

“HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN”

“HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT”

“AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM”

CHRIST CAME UNTO HIS OWN

“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:11 and 12.

The study of John 1:11 and 12 has proved so interesting and helpful to me that I want to share with others some of the blessings I have received in this study.

If you are a child of God, of course you know the truth of Galatians 3:26:

“FOR YE ARE ALL THE CHILDREN OF GOD BY FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS.”

This is the only way that any child of Adam can become a child of God. The same Apostle John, who was directed by the Holy Spirit to write the verses which we are considering, also wrote:

“Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” “He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” I John 5:1 and 12.

He also wrote II John 9:

“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”

It was Christ Himself Who spoke the words of John 5:23 and John 14:6

“That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent Him.”

Again note these words of the Lord Jesus:

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

Then the Holy Spirit directed the Apostle Peter to write I Peter 3:18:

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

All of these Divine statements help us to understand John 1:12:

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

Only receivers and believers become God’s children or sons. There is positively no way to Divine sonship except through and by the Lord Jesus Christ, faith in the Son of God and His once for-all sacrifice on the cross. Unbelievers are by nature the children of wrath. Ephesians 2:1 to 3.

Whether we call the believer’s relationship. to God, “Divine sonship,” “regeneration,” “redemption,” “reconciliation,” “salvation,” or “membership in Christ’s Church,” this

relationship is established always and only by faith in the true Christ of the Bible and because of the application of the precious blood of this eternal Son of God.

This Divine process is clearly stated in Colossians 1:20 and 21, Ephesians 1:6 and 7 and Ephesians 2:8 to 10:

“And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled.”

“To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He made us accepted in the Beloved, In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

“For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM

“As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:12.

This should all be very clear to Gentiles and Jews during this period of grace in which we are so extremely fortunate to live. But this economy and age of grace did not begin until after “His own received Him not.” Note carefully the message of Acts 2:22 and 23:

“Ye men, of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know; Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

Jesus of Nazareth was a Man approved of God; that is, Jesus was put on display by God. Where and for whom? In the land of the Jews; for Israel. Some years after the Lord Jesus was rejected by Israel, crucified, buried, raised, and ascended, He said to a converted Jew:

“Depart; for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles.” Acts 22:21.

Then that converted Jew wrote:

“The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Titus 2:11.

Then note his message in I Timothy 2:3 to 6:

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time. Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not, a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.”

All of this is quite different from the statements of Jesus of Nazareth in the land of the Jews, in the midst of Israel. Note the Lord’s instructions:

“THESE TWELVE JESUS SENT FORTH, AND COMMANDED THEM, SAYING, GO NOT INTO THE WAY OF THE GENTILES, AND INTO ANY CITY OF THE SAMARITANS ENTER YE NOT: BUT GO RATHER TO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.” “BUT WHEN THEY PERSECUTE YOU IN THIS CITY, FLEE YE INTO ANOTHER: FOR VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, YE SHALL NOT HAVE GONE OVER THE CITIES OF ISRAEL, TILL THE SON OF MAN BE COME.” Matthew 10:5, 6 and 23.

Read this plain, positive statement of Christ:

“BUT HE ANSWERED AND SAID, I AM NOT SENT BUT UNTO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.” “BUT HE ANSWERED AND SAID, IT IS NOT MEET TO TAKE THE CHILDREN’S BREAD, AND CAST IT TO DOGS.” Matthew 15:24 and 26.

Christ came unto His own. While on earth, as Jesus of Nazareth, He did not say to His twelve apostles, “depart, for I will send thee far hence to the Gentiles.” No, He positively commanded them, “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” “You are to go to the cities of Israel.” “Go to the lost sheep of Israel.” “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of Israel.”

So while Christ was on earth it certainly was not true that the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”

HOW CAN THEY HEAR WITHOUT A PREACHER?

Note in this connection Romans 10:14:

“How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”

How could the Gentiles have believed, when Jesus of Nazareth was here, when the preacher was forbidden to preach to Gentiles? Let us keep this in mind when we read “as many as received Him”; “them that believed on His name.”

This should cause us to ask this question, when did this present economy of grace begin? When did the Gentiles first hear the gospel of grace? This expression, “economy of grace,” is used in the Bible. The word “economy” is from the same Greek word translated “dispensation.”

Note Ephesians 3:1 and 2:

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward.”

Here is a spiritual program that is definitely “Gentilish.” The program of Jesus of Nazareth on earth was definitely “Israelitish.” And as we compare and contrast the two ministries we learn that they were not only for different people, but that they were different programs. There is a difference between “the Gospel of the Kingdom” and “the Gospel of the Grace of God.”

The development of the truth of John 1:11 and 12 should cause us to obey Philippians 1:10. The Greek of this verse is, “test things that differ.”

Note again our two verses:

“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:11 and 12.

HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN COMPARED WITH OTHER SCRIPTURES

Before we consider the statement “His own received him not,” let us study the statement, “He came unto His own,” with other Scriptures:

“I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David.” Revelation 22:16.

“And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” Revelation 5:5.

“For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.” Hebrews 2:16.

“The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.” Matthew 1:1.

“Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision.” Romans 15:8.

The Lord Jesus was the Root and Offspring of David. He was the Lion of the tribe of Judah. The Lord Jesus was the Seed of Abraham. He was the Son of David, the Son of Abraham. Jesus Christ was the Minister of the circumcision.

Note what a Jew said to the Lord Jesus Christ: “. . . Rabbi, Thou, art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel.” John 1:47 to 50.

Note the first question in the Book of Matthew, “Where is He that is born King of the Jews?” Matthew 2:2.

So the Scriptures plainly teach that Jesus of Nazareth was “the King of Israel,” “the King of the Jews,” “the Minister of the Circumcision.”

Jesus Christ came unto His own. His own was Israel. He was rejected as King of the Jews. The careful study of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John will convince the student that Jesus Christ was indeed the Minister of the circumcision.

Note again the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 4:22:

“YE WORSHIP YE KNOW NOT WHAT: WE KNOW WHAT WE WORSHIP; FOR SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS.”

“We know what we worship.” Here the Lord Jesus identified Himself with the Jews:

“Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” Hebrews 2:17.

“For both He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren.” Hebrews 2:11.

Preceding the statement “He came unto His own” is the statement: “The Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “All things were made by Him.” Following the statement, “He came unto His own”, is the statement; “the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us.” With this last statement we quote again Acts 2:22 and Acts 10:39:

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.”

“And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem, Whom they slew and hanged on a tree.”

Christ tabernacled among us. Christ tabernacled in the midst of Israel, in the land of the Jews. Note this significant statement:

“WHO ARE ISRAELITES; TO WHOM PERTAINETH THE ADOPTION, AND THE GLORY, AND THE COVENANTS, AND THE GIVING OF THE LAW, AND THE SERVICE OF GOD, AND THE PROMISES; WHOSE ARE THE FATHERS, AND OF WHOM AS CONCERNING THE FLESH CHRIST CAME, WHO IS OVER ALL, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER, AMEN.” Romans 9:4 and 5.

Here we learn that God over all was an Israelite while He was on earth, in the flesh.

Note His own words in John 14:9: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:30 to 33.

"And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:7 and 11.

"Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

THE CIRCUMCISION AND PRESENTATION OF JESUS CHRIST

"And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the Child, His name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb." "And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary His mother, Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." "And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth." Luke 2:21, 34, 39 and 40.

JESUS CHRIST UNDER THE LAW

"But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Galatians 4:4.

"And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." Luke 4:16.

"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to His disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat." "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not." Matthew 23:1 to 3.

"And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." Matthew 8:4.

"And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the Passover." Matthew 26:19.

"The Jews answered Him, We have a law and by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." John 19:7.

