

The Bible Standard

“Send out your light and truth! Let them lead me;...”

Psalm 43:3

“LIFT UP A STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE”

Isaiah 62:10

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONSOLATION—COMFORT

“And Josès, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles’ feet” (Acts 4:36). “But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet” (Acts 5:1, 2).

In these texts is a lesson of a sharp contrast between true and false brotherhood in the Church. A shining example of the true was

Barnabas, while Ananias and Sapphira were conspicuous illustrations of the false. The five hundred brethren who had become believers during our Lord’s ministry, and who were thus prepared in advance for the Pentecostal blessing, were added to abundantly by the thousands converted on the day of Pentecost. As a whole, they were a very choice class. Only the children of the light, “Israelites indeed,” stood loyally with the Redeemer during His trials and revilings. And a similar class of “Israelites indeed” proved amenable to the lessons and demonstrations and preaching of Pentecost Day. These were devout men, out of all the country around Judea, who were visiting Jerusalem at the time, attending a religious festival, in compliance with the demands of the Law.

With such a flood of popularity as came to the Church at Pentecost, it was only to be expected that some would be carried in by the excitement and the miracles and the favor of the Lord who were not “Israelites indeed.” But the latter evidently were few comparatively. Amongst the true, there was the fervor, the love, the fellowship of kindred minds. They realized themselves children of God, and brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of each other. The experience was a new one, and the holy Spirit ruling in their hearts their sympathies flowed together in one common stream. Were some of them poor or crippled, lowly, or sad, the others took delight in ministering to their comfort. They were brethren in the fullest, deepest sense.

ME, MYSELF AND I =
SELFISHNESS



How blessed this relationship none can really know, except those who have experienced it.

How few have experienced this mutual love in this our day! The mixture of the spirit of worldliness has so diluted the spirit of the Master in the hearts of the majority that true, brotherly love is but little understood. Nowhere probably in the world is the spirit of the brotherhood of the early Church more manifest today than amongst the gathering of the Bible Standard Ministries [LHMM] readers, in general conventions, or in lesser gatherings. It is beautiful indeed, heart-refreshing to note

the loving interest manifested one toward another. It evidences our return to the simplicity which is in Christ, and to the fellowship of His Spirit. Let us be glad for this. Let us cultivate this proper spirit, that the love of God and the love of the brethren may be more and more shed abroad in our hearts.

Selfishness is buried under love; or rather, temporarily, it is filled, for selfishness is the spirit of the world and of the Adversary, while love is the Spirit of God, the holy Spirit. We are not supposing that in their fervency and in their comparative ignorance of their own weaknesses and of the weaknesses of each other, the early followers of the Lord started the Communistic arrangement. Putting all their property and wealth together, they shared it as each had need; however, a lesson was to be learned from this experience!

Namely, that the Lord’s people, with the best of intentions in their hearts, are so differently organized physically—fallen in such different directions—that it is not practical, not feasible, for them to attempt to live together along Communistic lines. While giving each other credit for purity of heart and honesty of motives, the Lord’s people learn that in their flesh dwelleth no perfection, and likewise, none in the flesh of their brethren. Hence, with the same love in our hearts, the one for the other, we have learned that it is better to

allow each other full freedom and full responsibility as respects the management of earthly affairs, and that this is the condition in which each can be happiest, and in which each can make greatest progress and learn best the needed lessons of preparation for the Millennial Kingdom and its services.

The early Church learned this lesson speedily. Its Communism did not last long. First of all, the apostles found that, notwithstanding the confidence of the Church in them as spiritual and able ministers of the Gospel, and specially sent of the Lord, there were murmurings against them, because some thought that their interests were not so well served from the general fund as those of others. This led to the giving over of the management to the deacons, and ultimately the entire project fell to pieces. It taught a lesson profitable to the Lord's Church from that failure to the present time. That lesson is that it is possible to have Communism in heaven, or on earth amongst perfect men, but not feasible to have it amongst those who are imperfect, and whose tastes and appetites, experiences, etc., are diverse. This is our answer to the dear friends who occasionally urge the expediency of Socialistic and Communistic arrangements at the present time. The Lord wills that His people shall be scattered throughout the world, in order that they may the better let their lights shine in the midst of the earthly darkness, bearing witness to the Truth.

