean that every man on earth will be in possession of divinely given knowledge concerning God and Christ. This knowledge will constantly increase through prophecies, visions,

and dreams. See Acts 2:17, 18. Some will continue in rebellion against God and Christ in spite of this knowledge, but all who do so will surely be eliminated from the inhabitants of this earth. The declaration of both Joel and Peter proves that all this takes place before the great and notable day of the Lord comes. Joel 2:31, Acts 2:20. And since the second coming of Jesus Christ takes place in the day of the Lord, all these blessings must precede His return to this earth. That good work which God began among Israel and the Gentiles in the Acts period has been wholly discontinued until the day of Jesus Christ. This is the testimony of Philippians 7:6 when it is correctly translated. The work, which God began on the day of Pentecost, should have culminated in the full establishment of the rule of the heavens over the earth. As the Acts period drew near to its close, this was the confident expectation of Paul. He declares this in Romans 13:11,12.

And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Romans 13:11, 12.

But the night has continued for 1900 years. The darkness is not yet past. We still wrestle against "the rulers of the darkness of this world." Was Paul mistaken? Has the Word of God been broken? No, he was not mistaken. We know the answer. All this was postponed while God completes a purpose, which was still a secret when Paul wrote Romans. We live in the time of a postponed kingdom. God is now demonstrating His grace.

The Rule of the Heavens

The coming dispensation is a period of time when the heavens will rule over the earth. This is what John the Baptist meant when he said, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of the heaven is at hand." This kingdom was dependent solely upon the first coming and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and it was in no way dependent upon His second coming.

The Greek word translated kingdom (*basileia*) throughout the New Testament means sovereignty, rule, dominion and control. These abstract principles, when they are exercised, will produce something concrete, that is, a kingdom. The concrete (kingdom) comes as the result of the exercise of the abstract (sovereignty or rule), and the concrete will never come apart from it. In the Greek, *basileia* is used for both the abstract and the concrete ideas. This is the figure of speech metonymy by which the effect is put for the cause producing it.

When God placed man in the garden of Eden, He reserved for Himself complete sovereignty and control over man, ever though He gave man great liberty. He declared and fixed certain great principles or laws, which would become active the moment they were violated. When Adam sinned, the first great law became active. There was no need for God to bring Adam into court. Death began to work in him and nothing could stop it until it had reached its consummation.

The descendants of Adam continued to live under the same conditions. Great liberty was their privilege, but they so frightfully abused their liberty that they were smitten by God in the flood of Noah's time. The new race of men that came from Noah constantly chafed at the idea of any divine control. They desired to throw off every vestige of it and walk independently of God. The record of this is written in Romans, first chapter. **When they knew God, they did not give Him glory as God; therefore, God gave them up. Romans 1:21, 24.** They change the truth of God into a lie, so, we read again, God gave them up to vile affections. Romans 1:25, 26. They did not like to retain God in their knowledge, so God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Romans 1:28. The exact time when this giving up took place is not easy to fix. It appears to have been a gradual process rather than one great act. The four hundred silent years between Malachi and Matthew is proof that God had removed every control, every restraint, and that He no longer intervened in the affairs of men.

However, the message of many Old Testament prophecies is that God would again intervene, take control, establish His rule, and bring about a time of blessing, peace, and righteousness. The greater part of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the Minor Prophets deal with this theme—the coming period of time when God would intervene and take control. Most of the Psalms are concerned with this period of time. In these writings the Spirit of God reveals a time to come when the meek, not the proud, will be given the earth, when longevity will again be the privilege of men, when the knowledge of the Lord will be universal, when sin will be visited by judgment from the Lord. Read Psalm 145. In view of this men were constantly warned that the time would come when they would be living under vastly different conditions. To these conditions they would need to conform if they expected to remain among the inhabitants of the earth. Psalm 15.

When John the Baptist came thundering his startling message over the hills of Judea, he declared "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." When he was put in prison, the Lord Jesus heralded the same message. With these words they were warning men that the sovereignty, the rule, the control of the heavens over earth was so near that men had better set their lives in order.

Since God rules "the heavens" the rule of the heavens is also the rule of God. Compare Matthew 4:17 and Mark 1:14, 15.