"And for this cause He is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." Hebrews 9:15.

So we are all agreed that Jesus Christ came unto His own world and unto His own nation. As a religious Jew, the Lord Jesus spent His days in the land of the Jews. Jesus Christ was announced to Israel for national redemption. Luke 1:67 to 80.

JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF MAN

In His ministry to Israel, the Lord Jesus called Himself “the Son of man.” This title “Son of man” is found about eighty times in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It was the Lord Jesus Himself Who used this title.

HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN

THE SON OF MAN—THE SON OF ABRAHAM

“AND JESUS SAID UNTO HIM, THIS DAY IS SALVATION COME TO THIS HOUSE, FORASMUCH AS HE ALSO IS A SON OF ABRAHAM. FOR THE SON OF MAN IS COME TO SEEK AND TO SAVE THAT WHICH WAS LOST.” Luke 19:9 and 10.

Here we learn that although Zacchaeus was a despised publican, Israel’s Son of man sought and found him, because Zacchaeus was the son of Abraham.

Note also Luke 13:16:

“AND OUGHT NOT THIS WOMAN, BEING A DAUGHTER OF ABRAHAM, WHOM SATAN HATH BOUND, LO, THESE EIGHTEEN YEARS, BE LOOSED FROM THIS BOND ON THE SABBATH DAY?”

The Son of man came to seek and save and bless the sons and daughters of Abraham. “Christ came unto His own.”

HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN

Note one of the most interesting experiences in the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth.

THE LORD JESUS AND THE GENTILE WOMAN

“Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto Him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, Lord, help me. But He answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master’s table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.” Matthew 15:21 to 28.

The same story is recorded in Mark 7:24 to 30. Note verses 26 and 27:

“The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. But Jesus said unto her, LET THE CHILDREN FIRST BE FILLED, for it is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it unto the dogs.”

The words sound rather cruel, “It is not meet to take the children’s bread and to cast it unto the dogs.” But that Gentile woman was not only of great faith, but of great humility: And

she answered and said unto Him, “Yea, Lord, yet the dogs under the table eat of the children’s crumbs.”

The Jews were “the children”; the Gentiles were “the dogs.”

We emphasize two statements of Christ:

1. “I AM NOT SENT BUT UNTO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL.”
2. “LET THE CHILDREN FIRST BE FILLED.”

Note again the difference between the children and the Gentiles:

“Wherefore, remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands: That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.” Ephesians 2:11 and 12.

Poor Gentiles. They were hopeless aliens, without God (atheos). They were atheists. They were no people, a foolish nation. Romans 10:19. They were dogs. Surely they needed salvation. They needed Christ’s message. They needed Christ. But Christ said to His twelve preachers, “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” Matthew 10:5. “Ye will not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.” Matthew 10:23.

Perhaps this will explain to us why the twelve apostles remained in Jerusalem when the other disciples of Jesus were driven from that city. Acts 8:1. They were to remain in the cities of Israel. Note their ministry was to Israel. Galatians 2:9.

Then note what those scattered disciples did:

“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, **PREACHING THE WORD TO NONE BUT UNTO THE JEWS ONLY.**” Acts 11:19.

Also carefully note the attitude of the twelve toward the Gentiles expressed in the statement of Peter about seven years after Christ went back to heaven:

“And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” Acts 10:28.

Up to the time of Peter’s housetop vision the Gentiles, in the sight of God, and the Jews, were common and unclean.

More than twenty years after the death of Christ, Paul wrote, “Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.” It took the Jews a long time to learn this, and some of the most devout, religious Jews never did accept it as truth.

Observe that from the resurrection of Christ until the day the Lord instructed Peter to preach to Cornelius, it was unlawful for the Twelve, or for any other Jewish disciples, to go unto the Gentiles. Acts 10:22. Therefore, if the eunuch of Acts 8:36 to 40 was a Gentile when Philip preached to him, Philip was guilty of an unlawful deed. But that eunuch had been up to Jerusalem to worship. He was a Jew by religion, a proselyte. Note again carefully Acts 11:19:

“Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only.”

Carefully compare Matthew 15:24 with Acts 5:29 to 32 and Acts 10:28.

LET THE CHILDREN FIRST BE FILLED

The Jews were “the children.” On earth, the Son of man was sent only to “the children.” They were called “the children of the kingdom.” Matthew 8:12.

“The children” sinned against the Son of Man. Note their greatest sin:

“The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus, Whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when He was determined to let Him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of Life, Whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.” Acts 3:13 to 15.

What had the Son of man said to the children concerning all their sins against Him? “Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven them.” Matthew 12:32.

They spoke against the Son of man. They sinned against the Son of man. They killed the Prince of Life. But in spite of their terrible crime, that some have called their “crowning sin,” note God’s offer of mercy and forgiveness to those murderers:

“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Spirit, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him. When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took council to slay them.” Acts 5:29 to 33.

The thirty-third verse shows that they preferred to remain murderers rather than repent and receive God’s forgiveness through their Messiah Whom they had murdered.

Let us note several of the messages which God sent to Israel, to see how the words of Jesus of Nazareth, “let the children first be filled,” applied in the early chapters of Acts:

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.” Acts 2:22 and 23.

“Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Acts 2:36.

“And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.” Acts 3:17.

“Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenants . . . Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” Acts 3:25 and 26.

Note the result of Peter’s message in Acts 2:38 to 42. Three thousand Jews repented and believed.

Then note Acts 4:4:

“Howbeit many of them which heard the Word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.”

These were all Jews. The children were first being filled. While some were being thus filled with Divine blessing and salvation, others were filled with something else:

“When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him (Stephen) with their teeth.” Acts 7:54.

“But when the Jews saw the multitudes, THEY WERE FILLED WITH ENVY, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.” Acts 13:45.

Then note the significant words of Paul in the next verse:

“THEN PAUL AND BARNABAS WAXED BOLD, AND SAID, IT WAS NECESSARY THAT THE WORD OF GOD SHOULD FIRST HAVE BEEN SPOKEN TO YOU: BUT SEEING YE PUT IT FROM YOU AND JUDGE YOURSELVES UNWORTHY OF EVERLASTING LIFE, LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.”

Here we note that about eighteen years after Jesus of Nazareth said to the Gentile woman, “let the children first be filled,” the children were being filled first. “It was necessary.” What was necessary? “That the Word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.” Acts 13:46. This was in Asia.

Several years later Paul was in Europe. What happened?

“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook his raiment and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from HENCEFORTH I WILL GO UNTO THE GENTILES.” Acts 18:5 and 6.

The children were first being filled. Note Paul’s words in Romans 1:16:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first and also to the Gentile.” Romans 1:16.

Let us keep in mind the important words, “lo, we turn to the Gentiles.” Then note what followed:

“AND IT CAME TO PASS IN ICONIUM, THAT THEY WENT BOTH TOGETHER INTO THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE JEWS, AND SO SPAKE, THAT A GREAT MULTITUDE BOTH OF THE JEWS AND ALSO OF THE GREEKS BELIEVED.” “AND WHEN THEY WERE COME AND HAD GATHERED THE CHURCH TOGETHER, THEY REHEARSED ALL THAT GOD HAD DONE WITH THEM, AND HOW HE HAD OPENED THE DOOR OF FAITH UNTO THE GENTILES.” Acts 14:1 and 27.

Thus we see, or we should see, if we are to understand the Scriptures:

1. That God’s order while Christ was the Man approved of God in the midst of Israel was, to the Jews and not to the Gentiles.
2. That God’s order for the Twelve, during the first nine chapters of Acts was, to the Jews and not to the Gentiles.
3. That God’s order, by Paul, after Acts 13:2, was “to the Jews first and also to the Gentiles.”