The description given us in the lesson beautifully illustrates the spirit of full consecration to the Lord—a full love and generosity towards all the brethren and a full confidence in the apostles as the Lord's representatives. Their wealth was brought and laid at the apostles' feet. Amongst others who did this was Joseph, the uncle of John Mark, supposedly a member of a wealthy family residing in the Mount of Olives, in the house, the garden of which was our Lord's Gethsemane. He now had become an earnest follower of the Nazarene. He sold a field which he possessed and brought the proceeds to the apostles' feet. He was evidently a man of great sympathy and beautiful character, as is evidenced by the surname given him in the early Church, namely Barnabas. The word signifies, "Son of a consoling message," or, more briefly, "Son of consolation." Thank God the same spirit is yet to be found amongst his people. Some of them are sons and some of them are daughters of consolation, especially to his other sons and daughters—sympathetic, loving, kind, helpful.

Comfort! Consolation! What rest and refreshment and peace and joy these words imply! The poet has said: Oh, what comfort it brings, my soul sweetly sings. That the

name "son of consolation," or comfort, should be given to anyone of mature years tells a story in itself respecting the general character of the person. We know little about Barnabas, but if this one sentence of holy writ comprised the sum of our knowledge, we could not fail to love and appreciate him.

In one sense of the word the church is spoken of as a mother, Zion, and all the true people of God are thus represented as her children—sons and daughters. Some of these are sons of comfort and daughters of comfort, while others are sons and daughters of pain, continually causing more or less of distress and discomfort to others and to themselves. We want to see this subject in its true light in order that we may each act accordingly—that a larger and an increasing number of the children of Zion will be sons and daughters of comfort to all with whom they come in contact, and in a general way comforters to the church as a whole.

Some may be inclined to query, Does the true church need comfort? Are not the majority too comfortable already? Do they not rather need to be stirred up, to be reminded of their sins, to be chided and made generally as uncomfortable as possible, to the intent that they may thus be helped onward and upward? We should not ignore the fact that there are times when reproofs and corrections in righteousness are proper, as the Apostle advised. But we have no sympathy at all with the thought so common with some good people, *viz.*, that they should always be feeling miserable with themselves and making other people miserable, by continually nagging and faultfinding, upbraiding and intimidating.

We believe that such well-meant but mistaken efforts have done much harm, have driven away from the family circle of Zion many who could not, without hypocrisy, claim that they are the vilest of sinners, nor properly appreciate prayers in which they are represented as saying, "Lord, be merciful unto us, *miserable sinners!*" when they realize Divine favor and forgiveness—justification from all things.

Those needing reproof, rebuke, *etc.*, are such as are walking after the flesh and not after the Spirit—in violation of their covenant. Those who should be warned to flee from the wrath to come are such as have never yet fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel—such as are without God and have no hope in the world—no relationship to Christ, through faith and obedience.

But the truly consecrated, however imperfectly, are continually seeking to walk after the Spirit; though they are well aware that because of imperfections of the flesh they do not and cannot walk up to the Spirit. These, instead



of needing reproofs, rebukes, smitings, and upbraidings for their shortcomings, which they admit and strive against, need sympathy, assistance, comfort.

Few probably have noticed to what extent the Scriptures administer this very “balm of Gilead” to the true children of Zion; but the Scriptures are full of comfort, and there is a great need that all who are truly the Lord’s people should see to it that they are more and more sons and daughters of comfort in the church, administering to one another the helpfulness and encouragement and refreshment which the Lord intended. Our Lord spoke of the holy Spirit as the Comforter, and He mentions Himself also as a comforter, saying, “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter” (John 14:16).

To what extent our Lord Jesus was a comforter we may judge as we look back to the 3½ years of His ministry, and at its close hear Him say to His faithful ones, “I will not leave you comfortless” (John 14:18), orphans, bereaved of a caretaker. And as respects His care over the Apostles while with them, we have a suggestion from His prayer to the Father, “those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled,” as the Scriptures foretold (John 17:12).

JESUS THE GREAT COMFORTER

It had been foretold of our Lord in advance through the Prophets that he would be a comforter, as we read, “The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD [Jehovah] hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted . . . to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness” (Isa. 61:1-3).

All this means that our Lord Jesus was a comforter in Zion above and beyond all other comforters. He entered into sympathy with the meek and lowly and right-intentioned in all of their weaknesses and trials and difficulties; and this is the hold that the character and words of Jesus have today upon our hearts, and also upon the hearts of many who are not His people in the full consecrated sense. It was not by continually chiding the Apostles, and accusing them, but because our Lord sympathized with them, assisted them, and interpreted their heart-intentions liberally, generously, that they

became more and more His faithful followers, even unto death.