However, it was made plain by the Lord Jesus that this rule of the heavens was not to be fully manifested or realized at one stroke. It would come by the same process that seed produces a plant, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. See Mark 4:26-29. Furthermore, the Lord by means of parables revealed certain truths concerning the kingdom of the heavens, which prior to His advent had been secret. When these parables are examined they reveal one phase or aspect of the kingdom of heaven, which precedes "the harvest," and another which follows it. The harvest takes place at the second coming of Christ. See Matthew 13:24-30 and 13:36-43.

During the three years of Christ's earthly ministry there was no evidence that the heavens had assumed control of earth and men in the earth. Men still ordered their own lives. It was their hour and the hour of the power of darkness. They crucified the Lord of Glory, but God did not intervene. Three days after His crucifixion, the heavens did intervene. They had killed the Prince of Life, but God set aside their deed and raised Him from the dead. At the time of His resurrection many bodies of the saints, which slept arose, came out of their graves and appeared to many in Jerusalem. Matthew 27:51-53. This was only a token. Strange events such as this are to be expected when the heavens assume control. This might be called the "blade" of the kingdom of heavens. Here we see it just pushing aside the clouds, which would obstruct its growth. We see Ananias and Sapphira die because of their sin. The Apostles are put in prison, but an angel of the Lord opens the doors and sends them back to their God appointed task. Dorcas took sick and died, but she was so deserving of life that she was raised from the dead. The fashion of that world was slowly passing out, and a new world was slowly coming in. I Corinthians 7:31. It seemed that the rule of God would soon pass the "blade" stage and develop into the "ear" stage. But it was just here that God postponed the kingdom, and brought in the unexpected and unpredicted dispensation of grace. When God's purpose in this dispensation of grace is complete, God will intervene and assume control of earth and the men of this earth.

The World Enlightened

In the coming dispensation, all mankind will be enlightened in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Spirit of truth was sent into the world for this purpose, and it is a purpose, which has never been fulfilled. This is a work that is to be done during the absence of Christ, that is, between

His ascension and His second coming. This work of enlightenment will be to the Jew first, then to the Gentile. In that day it will be true to the very letter that "the darkness is past and the true light now shineth." I John 2:8. Since we today wrestle against "the rulers of the darkness of this world," we cannot say that the darkness is past (Ephesians 6:12). When God imparts to all men understanding concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment, the darkness will then be past. Never again can any man excuse his sin by saying, "I did it in ignorance." All ethical and moral problems will be solved overnight when God enlightens mankind. From that time forth every man will be held strictly accountable for his response toward this God-given light. Sickness and death will be the portion of those who refuse to conform.

If I had not come and spoken unto them. they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. John 16:22.

These words will be applicable to every man who rejects the truth in the day that God enlightens every man concerning sin, righteousness and judgment.

{Concluded In Next Issue}

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

As the Lord Jesus neared the end of His earthly mission He began to speak of the new work of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel of John is the only place we find the words of Christ concerning this, it being a universal truth embracing the whole world. His words concerning this new work of the Spirit are as follows:

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart. I will send him unto you. And when he is come. he will reprove the world of sin. and of righteous ness, and of judgment: Of sin because they believe not on me: Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see me no more: of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. John 16:7-11.

I do not claim to have perfect understanding of this passage; nevertheless, it is my conviction that these words are a prophecy, and that this prophecy has been fulfilled only in part. The Spirit has come, but He has never yet "reproved" mankind of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. I believe that the truth declared by the Greek word (elegcho) translated "reprove" can best be expressed by the word *enlighten*. To enlighten is to impart understanding concerning the subject in question. I believe that the time will come when the Spirit of truth will impart understanding to every man on earth concerning these three great matters.

My teaching in regard to this passage has created rejoicing among some, surprise among others, and consternation among a few. A number of questions have come to me from other students of the Word. Some hold that I am making this passage to mean too much, and others feel I am wrong in holding that it will be fulfilled in the future. They feel that this is what the Holy Spirit has been doing for 1900 years, and that instead of it beginning at some future time, this work is now nearing its end.

I am seeking to fully consider every objection to my position, but I cannot go along with those who weaken every word of this strong declaration, and who seek to make it mean as little as possible so that it will harmonize with the limited work the Holy Spirit is doing now.

Much interest centers in the Greek word translated "reprove" as there are some who feel that I make it to mean too much by using the word *enlighten* as a translation. This needs to be fully considered, but in order to do so we will need to consider the passage as a whole. Certain general truths need to be understood' before the words of this passage can be interpreted.