ONES NOT HIS OWN

We have studied how Jesus Christ, the Minister of the circumcision, came unto His own. We read what Israel’s Messiah said to a Gentile woman who was not “His own.”

Now let us read the account of a very interesting experience which another Gentile had with the Son of man while He was in the land of the Jews, in the midst of Israel. Note carefully every word:

“Now when He had ended all His sayings in the audience of the people, He entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion’s servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to

die. And when he heard of Jesus, HE SENT UNTO HIM THE ELDERS OF THE JEWS, beseeching Him that He would come and heal his servant. And when they came to Jesus, they besought Him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom He should do this; FOR HE LOVETH OUR NATION, AND HE HATH BUILT US A SYNAGOGUE. Then Jesus went with them. And when He was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to Him, saying unto Him, Lord, trouble not Thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him, and turned Him about, and said unto the people that followed Him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning, found the servant whole that had been sick.” Luke 7:1 to 10.

“When Jesus heard it, He marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. BUT THE CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM SHALL BE CAST OUT INTO OUTER DARKNESS; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee, And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.” Matthew 8:10 to 13.

In the Lord Jesus’ conversation with the Gentile woman He said, “let the children first be filled.” In His conversation with the Gentile man He said, “the children shall be cast into outer darkness.”

There are about seventeen million Jews in the world, in this year 1941 A.D. Most of them are still in darkness, having been blinded in accordance with Romans 11:7. They are truly a God-forsaken people. Instead of receiving their own Divine King, they said, “away with Him, crucify Him”; “we have no king but Caesar.” This Israel’s rulers cried when Pilate asked them concerning Christ. “Shall I crucify your king?” Then they cried, “His blood be upon its and our children.”

But now for the interesting facts concerning Christ and the Gentile centurion in Luke 7 and Matthew 8. This man was a Roman officer. He was a humble man. He was a man of great faith. He knew that no Gentile was worthy to approach the Son of God. He realized that only Israel had a claim on the Divine Messiah. This Gentile loved the Jews, not only in word but in deed. He had proved his love. He had built them a house of worship. He sought the elders of the Jews to intercede for him. He asked them to go to Jesus, for he knew that Jesus was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. He was not one of those sheep. He took his place as an alienated heathen; and his great faith prevailed. He obtained a kingdom blessing from the Son of man.

Then note the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 8:11 and 12:

“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

THESE WORDS COMPARED WITH ROMANS

“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”

“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.”

“For I would not brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief.” Romans 11:7,11,25 and 30.

Then note the awful judgment upon Israel, in Acts 28:25 to 28:

“And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.”

Then several years after those solemn words of Acts 28:25 to 28 the Divine judgment of Matthew 22:7 fell.

“But when the King heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.”

Note also Luke 21:20 to 24:

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter there into. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.”

We are still living in “the times of the Gentiles.” But we are also in the dispensation of grace for Gentiles. The Gentiles do not have to build synagogues for the Jews, or reach the Lord Jesus through Jewish elders during this present dispensation of grace. It is still true that “salvation is of the Jews.” John 4:22.

Undoubtedly there will yet be the fulfillment of Zechariah 8:22 and 23.

“Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord. 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.”

But this is to be in another age that shall follow this age of grace. Titus 2:11 and Ephesians 2:8 and 9 are still true.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”

“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

For your own edification and satisfaction study Matthew, Mark, Luke and John very carefully and prayerfully, and see if you can find any record of any Gentile man, other than the Roman centurion, who received a blessing from the Lord Jesus while He was on earth. The Samaritans of John 4 were not Gentiles. Why would you say the centurion received the blessing?

Did the Lord Jesus mean what He said, in Matthew 15:24, "I AM NOT SENT BUT UNTO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL"?

We leave with you this question, if some Gentiles were saved while Jesus Christ was on earth, did they become Christians or Jews; did they become members of Christ's Body or Old Testament saints? Note that some of the Jews of Acts 2:5 were called "proselytes." Acts 2:10. These proselytes were Gentiles by nature but Jews by religion.

Note the equality and union of believing Jews and Gentiles some years later:

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Romans 10:12 and 13.

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." I Corinthians 12:13.

"And that He might reconcile both unto God in one Body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." Ephesians 2:16 to 18.

Now this question in closing: why did not the Gentiles on earth, during the days of the Son of man, become members of the Body of Christ?

HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT

Israel's rejection of their own King and Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, is told in these words:

"BUT HIS CITIZENS HATED HIM, AND SENT A MESSAGE AFTER HINT, SAYING, WE WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN TO REIGN OVER US." Luke 19:14.

Then the King of Israel uttered some very harsh words in His bitter denunciation of Israel in Matthew 23:30 to 33:

"And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

What an awful judgment!

Is it not strange that some fifteen years after the Lord Jesus pronounced this terrible judgment upon Israel He was still dealing with that nation in mercy? Then He directed Paul to warn them:

"Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Acts 13:40 and 41.

Between the awful denunciation of Jesus of Nazareth in Matthew 23 and this warning from the mouth of the Apostle Paul another servant of the Lord was sent to Israel. It was Stephen. By the mouth of Stephen, Israel's rulers were again bitterly assailed:

"Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the just One; of Whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." Acts 7:51 to 53.

Fully twenty years after Jesus of Nazareth pronounced His awful judgment upon Israel, Paul spoke to them concerning the Christ Whom they had crucified. Note his message and Israel's reaction:

“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean; from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.” Acts 18:5 and 6.

Mark well the statement “Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean.” This takes us back to Ezekiel 3:17 and 18:

“Son of man, I have made Thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

Then note what Paul wrote concerning the Jews in I Thessalonians 2:14 to 16:

“For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.”

Surely these were solemn and significant words—“the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.” But this was not the first time that Divine judgment had fallen upon Israel.

THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES

In the last two chapters of II Kings and in the last two chapters of Jeremiah we read of the awful judgment upon the Jews and Jerusalem when God permitted the King of Babylon to besiege the city, destroy the temple and enslave the children of Abraham. That was about 600 B.C. It was about that time when “the times of the Gentiles,” politically, began.

Before that awful Divine punishment, note the message which the Lord sent to His nation by His prophet, Isaiah:

“The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not now, My people doth not consider. A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward.” Isaiah 1:3 and 4.

THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

Now let us compare the parable of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1 to 7 with the parable of the vineyard in Matthew 21:33 to 46:

“Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?

Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged, but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.” Isaiah 5:1 to 7.

This is all very interesting and significant. Now for the parable of the vineyard spoken by Christ in Matthew 21:33 to 46:

“Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet”

Much of the ignominious history of God’s favored nation, from the time of Isaiah until the day that Pilate asked Israel’s rulers, “shall I crucify your King?”, is told in these two parables. But their sin and punishment did not begin with Isaiah or end at Calvary. Israel was a disobedient, a rebellious, and a stiff-necked people long before Isaiah preached to them.

WE WILL NOT HAVE THIS MAN TO—REIGN OVER US

Centuries before Israel said “we will not have this Man to rule over us,” “away with Him, crucify Him,” “we have no king but Caesar,” their forefathers said to Samuel, the man of God, “make us a king”; they too said in different language; “we will not have Jehovah to be our King.”

“Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.” I Samuel 8:4 to 6.

“And when ye saw that Nahash the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto Me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your King.” I Samuel 12:12.

Note the message God sent to them by His servants Isaiah, Hosea and Jeremiah:

“I am the Lord your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.” Isaiah 43:15.

“Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.” Hosea 10:13.

“The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond: it is graven upon the table of their heart, and upon the horns of your altars.” Jeremiah 17:1.