Note the case of the woman taken in sin, and our Lord’s failure to make any pharisaical tirade against her. Mark his reproof to those who stood by: “He that is without sin . . . let him first cast a stone.” Mark how, when they were all thus convicted of imperfection in some particular themselves, our Lord said to the woman, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more” (John 8:3-11).

Notice Jesus’ dealing with the Apostle Peter, after he had denied Him, cursing, and swearing (Mark 14:71). Many of the Lord’s followers would have felt it their duty to rebuke Peter publicly before all the Apostles, and to have required public confession and some sort of penance, and on every possible occasion afterward to have thrown in his face his weakness and disloyalty. Such have not rightly interpreted and copied the Lord’s Spirit, and hence are not sons and daughters of consolation in the church. They are, on the contrary, strife-breeders, vexatious hinderers of the work they desire to forward. They should hear the Master’s voice, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me” (Matt. 11:29). In proportion as we learn of the Lord we become, not mouthpieces for the law merely, but mouthpieces specially for mercy and love and helpfulness and comfort.

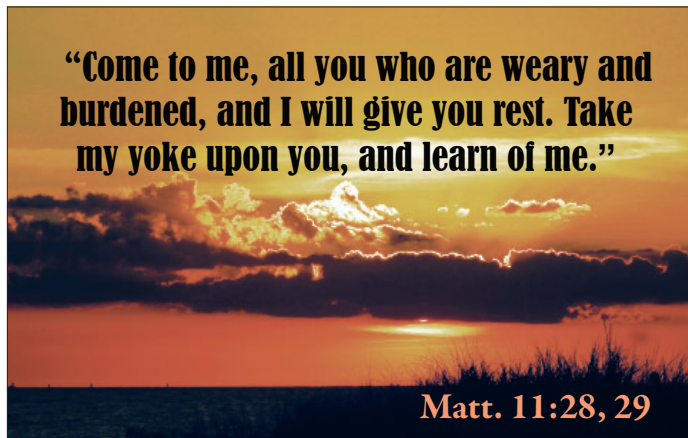
So far as the record shows, our Lord did not once mention to Peter either his profanity or his disloyalty. Peter knew about these without being told; he had already wept over them; a mere word from the Lord in chiding, reproof, might have discouraged him—perhaps hopelessly.

The nearest thing to a reproof in our Lord’s conduct and language was the inquiry, “Lovest thou me?” Let all who would be true sons and daughters of consolation in Zion learn this lesson from the great Teacher—not to strive to punish and correct and reprove and rebuke; but to avoid these so far as possible, and to inquire not so much about the past as about the present—What is the offender’s present attitude toward the Lord and toward His flock?

COMFORT AND COMFORTING NEEDFUL

It was with the full appreciation of the fact that the church would need comfort rather than chiding and reproof that our Lord said, “If I go not away the Comforter [the holy Spirit] cannot come.” The Ransom merit had to be presented in the “Most Holy” to the Heavenly Father before His blessing could be bestowed. That blessing would yield the comfort of the bestowing of the Spirit and comfort of the exceeding great and precious promises to those who had accepted Jesus—and to those who would believe on Him through their word. True, our Lord spoke of the holy Spirit as reproofing—but not as

reproving the church; He said, “He shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of a coming judgment.” The nearest suggestion to reproof in respect to the holy Spirit’s dealing with the church is that given by the Apostle, when he says, “Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” And again, he says, “Quench not the Spirit” (Eph. 4:30; 1 Thes. 5:19).



The grand provision made for the comfort of the Lord’s people clearly indicates a necessity for such comfort; nor is this necessity difficult to find. The Lord’s people are beset on every hand with adverse conditions—the world, the flesh, the adversary—seeking to intimidate or discourage or entrap the Christian, so as to hinder his development in grace, knowledge, and love, and ultimately to hinder him from the attainment of the perfection and glory to follow, which God has promised to the faithful only. What we need, in order to make us sons and daughters of consolation in the church, is a larger measure of love and sympathy in our hearts. In proportion as sympathy and love come in, they will crowd out the spirit of strife and contention and judging and fault-finding, even as they crowded out at first the spirit of the flesh—anger, malice, hatred, strife, vainglory.