It should be noted first of all that this work is the work of a Paraclete (Comforter). This word denotes one whose calling is to be alongside to give help. Take for example the case of a young surgeon who is to perform a delicate operation. The life of the patient is in his hands, and he feels heavily this responsibility. But he has no fear for there will be standing at his side an older surgeon with wide experience and the skill and wisdom that comes from long practice. This older surgeon will do nothing but stand alongside to watch carefully, to suggest, to admonish, or whatever may be necessary to help the younger surgeon. In such a case the older surgeon is a paraclete. It is his calling in regard to this operation to stand alongside and help. A work such as this will some day be done for every man on earth in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. Those who reject this work will demonstrate their unworthiness to remain among the men of earth. They will be eliminated.

This Paraclete is first mentioned in John 14:17 where He is called the Spirit of truth. In I John 4:6 we read of the exact opposite, "the spirit of error." The Spirit of truth is divine, that is, it is God's Spirit, while the spirit of error is satanic. The spirit of error was already in the world and actively at work at the time when Christ made the promise that the Spirit of truth would be sent. The presence of these two diametrically opposed spirits in the earth was sure to result in an all-out conflict for supremacy and victory, with each general bringing forth every weapon in their arsenals. But even though the Spirit of truth has come into the world this conflict has never yet taken place. If there are any who believe that in the 1900 years we have witnessed an all-out conflict between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error, they had better face the facts honestly and admit that if this is so, the Spirit of truth has always been the loser.

In spite of the presence of the Spirit of truth in the world, conditions have not been much different than before He came. Ignorance, superstition, deception, error, and darkness prevail throughout the world today, and this is all that most men have known for 1900 years. They are born in it, they live in it, and they die in it. Therefore, if there has been a conflict between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error for 1900 years, the one seeking a victory for light and truth, while the other seeks a victory for darkness and error, then let us be honest, let us give the "devil his due" and admit that he has won the battle, the Spirit of truth always arriving with "too little, too late."

There are some who believe that there can be no triumph for the Spirit of truth until the Lord comes to his aid and binds Satan. Then with Satan bound the Spirit of truth will have a mighty victory with men for a thousand years, until such time as Satan is loosed. This would be too much like a boxer winning a fight with an opponent who has his hands tied behind his back. We cannot tolerate such ideas. The Spirit of truth must yet have His victory over an opponent who is free to do all in his power. In no other way can it be properly demonstrated that **"greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."** **I John 4:4.** The battle that will show this has not yet been joined. It will begin the very moment that the salvation of God returns to Israel. That will be a spiritual shot which will be heard around the world, the beginning of the long awaited conflict between the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

The student of the book of Acts and all the Scripture which pertains to that period cannot but believe that in that thirty three years, the stage was being set for a public world-wide contest between

these two opposing spirits. Paul fully anticipated this battle and the outcome when he said near the close of the Acts period: **"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."** **Romans 16:20.**

However, it seems as if at the close of the Acts period the Spirit of truth withdrew from the field of battle. The spirit of error has operated without hindrance for 1900 years. The only thing that has kept Satan from absolute victory is the fact that God has ever been dispensing grace, and this grace has resulted in many being brought to Him. God's grace has caused the lives of some to become receptacles for the Spirit of truth. Nevertheless, the truth cannot be denied that while God's gracious dealings have resulted in some brands being plucked from the burning, Satan without hindrance has poured gasoline on the fire.

The explanation of this is found in God's purpose in the present dispensation. If He seems to have withdrawn from the field of battle, it is in order to accomplish another purpose. We live in a parenthesis in God's program as revealed in the prophets, during which He is demonstrating and establishing the fact that He is primarily the God of infinite grace. I make no apology for repeating this truth again and again. If we fail to recognize the character of the present time, our understanding of both past and future times will be blurred.

The truth of the graciousness of His character is the one truth that God is now seeking to demonstrate and establish, and the Spirit of truth is cooperating fully with the Father in this great effort. When this has been completed to God's satisfaction, the work that the Spirit of truth came to do will be resumed. He will enlighten the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. Let us not hesitate to believe God concerning this. Even though it has been long delayed, it will yet be done to the fullest extent declared by our Lord.