Then note the Word of the Lord to Jeremiah concerning Israel:

“The Word which came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause thee to hear my words. Then I went down to the potter’s house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it. Then the Word of the Lord came to me, saying, O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord, Behold, as the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel.” Jeremiah 18:1 to 6.

Note the Word of the Lord to Ezekiel concerning Israel:

“SAY UNTO THEM, AS I LIVE, SAITH THE LORD GOD, I HAVE NO PLEASURE IN THE DEATH OF THE WICKED; BUT THAT THE WICKED TURN FROM HIS WAY AND LIVE: TURN YE, TURN YE FROM YOUR EVIL WAYS; FOR WHY WILL YE DIE, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL?” Ezekiel 33:11.

“WHY WILL YE DIE, O HOUSE OF ISRAEL?” Compare these words with the statement of Jesus Christ in John 5:39 and 40:

“SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES; FOR IN THEM YE THINK YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE: AND THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME. AND YE WILL NOT COME TO ME THAT YE MIGHT HAVE LIFE.” John 5:39 and 40.

O THE DEPTH OF THE RICHES

We should read John 12:37 to 41 with Romans 11:25 to 32 and then join with Paul in the exclamation of Romans 11:33 and 34. Note this exclamation:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?”

Now let us note why Paul recorded these wonderful words:

“For I would not brethren that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes. For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.” Romans 11:25 to 32.

Now with these statements let us carefully and prayerfully study John 12:37 to 41:

“BUT THOUGH HE HAD DONE SO MANY MIRACLES BEFORE THEM, YET THEY BELIEVED NOT ON HIM. THAT THE SAYING OF ESAIAS THE PROPHET

MIGHT BE FULFILLED, WHICH HE SPAKE, LORD, WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HATH THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED? THEREFORE THEY COULD NOT BELIEVE, BECAUSE THAT ESAIAS SAID AGAIN, HE HATH BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HARDENED THEIR HEART; THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, NOR UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM. THESE THINGS SAID ESAIAS WHEN HE SAW HIS GLORY AND SPAKE OF HIM.”

And we exclaim with Paul:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?”

Perhaps we shall repeat these words after we have read Romans 11:7 and 11 to 15:

“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” “I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. FOR IF THE CASTING AWAY OF THEM BE THE RECONCILING OF THE WORLD, WHAT SHALL THE RECEIVING OF THEM BE, BUT LIFE FROM THE DEAD?”

And as we meditate upon these statements, let us study with them Matthew 26:24—Acts 2:22 and 23—Luke 24:46 and 47 and Acts 2:26 to 29:

“The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.”

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know, Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.”

“And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

“The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For of a truth against Thy Holy Child Jesus, Whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together. For to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto Thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak Thy Word.”

Now let us note Acts 13:26 to 31 and I Corinthians 2:8:

“Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the Word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him. And though they found no cause of death in Him, yet desired they Pilate that He should be slain. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre. But God raised Him

from the dead: And He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people.”

“WHICH NONE OF THE PRINCES OF THIS WORLD KNEW: FOR HAD THEY KNOWN IT, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE CRUCIFIED THE LORD OF GLORY.”

After reading all of these Scriptures we can better understand Acts 3:17 and 18 in the light of I Peter 1:18 to 20. We quote these five verses:

“But now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled.” Acts 3:17 and 18.

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.” I Peter 1:18 to 20.

Let us note again John 1:11: “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”

It is interesting to note that in the Gospel of John the word “Jew” is found seventy times. John is a Jewish Book.

Note the one mention of Gentiles in the Gospel of John:

“Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while and I am with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me. Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me; and where I am, thither ye cannot come. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will He go, that we shall not find Him? will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?” John 7:33 to 35.

There is no hint in this Divine Record that Jesus Christ preached to any Gentiles. This is the only one of the Four Gospels that records the Lord’s visit to Samaria. “He must needs go through Samaria.” John 4:4. There many believed on Jesus Christ. John 4:39 to 41. This was because of the testimony of the woman at the well. Note that the Lord Jesus differentiated between the Gentiles and the Samaritans:

“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.” Matthew 10:5.

Note the words of the woman of Samaria:

“Then saith the woman of Samaria unto Him, How is it that thou, BEING A JEW, asketh drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for THE JEWS HAVE NO DEALINGS WITH THE SAMARITANS.” “Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?” “Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”

Note what the Lord Jesus said to her:

“Ye worship ye know not what: we know, what we worship ship; for SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS.” John 4:9 and 12; John 4:20 and 22.

Thus we learn that the Samaritans were not Gentiles. With the exception of this ministry in Samaria, every scene in John is set on a Jewish stage.

How are we to interpret John 3:16?

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

While the Lord was here on earth no servant of His was authorized to proclaim the truth of Romans 10:12 and 13:

“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

We must not interpret the “whosoever” of John 3:16 as an offer of salvation by grace to Gentiles, while Jesus Christ was the Minister of the circumcision in the land of the Jews.

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem, Whom they slew and hanged on a tree.” Acts 10:38 and 39.

Note carefully the statement of Paul concerning the ministry of the Lord Jesus:

“Of this man’s seed hath God according to His promise RAISED UNTO ISRAEL A SAVIOUR, JESUS.” Acts 13:23.

Then after the resurrection of Jesus Christ note Peter’s message to Israel concerning Christ:

“The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, Whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, FOR TO GIVE REPENTANCE TO ISRAEL, and forgiveness of sins.” Acts 5:30 and 31.

We emphasize these facts, because there are some who seem to believe that John 3:16 and John 1:12 are in contradiction to Matthew 15:24. Note the three statements:

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

“But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

“He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

We can better understand the “whosoever” of John 3:16 by carefully studying Acts 10:34 to Acts 11:18. Note Acts 10:40 and 43:

“Him God raised up the third day, and shewed Him openly.” “To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name WHOSOEVER believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.”

This message was proclaimed by Peter to a company of Gentiles, about seven years after Christ had died and gone back to heaven. Note what Peter said at that time:

“And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.” Acts 10:28.

Note what the other eleven said and did after they heard that Peter had preached to Cornelius:

“And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the Word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision, contended with him, Saying, Thou wentest into men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.” Acts 11:1 to 3.

Then, in Acts 11:4 to 17, Peter explained why he preached “whosoever” to Cornelius. Then note the rejoicing:

“When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.” Acts 11:18.

But let us never forget the truth of Acts 8:1 and Galatians 2:9:

“And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, EXCEPT THE APOSTLES”

And when James, Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and THEY UNTO THE CIRCUMCISION.”

Peter and his fellow-apostles remained in Jerusalem as apostles to the Jews. They were still there years later. Acts 15:1 to 6. The Lord Jesus, in Jerusalem, appeared to Paul and said, “Depart; for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.” Acts 22:21.

Then note Paul’s testimony:

“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” Romans 15:16.

“For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.” Romans 11:13.

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus; Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” I Timothy 2:3 to 6.

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.” Ephesians 3 :8.

The Apostle John was directed by the Holy Spirit to write His Gospel after the death of Paul, after the saints had been indoctrinated in grace. We must not think that Jesus Christ or His apostles preached a “whosoever” message to Gentiles, while He was here on earth or during the first eight or ten years after the death of Christ. Let us not follow the error of those who have interpreted Acts 2:39 to mean Gentiles.

Note this verse:

“For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that ARE AFAR OFF, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:39.

If Peter referred to the Gentiles in this verse, the housetop vision, of Acts 10 would have been unnecessary. Acts 10:28 is the negative answer to the question, “did Acts 2:39 refer to Gentiles?” Study Acts 2:39 with Daniel 9:7 and see that the “far-off” were Jews.

CERTAIN GREEKS

Note that the Greeks who came to the land of the Jews were not permitted to see Jesus.