It should be carefully noted that this work is dependent upon Christ departing, that is, upon His being away from the earth and not upon it. He told His disciples that it was to their advantage that He depart. This is the meaning of "expedient" in this passage. If He remained, the Holy Spirit would not come to them, but if He departed He would send Him. This entire parenthetical dispensation of grace must be placed between the coming of the Spirit upon the disciples and the second step of enlightening the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment. He has come, but mankind has not yet been enlightened concerning sin.

The Greek word *elegcho* (pronounced e-ENG-kho) here translated "reprove" is translated "convict" in the Revised Version; "convince" by the Revised Standard; "bring conviction" by Goodspeed; "bring demonstration" by J. N. Darby. Concerning the meaning of this word, it will be well to consider the testimony of others.

Dr. A. C. Gaebelein made the following comment on John 16:7-11: "These words are generally misunderstood. The common interpretation is that the Holy Spirit convinces people that they are lost sinners, that they need righteousness and also convinces them of a coming judgment. Conviction of sin is certainly the work of the Holy Spirit, who also quickens those who believe, but this is not the teaching of the passage before us in this paragraph. Much depends on the right rendering of the word 'reprove.' It has not the meaning of an inward conviction, but rather means a conviction by demonstration. It means conviction by an unanswerable argument." *The Gospel of John* page 304.

After making these strong statements, Dr. Gaebelein does not follow them out to all their conclusions. He believed this work of the Spirit is being done now. He failed to see that the Holy Spirit has never yet brought "conviction by an unanswerable argument" to mankind concerning sin. If so, no psychologist would be able to stand before any class and spew forth his Freudian and behavioristic philosophy. He would be laughed at till he left the platform.

In showing the difference between *epitimeo* (the Greek word that does mean rebuke) and *elegcho* (the word translated "reprove" in John 16:8) Archbishop Trench in his *Synonyms of the New Testament* says:

"One may 'rebuke' another without bringing the rebuked to a conviction of any fault on his part; and this, either because there *was* no fault, and the rebuke was therefore unheeded or unjust; or else because, though there was such fault, the rebuke was ineffectual to bring the offender to own it; and in this possibility of 'rebuking' for sin, without 'convincing' of sin, lies the distinction between these words. In *epitiman* lies simply the notion of rebuking; which word can therefore be used of one unjustly checking or blaming another; in this sense Peter 'began to rebuke' his Lord. . . . But *elegchein* is a much more pregnant word; it is so to rebuke another, with such effectual wielding of the victorious arms of the truth, as to bring him, if not always to a confession, yet at least to a conviction, of his sin."

This Greek word appears in the Septuagint of Job 5:17 and Proverbs 19:25. I have used the word *enlighten* as being the one English word which best expresses the truth in the Greek word *elegcho*. For this I am indebted to Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer who says concerning *elegcho* in John 16:8:

"The determining word is *elegcho* since it defines what it is that the Holy Spirit does in the mind and heart of the unsaved individual respecting sin, righteousness, and judgment. The A.V. translates this word by *reprove*, the R.V. translates it *convict*, and still other scholars have translated it *convince*. In every instance in which this word appears, the word connotes the impartation of understanding regarding the subject in question. With this in view the translation by the word *enlighten* is perhaps the most satisfactory." *Systematic Theology, Volume 6, page 94.*

These quotations from others have been given to show that I have not acted arbitrarily in using the word *enlighten* in connection with John 16:7, 8. In fact, I would prefer a stronger more expressive word, one that sets forth the idea of imparting understanding or giving intelligence regarding the subject in question. But I know of no such word in common use. The word *enlighten* comes the nearest of any English word I know to express the truth of the Greek word *elegcho*.

The Present Work of The Spirit

It is of great importance for us to see that John 16:7,8 speaks of a work which the Spirit of truth is to do for men outside of Christ. Therefore, if we are to make any contrast between the work which the Holy Spirit is doing now and that which He will do in the coming dispensation, we must make our contrasts between what He is doing for men of the world now and what He will do for men of the world then. Some are looking at what He is doing for the believer now, contrasting this with what He will do for the world in the future, then concluding that His great work of enlightening is going on now. This is false reasoning. The contrast must be between the work the Spirit of truth does for men of the world today and what He will do for men of the world in a future day.