“And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast; The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew; and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.” John 12:20 to 22.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” John 12:24.

There was one Greek of great faith who had seen Jesus. She took her place as a little dog under the table. Mark 7:26 to 30. Compare the experiences of this one Greek and the certain Greeks of John 12:20 to 22 with Acts 14:1:

“AND IT CAME TO PASS IN ICONIUM, THAT THEY WENT BOTH TOGETHER INTO THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE JEWS, AND SO SPAKE, THAT A GREAT MULTITUDE OF THE JEWS AND ALSO OF THE GREEKS BELIEVED.”

Here is the record of the first company of Greeks who were saved. That was after the statement of Acts 13:40; 41 and 46:

“Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you. And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.” “Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that THE WORD OF GOD SHOULD FIRST HAVE BEEN SPOKEN TO YOU; BUT SEEING YE PUT IT FROM YOU, AND JUDGE YOURSELVES UNWORTHY OF EVERLASTING LIFE, LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.”

Mark well, “LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.”

With this note Romans 11:11 and 11:30:

“I say then, Have they (the Jews) stumbled that they should fall? God forbid; but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.”

“For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief.”

Do not confuse the Grecians, of the first chapters of Acts, with the Greeks of Acts 14:1. Grecians were “Greek-speaking” Jews.

“YOUR BLOOD BE UPON YOUR OWN HEADS”

Note again Acts 18:5 and 6:

“And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed, he shook his raiment, and said unto them, YOUR BLOOD BE UPON YOUR OWN HEADS; I AM CLEAN; FROM HENCEFORTH I WILL GO UNTO THE GENTILES.”

Also Acts 20:21; 26 and 27:

“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I am not ashamed to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”

Here we note that Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, delivered his own soul in testifying to the Jews. Note the first commission which Paul received from Christ:

“The Lord said unto him, Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.” Acts 9:15.

It was to Jews that Paul said, “your blood be upon your own heads.” He had in mind Ezekiel 3:17 and 18:

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the Word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from His wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.”

So Paul was warning Israel years after Christ told Israel, “your house is left unto you desolate.”

Let us note Matthew 23:30 and 35—Matthew 27:24 and 25 and Acts 5:28:

“If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.”

“That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.”

“When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.”

“Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.”

It is interesting to study Matthew 23:23 to 40 with Acts 3:26—Acts 5:29 and 39—Acts 13:46 and Acts 18:5 and 6, and find the scriptural answer to the question, “why did the Lord send the Twelve and Paul to the Jews for years after He pronounced the awful judgment of Matthew 23, wherein He called them murderers, serpents, vipers, blind fools and hypocrites?” Why after that did Peter and Paul say to such awful criminals, “to you first”? Acts 3:26 and 13:46.

Read Luke 23:34:

“THEN SAID JESUS, FATHER, FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO.”

Surely there was no more definite offer of the Kingdom to the Nation Israel in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John than there is in Acts 3:19 to 21.

So if we are to enjoy an intelligent understanding of the Book of Acts we must know that Christ’s prayer on the cross prevailed with God, the Father, and the terrible judgment pronounced upon Israel in Matthew 23 was postponed until the Twelve and Paul had again given a testimony to the Nation Israel. It is a great mistake to teach that Israel had been set aside as a nation when Peter and the Eleven preached to all the house of Israel on the day of Pentecost.

GREAT DISTRESS AND WRATH UPON THIS PEOPLE

Because Christ’s own received Him not He said, concerning the Jews and the land of the Jews, “there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.” Luke 21:23. Note His words in Matthew 22:7:

“But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth; and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.”

That awful judgment fell upon Jerusalem about 69 or 70 A.D. God was very gracious, longsuffering, and merciful to Israel and waited nearly forty years after the judgment was pronounced by the Lord Jesus before Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews were scattered.

Then all happened as predicted in Luke 21:24:

“AND THEY SHALL FALL BY THE EDGE OF THE SWORD, AND SHALL BE LED AWAY CAPTIVE INTO ALL NATIONS: AND JERUSALEM SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED.”

For centuries the Jews and Jerusalem have been just as the Lord Jesus said they would be. This condition and predicament will continue until “the times of the Gentiles” be fulfilled. And then what?

“AND THEN SHALL THEY SEE THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD WITH POWER AND GREAT GLORY. AND WHEN THESE THINGS BEGIN TO COME TO PASS, THEN LOOK UP, AND LIFT UP YOUR HEADS; FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH.” Luke 21:27 and 28.

Note the words of the Lord’s disciples who met Him after His death and resurrection:

“But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel.” Luke 24:21.

What did they mean “we trusted it had been He which should have redeemed Israel”? The answer is, Luke 1:31 to 33: 68 to 71; 74 and 75.

“And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.”

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people. And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us.”

“That He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before Him, all the days of our life.”

Jesus Christ was born in the house of David, in the city of David, of the seed of David, to occupy the throne of David, to reign over the Jews and deliver them from Gentile domination and oppression.

In another lesson we shall learn that many Israelites or Jews received Christ and were redeemed. The disciples who said, “we trusted it had been He that should have redeemed Israel,” were redeemed. But Israel was not redeemed. Why not? Because they knew not the things that belonged to their peace. Because they knew not the time of their visitation. About twenty-five years after Christ’s death, after the Twelve and Paul had preached to Israel, in and out of their land, the Holy Spirit directed this statement:

“WHAT THEN? ISRAEL HATH NOT OBTAINED THAT WHICH HE SEEKETH FOR; BUT THE ELECTION HATH OBTAINED IT, AND THE REST WERE BLINDED.” Roman 11:7.

While Christ was on earth some Jews believed, and some Jews received Him not. Christ redeemed Israelites, but He did not redeem Israel. This distinction must be realized by any one who is to understand the ministry of Christ and His twelve apostles, before and after His death and resurrection.

Let us carefully read and study the significant words of the Lord Jesus, in Luke 19:41 to 44 and Luke 13:34 and 35:

“AND WHEN HE WAS COME NEAR, HE BEHELD THE CITY, AND WEPT OVER IT. SAYING, IF THOU HADST KNOWN, EVEN THOU, AT LEAST IN THIS THY DAY, THE THINGS WHICH BELONG UNTO THY PEACE! BUT NOW THEY ARE HID FROM THINE EYES. FOR THE DAYS SHALL COME UPON THEE, THAT THINE ENEMIES SHALL CAST A TRENCH ABOUT THEE, AND COMPASS THEE ROUND, AND KEEP THEE IN ON EVERY SIDE, AND SHALL LAY THEE EVEN WITH THE GROUND, AND THY CHILDREN WITHIN THEE; AND THEY SHALL NOT LEAVE IN THEE ONE STONE UPON ANOTHER; BECAUSE THOU KNEWEST NOT THE TIME OF THY VISITATION.”

“O JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM, WHICH KILLEST THE PROPHETS, AND STONEST THEM THAT ARE SENT UNTO THEE; HOW OFTEN WOULD I HAVE

GATHERED THY CHILDREN TOGETHER, AS A HEN DOTHT GATHER HER BROOD UNDER HER WINGS, AND YE WOULD NOT! BEHOLD, YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT UNTO YOU DESOLATE; AND VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, YE SHALL NOT SEE ME UNTIL THE TIME COME WHEN YE SHALL SAY, BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.”

Jerusalem knew not the things that belonged to her peace. Note the command of Psalm 122:6, “PRAY FOR THE PEACE OF JERUSALEM.” Note in Isaiah 9:6 and 7, that the Prince of Peace is yet to sit on David’s throne; and there is to be no end of His peace. Note in Luke 1:32; 70 and 71 that Jesus Christ was born to take David’s throne and bring about the restitution of all things. Note in Acts 2:27 to 32, and in Acts 3:19 to 21, that the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead to take David’s throne, and that, if Israel had repented, God would have sent Him back from heaven to bring about the restitution of all things.