If the truth is honestly faced, the world today is not being enlightened concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. The world has no intelligence, no understanding, and no conviction concerning these things. Men are pretty well destitute of light, and much that they hold concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment has come from Satan's lies rather than the truth of God. Satan's errors concerning sin are taught in most schools and declared from many pulpits. God's truth concerning sin is not known. In view of these obvious facts, it is almost a slander against the Holy Spirit to say that He is today enlightening the world in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. If so, it has all been ineffectual. The world still dwells in darkness.

The End

THE COMING OF ELIJAH

The Old Testament closes with one of the greatest promises in the Bible. It is a promise that has never yet been fulfilled:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. Malachi 4:5-6.

Even though the meaning of certain phrases in this promise are somewhat obscure, its leading features are quite plain. We are told that before "the great and dreadful day of the Lord" Elijah will be sent to the people of Israel, and he will accomplish a far-reaching work of spiritual nature. It is also declared that if it were not for this great work, it would be necessary for the Lord when He comes to smite the earth with a curse.

The Lord is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. If He came today, He could do nothing else but smite the earth with a curse. But we can rest assured that He will not do this for we have His word for it that before He comes He will send Elijah who will bring about a spiritual condition which will make this unnecessary.

The phrase "turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers" is somewhat obscure. However, we can say with certainty that these words indicate a work of great spiritual importance. Furthermore, we know that in God's order the family is the one unit He has established, and in the family the father is supposed to be the head and teacher of the son. Today, the average father is incapable of being either head or teacher, and at the best the children regard the father as a well-intentioned nincompoop whose chief function is to bring in the money. The ministry of Elijah is going to make fathers to be what they should be, and he will do the same for the children. Delinquent parents and delinquent children will then be a thing of the past.

The words of the angel of the Lord to Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, shed further light on the meaning of this phrase. Concerning John the Baptist he said:

And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias (Elijah), to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Luke 1:17.

The ministry of John prepared some in Israel for the first advent of Christ. The work of Elijah in a coming day will prepare all Israel for the second advent of Christ. When He comes again He will find a nation fully ready for the Lord.

The words of Christ emphasize further the far-reaching spiritual nature of the work Elijah is to do:

And His disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them. Elias truly shall first come and restore all things. Matthew 17:11.

From this we know that the work of Elijah is not to be insignificant. He will "restore all things," and this will be done before the beginning of the great and notable day of the Lord.

The prophecies of Malachi and the Lord Jesus concerning the coming of Elijah and his great ministry has proved embarrassing to the reasoning of many. They can find no room in the limits of their tight systems of prophetic interpretation for the work that he will do. Some get around it by making Elijah to be one of the two witnesses described in Revelation 11:3-12. This cannot be true

for Elijah does a great work of "turning." He turns the heart of both fathers and children. The verb *turn*, which appears twice in the Malachi prophecy is the Hebrew word *shuv*, and it indicates that kind of turning which denotes the conversion of the heart. See Psalm 51:13, Psalm 19:7, Isaiah 1:27 and Isaiah 6:10 where this same word is translated "converted." Since the two witnesses in Revelation are smiting men with "curses," we cannot say that they do the work of turning men to God so that when the Lord comes, He will not need to smite the earth with a curse.

Others get around the direct prophecy of Malachi by saying that it was fulfilled in John the Baptist. They feel they have solid ground in Scripture for this position. And since that is the way they want it to be, they steadfastly refuse to consider the questions and problems that this position creates. Furthermore, they seem to care little that this position breaks the Word of God;

In considering the idea that John the Baptist and his ministry fulfilled the Malachi prophecy of the coming of Elijah, certain facts must be honestly faced.

When the priests and the Levites asked John if he were Elijah, he answered by saying, "**I am not.**" See **John 1:21**. This is enough to settle it for all who permit the Word of God to speak in regard to matters in dispute. John the Baptist said he was not Elijah.

In the Malachi prophecy we have a direct statement made by the Lord that he would send "Elijah the prophet." John declared that he was not Elijah; therefore, he could not have been the one whom God promised to send. Even though John the Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elijah," he did not fulfill the Malachi prophecy. I am sure that every reader of these lines would feel he had been defrauded if he had purchased a ticket to hear Mr. Fritz Kreisler play the violin, and then there appeared on the stage someone whom they said would play just like him. Our God has promised that Elijah will some day appear on the stage of this world and do a work of such magnitude that it will remove the possibility of the earth being smitten with a curse. We have every right to believe that God will keep this promise. We cannot settle for John the Baptist. To do so is to break the Word of God.