It was in connection with Christ’s birth, in the city of David, that the heavenly messenger cried, “peace on earth.” Luke 2:11 to 14.

But right before those pathetic and awful words of Luke 13:34 and 35, note some other awful words of the Lord Jesus:

“I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.” Luke 12:49 to 53.

If Israel had been redeemed, “peace on earth” would have been a reality. Universal peace on earth will begin at Jerusalem, but never as long as the throne of David is unoccupied, and the heavens retain Jesus Christ.

Note the high place and ministry of Jesus Christ at the present time:

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum; We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Hebrews 8:1 and 2.

“And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, Which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1:19 to 23.

During the absence of the Lord Jesus; “the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.” Titus 2:11.

But Israel’s Messianic kingdom will be in abeyance, and universal peace will be postponed. The kingdom covenants concerning Israel’s peace on earth have been interrupted or suspended and God has brought in a different spiritual program. So we must see that after the Holy Spirit ceased to record the activities of the twelve apostles in the Book of Acts, the Lord brought in this present parenthetical period. The Twelve are to have a very special place when the Messianic kingdom is established after this present “grace” dispensation.

“And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Matthew 19:28.

It is true that God works all things after the counsel of His own will. We surely believe also Acts 15:18:

“KNOWN UNTO GOD ARE ALL HIS WORKS FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD.” Acts 15:18.

We also believe Ephesians 1:4 and 5 and 3:11:

“According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.” “According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

God not only knew all things from the beginning of the world, but He had an eternal purpose before the foundation of the world, which He knew would be accomplished in this parenthetical period while Israel’s kingdom would be postponed. However, we must never remove the element of human responsibility. The Lord Jesus put that responsibility where it belonged. Israel knew not the things which belonged to her peace. Israel knew not the time of her visitation. Therefore, the words of the Lord Jesus in Luke 13:35 and in Matthew 21:41 and 43, which we quoted.

In what sense was the kingdom of God taken from Israel? Note Luke 12:32 and Acts 14:22:

“FEAR NOT, LITTLE FLOCK; FOR IT IS YOUR FATHER’S GOOD PLEASURE TO GIVE YOU THE KINGDOM.”

“CONFIRMING THE SOULS OF THE DISCIPLES, AND EXHORTING THEM TO CONTINUE IN THE FAITH, AND THAT WE MUST THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.”

Many individual Jews believed and entered into the kingdom of God. But the kingdom of God was taken away from the Jews. When was that kingdom taken from them? Where is it now? When will the Jews receive the kingdom?

“BEHOLD, YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT UNTO YOU DESOLATE AND VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, YE SHALL NOT SEE ME, UNTIL THE TIME COME WHEN YE SHALL SAY, BLESSED IS HE THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.” Luke 13:35.

But remember that the desolation of the house of Israel did not take place at the time Christ pronounced the judgment of Matthew 23:27 to 37.

Read Luke 21:20:

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is high.”

As we today teach the postponement of the kingdom let us also teach the postponement of the judgment of Matthew 23:38 and 39 until after Paul preached to Israel.

AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM

“But as many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.” John 1:12.

With this verse let us note again Galatians 3:26 and Romans 10:14:

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:26.

“How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?” Romans 10:14.

The Lord Jesus said to His twelve apostles, “go not into the way of the Gentiles:” Matthew 10:5. For several years after His death and resurrection His disciples preached to none but to Jews. Acts 11:19. It was unlawful for His apostles to come near unto the Gentiles. Acts 10:28. How then could the Gentiles have believed without hearing? How could they have become the children of God without believing?

But later on Paul said, “LO, WE TURN TO THE GENTILES.” Acts 13:46. After that the Lord’s disciples learned “HOW GOD HATH OPENED THE DOOR OF FAITH UNTO THE GENTILES.” Acts 14:27. Who opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles? When and by whom?

Note Paul’s statement:

“FOR I SPEAK TO YOU GENTILES, INASMUCH AS I AM THE APOSTLE OF THE GENTILES I MAGNIFY MINE OFFICE.” Romans 11:13.

Then follows one of the most interesting and significant statements in the Bible:

“FOR AS YE (GENTILES) IN TIMES PAST HAVE NOT BELIEVED GOD, YET HAVE NOW OBTAINED MERCY THROUGH THEIR (ISRAEL’S) UNBELIEF.” Romans 11:30.

In agreement with this, note verse 28:

“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes.”

As touching the gospel the Jews were the enemies for the Gentiles’ sake. No wonder the apostle broke forth with: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out! Romans 11:33.

HIS OWN HAD NOT RECEIVED HIM

The Gentiles obtained God’s mercy through Israel’s unbelief. Note again Romans 11:7:

“WHAT THEN? ISRAEL HATH NOT OBTAINED THAT WHICH HE SEEKETH FOR; BUT THE ELECTION HATH OBTAINED IT, AND THE REST WERE BLINDED.”

The election from Israel obtained righteousness by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and the rest were blinded. Israel’s blindness was God’s judgment upon them because of their unbelief. With the exception of the election, Israel was cast away. Romans 11:15.

Note what the casting away of Israel meant for the Gentiles:

“FOR IF THE CASTING AWAY OF THEM BE THE RECONCILING OF THE WORLD, WHAT SHALL THE RECEIVING OF THEM BE, BUT LIFE FROM THE DEAD?” Romans 11:15.

What an important verse! This verse tells of a radical change in God’s dealings with Israel and with the Gentiles. “Through their (Israel’s) fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles for to provoke them (Israel) to jealousy.” Romans 11:11.

The eleventh chapter of Romans tells of the fall of Israel, the blindness of Israel, the unbelief of Israel, the casting away of Israel. And it also tells that this blindness is to be taken away from Israel when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. Romans 11:25 and 26.

When and because of the casting away of Israel, mercy, grace and salvation were sent to the Gentiles by the apostle of the Gentiles. This apostle was born out of due time. I Corinthians 15:8. He was not one of the twelve apostles who stood up on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2:14.

Paul was saved after Stephen was stoned to death, some time after Pentecost. Note concerning Paul in Galatians 1:22:

“And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ.”

He visited Jerusalem, but unto him the Lord Jesus said:

“MAKE HASTE AND GET THEE QUICKLY OUT OF JERUSALEM: FOR THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE THY TESTIMONY CONCERNING ME.” Acts 22:18. “AND HE SAID UNTO ME, DEPART, FOR I WILL SEND THEE FAR HENCE UNTO THE GENTILES.” Acts 22:21

Then note Paul’s testimony:

“That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:16.

In Acts 8:1 we learned that Peter and the Eleven remained in Jerusalem. In Acts 15:2 we learn that Peter and the Ten were still in Jerusalem about twenty years after Christ on earth had said to them, “go not into the way of the Gentiles.” Peter had preached to one company of Gentiles in the land of the Jews. The only time Peter left the land of the Jews, so far as the “Acts” record is concerned, he got into serious trouble. Galatians 2:11 to 14. Note the agreement between Peter, Paul, and the other apostles:

“And when James, Peter and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.” Galatians 2:9.

This is all very clear when we learn the difference between “the keys of the kingdom of heaven” committed to Peter (Matthew 16:16 to 19) and “the dispensation of the grace of God” committed to Paul (Ephesians 3:1 to 3).

Note Galatians 2:8:

“For He that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the Same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles.”

Then note Peter’s words concerning Paul:

“And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction.” II Peter 3:15 and 16.