The language of Matthew 17:10 seems to indicate that the scribes were justifying their "do nothing" attitude toward the Lord Jesus by quoting the prophecy of Malachi. They insisted that He did not have Elijah for His herald. This led the disciples to ask:

Why then say the scribes that Elias (Elijah) must first come. Matthew 17:10.

And although John the Baptist had come and had been beheaded, the Lord Jesus said in answer:

Elias (Elijah) truly shall first come, and restore all things. Matthew 17:11.

Thus our Lord made the coming of Elijah and the restoration of all things to be future events, rather than events that had already taken place. However, He added:

But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist. Matthew 17:12, 13.

This is the passage that many use to prove that John was Elijah. At first glance it seems to teach this, but many of us have learned to take more than one glance at a Scripture passage. We know that Elijah never died, and that John the Baptist was "born of a woman." If John were Elijah, then we have here a clear case of reincarnation, an idea that is foreign to the Scripture. Furthermore, when Elijah appeared upon the mount of transfiguration, it was Elijah and not John. The whole idea that John was Elijah is impossible and repugnant. What then did our Lord mean?

Since the scribes were using the fact that Elijah had not yet come as a decisive argument against the Messiah, it is evident that His words were directed against them. If they did not recognize John

as one sent from God, they would not recognize Elijah if he were sent by God. If Elijah had come they would have treated him exactly as they treated John. John was of the same character as Elijah.

I believe that the Lord here used a figure of speech. which is familiar to all of us. We speak of "a Lincoln," or "a Gladstone," or a Solomon." Our Lord was telling the disciples that an Elijah had come. The scribes had rejected him. Would it be different if the Elijah came?

That John the Baptist did not fulfill the Malachi prophecy concerning Elijah is demonstrated beyond question by our Lord's statement recorded in **Matthew 11:14:**

And if ye will receive it, this is Elias (Elijah) which was for to come.

The truth here is expressed in the same manner as we find in Matthew 26:26 where the Lord said, "this is my body," which means "this represents my body." In Matthew 11:14 our Lord declared that "If you will receive it he (John) represents Elijah who is about to come." If they would receive it John could do for them individually what Elijah will do for Israel nationally. He represented Elijah. Thus our Lord confirms the fact that Elijah's coming was a still future event, even though John was then upon the earth.

The End

THE ORDER OF THINGS TO COME

(Continued from Volume XI. Number 5)

With some hesitation and due restraint I now present an outline of my present understanding of the order of events concerning things to come. This outline is not to be regarded as my final and irrevocable views of the order of divinely predicted events; My life is dedicated to perpetual and progressive Bible study, and I expect to ever be learning more about each event set forth here. Additional light may call for some revision and clarification. The Scripture passages listed are NOT to be considered as proof texts of the propositions stated. They are put there for the guidance of the student, and they indicate a passage or portion, which needs to be studied in connection with the truth being set forth.

A. The Salvation of God returns to Israel. Joel 2:27:

1. This reverses Paul's proclamation in Acts 28:28.
2. This ends God's great demonstration of Grace, Ephesians 3:2.
3. This inaugurates a mighty work of the Spirit among Israel. John 16:7, 8. The enlightenment will be to the Jew first, resulting in the veil being removed from their eyes. Isaiah 60:2.
4. This leads them to confess Christ as Lord, and sends them back to their land. Ezekiel 36:7,8.
5. This begins the day of Christ. Philippians 1:6.
6. This occurs before the day of the Lord. Joel 2:31.

B. Israel is received by Jehovah as His people (nation). Hosea 2:23.

1. This must take place after their return to Palestine., Romans 9:26.
2. They are blessed spiritually (Hosea 2:16,17), materially (Hosea 2:22), and nationally (Ezekiel 37 :2125).