AS MANY AS RECEIVED CHRIST

Jesus of Nazareth on earth was sent only to Israel. Matthew 15:24. While Jesus of Nazareth was on earth the twelve apostles were sent to Israel only. Matthew 10:5 and 6. After Jesus of Nazareth was raised from the dead Peter declared that He had been raised to take the throne of David and to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. Acts 2:27 to 32 and Acts 5:29 to 33. It was unlawful for the apostles to go to Gentiles. Acts 10:28. The scattered disciples preached to none but Jews only. Acts 11:19. The Twelve remained in Jerusalem for years after the death of Christ. When one of the Twelve (James) died (Acts 12:1 and 2), that closed the record of the activities of the Twelve in the Book of Acts, except as they had dealings with Paul, the principal human actor in the last half of the Book of Acts.

And note carefully that Peter and his fellow-apostles agreed to go to the Jews about twenty years after Jesus of Nazareth commanded them to go not unto the way of the Gentiles. Compare Matthew 10:5 and 6 with Galatians 2:9. In both of these Scriptures the responsibility of the Twelve was the evangelization of the Jews.

So what? Note the message which John the Baptist proclaimed to inaugurate the public ministry of Jesus Christ the Minister of the circumcision to His own nation:

“And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.”

From the day of that proclamation by John until the day that Peter was on the housetop and saw a sheet of unclean creatures (Acts 10:11 to 17) God’s order was “not to the Gentiles.” So during those ten years “as many as received Him” applied to “as many Jews as received Him.” Note in Acts 2:10 that there were proselytes among the Jews.

HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT—AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM

“He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him; to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

Let us note again Romans 1:16:

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

Here we learn that the gospel of Jesus Christ was for both Jews and Gentiles. But Romans was written about twenty-five years after Jesus Christ met Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus.

Note again Romans 10:12 and 13 and I Corinthians 12:13:

“For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Romans 10:12 and 13.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” I Corinthians 12:13.

We have learned that there was a difference between Jews and Gentiles while Jesus of Nazareth was the Man approved of God by miracles in the midst of Israel. The Jews were “children” and the Gentiles were “dogs.” Matthew 15:24 to 28. Believing Jews and Gentiles were not baptized into the Body of Christ while Jesus Christ was the Minister of the circumcision here on earth. When we study the ministry of Jesus Christ and His apostles in Matthew, we should not anticipate the truth that is to be later on revealed in the Book of Romans.

THE CIRCUMCISION AND THE HEATHEN

Now let us compare and contrast Romans 15:8 with Ephesians 3:1 to 3 and 8:

“NOW I SAY THAT JESUS CHRIST WAS A MINISTER OF THE CIRCUMCISION FOR THE TRUTH OF GOD, TO CONFIRM THE PROMISES MADE UNTO THE FATHERS.” Romans 15:8.

“FOR THIS CAUSE I PAUL, THE PRISONER OF JESUS CHRIST FOR YOU GENTILES, IF YE HAVE HEARD OF THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD

WHICH IS GIVEN ME TO YOU-WARD: HOW THAT BY REVELATION HE MADE KNOWN UNTO ME THE MYSTERY (AS I WROTE AFORE IN FEW WORDS).” Ephesians 3:1 to 3.

“UNTO ME, WHO AM LESS THAN THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS, IS THIS GRACE GIVEN, THAT I SHOULD PREACH AMONG THE GENTILES THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST.” Ephesians 3:8.

There is a most decided difference between Jesus Christ a minister to the Jews and the Apostle Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

Then note in Romans 15:8:

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” So the ministry of Jesus Christ to Israel was a ministry of confirmation. Note how Christ stated this truth in Matthew 5:17 and 18:

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot and one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

Note the contrast in Ephesians 3:8:

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

Paul’s ministry to Gentiles, “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” was a message which he received by revelation from Jesus Christ in heaven after Israel was set aside as a nation. “The unsearchable riches of Christ” was a message by special revelation and was not prophesied by any of Israel’s prophets. It was so different from any confirmation message preached by Christ, the Twelve, or Paul.

PAUL’S SUFFERINGS

I wonder how much we really appreciate Paul’s sufferings for us:

“Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to MY GOSPEL: Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound.” II Timothy 2:7 to 9.

He went to the Roman prison for us. He was the prisoner of Jesus Christ for Gentiles. He was the custodian of “the dispensation of the grace of God.” Christ did not commit unto Peter or unto any of the Twelve “the dispensation of the grace of God” for Gentiles.

Note Colossians 1:24 to 27:

“WHO NOW REJOICE IN MY SUFFERINGS FOR YOU, AND FILL UP THAT WHICH IS BEHIND OF THE AFFLICTIONS OF CHRIST IN MY FLESH FOR HIS BODY’S SAKE, WHICH IS THE CHURCH: WHEREOF I AM MADE A MINISTER, ACCORDING TO THE DISPENSATION OF GOD WHICH IS GIVEN TO ME FOR YOU, TO FULFIL THE WORD OF GOD; EVEN THE MYSTERY WHICH HATH BEEN HID FROM AGES AND FROM GENERATIONS, BUT NOW IS MADE MANIFEST TO HIS SAINTS: TO WHOM GOD WOULD MAKE KNOWN WHAT IS THE RICHES OF THE GLORY OF THIS MYSTERY AMONG THE GENTILES; WHICH IS CHRIST IN YOU THE HOPE OF GLORY.”

Compare and contrast Acts 2:22 and Colossians 1:27:

“Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know.” Acts 2:22.

“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27.

A witness by miracles among the Jews. A Mystery among the Gentiles, “the hope of glory.”

HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN,
HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT,
AS MANY AS RECEIVED HIM

Now in summing up what we have gathered from the Scriptures concerning these three statements, we have learned that Jesus Christ came to His own nation Israel, presenting Himself as their Messiah, King and Deliverer. We have learned that after Israel had rejected the Son of man on earth and He had rejected them, Peter preached that God had exalted Christ to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

We also learned that what Israel did to Christ was that which God had before determined should be done. Acts 4:28. Note carefully Acts 13:29 and 30:

“AND WHEN THEY HAD FULFILLED ALL THAT WAS WRITTEN OF HIM, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre. But God raised Him from the dead:”

Also note again Matthew 26:22:

“The Son of man goeth as it is written of Him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born.”

Now note carefully Matthew 21:41 to 43:

“They say unto Him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out His vineyard to other husbandmen, which shall render Him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, DID YE NEVER READ IN THE SCRIPTURES, THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, the Same is become the Head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHALL BE TAKEN FROM YOU, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.”

Yes, the Stone was rejected by the builders, betrayed by the son of perdition; that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. Because of the prayer of Christ on the cross (Luke 23:34) and because Jesus Christ was delivered according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, because His death was inevitable and necessary for the redemption of sinful humanity (Acts 3:18), God was willing to forgive Israel’s sin against the Son of man and send Him back to Israel as their King and Messiah, if they would repent. Read Acts 2:22 and 23 and Acts 3:18 to 21.

Israel rejected Jehovah as King in the days of the Old Testament prophets. Israel rejected Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of man as King.

Once again Israel rejected the resurrected Christ and the witness of the Holy Spirit. They blasphemed the Holy Spirit; thereby committing the unpardonable sin. Then the risen Christ sent to the Gentiles “the ambassador of reconciliation.” Romans 11:15; Acts 13:46—Acts 18:5 and 6—Acts 28:25 to 28; II Corinthians 5:18 to 21.

The Gentiles obtained mercy because of Israel’s unbelief and blindness. This is the message of Romans Eleven.

“WHAT THEN? ISRAEL HATH NOT OBTAINED THAT WHICH HE SEEKETH FOR; BUT THE ELECTION HATH OBTAINED IT, AND THE REST WERE BLINDED.” Romans 11:7.