3. Their reception brings about a radical change in the world. Romans 11:15. God takes control.

4. The world is enlightened. John 16:7, 8. Isaiah 30:26.

C. The Premillennial Kingdom of the Heavens. Matthew 13.

1. This will fulfill Malachi 4:5, 6. Matthew 17:11, Acts 3:19, Acts 15:16,17.

2. The world will be planted with the sons of the kingdom. Matthew 13:36-43.

3. The nations are blessed, wars, famines, and plagues cease. Peace, equity and righteousness are established. Hosea 2:18. The earth is blessed. Earthquakes cease. Hosea 2:21, 22,

4. Jerusalem and the Temple are completely rebuilt, with Gentiles giving all possible aid. Isaiah 60:10.

5. Universal righteousness shall be upon "the earth. Isaiah 61:11. .

6. All nations are in accord. God is honored.

D. The Great Apostasy. II Thessalonians 2:3.

1. False teachers appear. II Peter 2:1.

a. The tares appear among the wheat. Matt. 13:24-30.

b. Many follow them. II Peter 2:1.

c. Men become forgetful. Deut. 8:11-17.

E. The Seventieth Week of Daniel's prophecy. Daniel 9:27.

1. This marks the beginning of the day of the Lord. Isaiah 2:12.

2. Three-and-a-half years of false progress and prosperity. I Thess. 5:3.

a. God withdraws. Isaiah 18:1-7.

3. The signs of Christ's coming begin to appear. Matthew 24:3-7.

4. The seven-year covenant is broken. Daniel 9:27.

a. The abomination of desolation stands in the holy place. Matthew 24:15.

b. The man of sin in the temple of God. II Thess. 2:4.

5. Three-and-a-half years of tribulation. Matthew 24:41.

F. The Lord descends from heaven. I Thess. 4:16.

1. The dead in Christ are raised first. I Thess. 4:16.

2. Those who are alive and remain are caught up. I Thess. 4:16.

3. Indignation. The vials of God's wrath are poured out. Revelation 16.

G. The Lord Jesus Returns to the Earth. Revelation 19:11-16.

1. The battle of Armageddon. Revelation 19:17-19.

2. The Beast and False Prophet are destroyed. Revelation 19:20.

3. Satan bound and imprisoned for a thousand years. Revelation 20:1-3.

H. The Millennial Kingdom. Revelation 20:6. Isaiah 24:23.

I. The Little Season. Revelation 20:3,7.

1. Satan loosed. Revelation 20:7. Insurrection. Revelation 20:8.
2. The rebellious slain. Revelation 20:9. Satan destroyed. Revelation 20:10.

J. The Great White Throne. Revelation 20:11.

1. The final resurrection. Revelation 20:12.
2. Death and Hades destroyed. Revelation 20:14.

K. The New Heavens and New Earth. Revelation 21 and 22.

1. The Goal reached. I Corinthians 15:24.
2. God All in All. I Corinthians 15:28.

The End

THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS

****We welcome to our readers list over 250 new readers who have requested THE WORD OF TRUTH since our last issue went out. To these we desire to say that back numbers of our publication are available without cost. A list of our pamphlets will be sent to any who request it. Address all mail to THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY, and not to any individual, unless it is intended to be personal. Please inform us at once of any change in your address. Whenever we set forth the material needs of this testimony, the appeal is sent impersonally to every name on our mailing list. All readers may do as they feel led about the support of this witness. They will continue to receive the magazine whether they feel led to support our work or not.

****About the middle of February, Mrs. Sellers became quite ill, and after two weeks had to be rushed to the hospital for blood transfusions. Examination indicated the need of major surgery at once, and this was performed on March 7 in spite of her weak condition. The operation revealed no adverse- conditions of any kind, but her condition remained extremely critical for a week following the surgery. However, she suddenly began to make an almost miraculous recovery, and on March 18 was able to leave the hospital for convalescence at home. This will require several months, but the physicians give us every assurance that she will be in better health than ever before. The temporary loss of her valuable help and the additional demands all this has made upon my time explains the delay in sending out this issue. I am able to report that God's grace has been our portion, wave after wave, during this difficult time. We are both deeply appreciative *of* the interest and the prayers of the many friends of this ministry who knew of her illness. We thank you.

****This issue completes Volume Eleven of THE WORD OF TRUTH. The bound copies of the six magazines which make *up* this Volume should be ready in about two weeks. The price will be \$1.50. Other Bound Volumes. now available are 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. These also are \$1.50 each. Any three - for \$4.00, *or* the eight Volumes *for* \$10.50. A complete set of all Bound Volumes and all pamphlets *for* \$12.00.

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