“FOR AS YE IN TIMES PAST HAVE NOT BELIEVED GOD, YET HAVE NOW OBTAINED MERCY THROUGH THEIR UNBELIEF.” Romans 11:30.

Because the Son of man had to go, when He went and as He went, according to the determinate counsel of God, in fulfillment of the Scriptures, because His death was inevitable in accordance with Acts 3:18, therefore, the Lord Jesus, on the cross, prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” God was willing to forgive Israel’s sin against the Son of man, if Israel would repent. Later on Israel was set aside as a nation but not until the words of warning in Acts 13:40 and 41 and Acts 13:46. Then Paul was free from Israel’s blood. Israel was cast away and reconciliation was sent to the Gentiles. Romans 11:15.

Again, let us answer the question, what meaneth, His own received Him not?” His own did receive Him.

MANY JEWS RECEIVED CHRIST

“And when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, in the feast day, many believed in His name, when they saw the miracles which He did.” John 2:23.

“And many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this Man hath done?” John 7:31.

“As He spake these words, many believed on Him.” John 8:30.

“And many believed on Him there.” John 10:42.

“Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on Him.” John 11:45.

“Because that by reason of Him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.” John 12:11.

“Then they that gladly received His Word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” Acts 2:41.

“Howbeit many of them which heard the Word believed; and the number of men was about five thousand.” Acts 4:4.

“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” Acts 4:32.

“And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.” Acts 5:14.

“And in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration.” Acts 6:1. (Hebrews and Grecians were Jews.)

“And the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” Acts 6:7.

“And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.” Acts 11:21.

“AND IT CAME TO PASS IN ICONIUM, THAT THEY WENT BOTH TOGETHER INTO THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE JEWS, AND SO SPAKE, THAT A GREAT MULTITUDE BOTH OF THE JEWS AND ALSO OF THE GREEKS BELIEVED.” Acts 14:1.

In the last verse quoted, Acts 14:1, we learn that not only Jews believed, but Gentiles believed. That was about 45 A.D. or 15 years after John the Baptist proclaimed John 1:31:

“And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.”

But all of the other verses quoted above referred to Jews. Many Jews believed. Many Jews were added. Believers were multiplied. All Jews. Several thousand Jews believed. Christ came unto His own. His own received Him not. Yet His own did receive Him. Many Jews believed on His name. What does it mean, “His own received Him not”? His own did receive Him. All of the first Christians were Jews.

Then note this interesting fact: many more Jews believed in Jesus Christ after He said “your house is left unto you desolate,” “the kingdom of God shall be taken from you,” than before the Lord Jesus pronounced those judgments of Matthew 21 and 23.

About twenty years after the Lord Jesus on earth pronounced those judgments upon Israel, Paul said to Israel, “Your blood be upon your own heads: I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.” Acts 18:6.

Surely we see that beginning with Pentecost the Lord gave Israel another chance, a new presentation of the Kingdom of heaven. It was after Paul’s words of Acts 18:6 that the Holy Spirit directed him to write Romans 11:7:

“What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”

Later on Paul wrote Ephesians 3:1 and 2:

“FOR THIS CAUSE I PAUL, THE PRISONER OF JESUS CHRIST FOR YOU GENTILES, IF YE HAVE HEARD OF THE DISPENSATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD, WHICH IS GIVEN ME TO YOU-WARD: HOW THAT BY REVELATION HE MADE KNOWN UNTO ME THE MYSTERY; (AS I WROTE AFORE IN FEW WORDS.)”

It is generally agreed by Christians that “the dispensation of the grace of God” for Gentiles began when and because Israel rejected their King and the nation Israel was set aside. But Christians are anything but agreed as to when that kingdom offer was withdrawn, as to when the nation Israel was set aside. However, it should be obvious to any thinking spiritual student of the Scriptures that Peter’s message of Acts 5:29 to 32 to Israel, is positive proof that when he spoke those words Israel had not been set aside, and the dispensation of grace for Gentiles had not begun. Saul had not been converted. It was to Saul, after his name was changed to Paul, that the risen Christ committed “the dispensation of the grace of God” for Gentiles.

Note Galatians 1:11 and 12 and Ephesians 3:8 and Galatians 2:7:

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

“UNTO ME, WHO AM LESS THAN THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS, IS THIS GRACE GIVEN, THAT I SHOULD PREACH AMONG THE GENTILES THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST.”

“BUT CONTRARIWISE, WHEN THEY SAW THAT THE GOSPEL OF THE UNCIRCUMCISION WAS COMMITTED UNTO ME, AS THE GOSPEL OF THE CIRCUMCISION WAS UNTO PETER.”

Note the wonderful grace messages in connection with “the dispensation of the grace of God” for Gentiles:

“Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world

began.” “Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.” II Timothy 1:9 and 11.

“That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:7 to 9.

Here we read of grace given before Adam was created and grace to be shown after sinners, saved by grace, are in glory with the Lord.

In this connection note Paul’s words in II Timothy 1:11.

“WHEREUNTO I AM APPOINTED A PREACHER, AND AN APOSTLE AND A TEACHER OF THE GENTILES.”

All of these glorious truths were given by special revelation to the Apostle of the Gentiles, for the Gentiles, so that they may know and rejoice in the truth of Ephesians 3:6—Ephesians 2:6—Ephesians 1:3 and 4—Ephesians 1:9:

“That the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, and of the joint-Body, and joint-sharers of His promise in Christ by the gospel.”

“And hath raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus.”

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. According as He had chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be wholly and without blame before Him in love.”

“Having made known unto us the Mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself.”

Yes, the Father of Glory has made known “the Mystery of His will,” through Paul, and He wants all of His children to receive “the spirit of wisdom: and revelation in the knowledge of Him, The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, Which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, Which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.” Ephesians 1:18 to 23.

Because the risen Lord made known this truth to Paul and because Paul told others and told them to tell others (II Timothy 2:2—Ephesians 3:9), he was in jail at Rome. Ephesians 6:19 and 20—Colossians 4:3 and 4.

Paul was the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ for Gentiles. But most Christians do not appreciate his sufferings for them. Paul was not in jail for preaching anything that Jesus of Nazareth preached to Israel or for any message that the twelve apostles preached, during “The Acts” period. He was the prisoner of the Lord Jesus Christ for proclaiming truth concerning God’s eternal purpose in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 3:11), the grace and purpose of God given to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus before the world began (II Timothy 1:9), the mystery among the Gentiles (Colossians 1:27), the blessed truth that the heathen, who were dogs while Christ was on earth, were predestinated to be members of the joint-Body of Christ during this parenthetical “grace” period while scattered Israel is the outcast nation. In this connection note Ephesians 4:13 and Luke 21:24:

“TILL WE ALL COME IN THE UNITY OF THE FAITH, AND OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SON OF GOD, UNTO A PERFECT MAN, UNTO THE MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF THE FULNESS OF CHRIST.”

“AND THEY SHALL FALL BY THE EDGE OF THE SWORD, AND SHALL BE LED AWAY CAPTIVE INTO ALL NATIONS; AND JERUSALEM SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN OF THE GENTILES, UNTIL THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES BE FULFILLED.”
Luke 21:24.

God will complete the Body, “the Perfect Man.” Then the parenthetical period will come to an end and the prophesied tribulation and the prophesied kingdom will be at hand. Christ will come unto His own and His own will receive Him. “The times of the Gentiles” will be fulfilled:

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” “So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”

My prayer is, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who loved us and gave His only begotten Son to die for our redemption, may bless this message to your soul, help you to grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ and cause you to serve the blessed Saviour more faithfully.

J. C. O’HAIR, 1941