As a rule (there probably are exceptions to all rules) those who have the spirit of helpfulness, of comfort, of consolation, and who are able to pour this balm into the wounded hearts of others most liberally are those who themselves have passed through severe trials, difficulties, disciplines, and who have thus been touched with a feeling of the infirmities of our race, and more than this, have been touched with a feeling of sympathy for the weaknesses and oppositions which assail the “brethren” in their endeavors to walk after the Spirit—not after the flesh. Those who have not “bowels of compassion,” who have little of sympathy, little of desire to lend a helping hand to the weak or the stumbling or those who are out of the way, have much yet to learn respecting the real meaning of the word *love*, in its higher senses—perfect

love, love for the brethren, yes, love that extends to all mankind, even to enemies, as it has opportunity, but “especially to the household of faith.”

THE HOLY SPIRIT COMFORTS THE CHURCH IN VARIOUS WAYS

(1) It comforts us by enabling us to come into such unity with the Truth and with the Lord that we can, to a considerable extent, see matters not only from the Divine standpoint but also can appreciate and feel from the same standpoint. For although the Spirit of the Truth is in the Word of Truth, there is, nevertheless, a necessity that the eyes of our understanding should be opened, that we may be enabled to comprehend the Word of Truth; and this double comfort is ours through the possession of the holy Spirit—in proportion as it abounds and is shed abroad in our hearts. It of course abounds and is shed abroad in the Word, but this is not sufficient. It must also be in our hearts a living power. We read of the early church “walking in the fear [reverence] of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Spirit” (Acts 9:31).

(2) It comforts us through the Scriptures, the promises of God, the Truth—for is it not the Spirit of the Truth? The Word of God, as the channel of the Truth, is to comfort us in proportion as the holy Spirit guides us into an understanding of it; as we read, “Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning [instruction], that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Rom. 15:4).

(3) The church, the brethren, in proportion as they become imbued with the holy Spirit and with the knowledge of the Truth, which it brings to their appreciation and comprehension, thereby become representatives of the holy Spirit in the church—comforters. This is the thought of the Apostle when he says, “Now the God of patience and consolation [comfort] grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus” (Rom. 15:5).

Reversing the foregoing order and considering the way in which the brethren are to comfort the church, we note that it is as the channels of the holy Spirit, and as the mouthpieces of the Word of God. No one is competent to be a comforter unless he already has received comfort from God.

So to speak, the Lord’s people begin receiving their comfort from the time they accept the assurances of God’s Word respecting His love and mercy, as exhibited in Christ Jesus, in that He died for our sins. In their appropriation of this Divine favor to themselves by faith, they had their first taste of comfort—peace, joy, blessing.

As they then proceeded and learned the way of the Lord more perfectly, the door of access into a still further grace was opened unto them—the grace of invitation to be with Christ in the Kingdom and its glorious work of comforting and uplifting mankind in general (Rom. 5:2).

And as this door of favor was entered, additional comfort, joy, peace, and blessing were added and understood and appreciated. And then, as the favored ones progressed under the ministries of the Truth, supplied by the holy Spirit, and became more and more able to rightly divide the Word of Truth, and to appreciate the different features of it, in the same proportion their faith grew stronger, and their comforts and joys multiplied through increasing and deepening knowledge of God and of His Plan.

Furthermore, as they behold in the glass of the Divine Word the glory of the Lord, the reflected light of His glorious character illuminating their hearts and enabling them to comprehend with all saints the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the Divine love, it brings still increasing confidence and comfort. And every one of these steps of progress, rightly received, and every additional element of character developed prepares the favored one for the exercise of his privilege of being a *comforter* to others. True, it was his duty and privilege to begin to comfort others as soon as he received the first elements of comfort himself, and to continue distributing the comforts as they came to him. Indeed, we know both from experience and from the Word that unless he thus made use of the favors and blessings and showed his appreciation of the grace of God by shining it forth upon others, his light being obscured would grow dim and eventually be extinguished. But the point we wish to impress is that ability to be a comforter depends upon growth in grace and knowledge, for none but those who themselves are comforted can dispense this grace to others.

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATIONS COMFORTING

Notice the Apostle's exhortation on this subject, and along the lines just marked out. In his second letter to the Corinthians (1:3-7) he says, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are

Comfort suggests relaxation and ease, but when God speaks comfort, he not only changes how we feel; he changes how we are, He instills a sense of security. God wants us to encourage His people. In the middle of their discouragement, give them courage, speak tenderly to them, change how they feel.

**"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people!"
(Isaiah 40:1)**

in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation [*comfort*] also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation [*comfort*] and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it

is for your consolation [*comfort*] and salvation. And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation [*comfort*]."

Ten times in these verses does the Apostle use this word "comfort." He evidently had a keen appreciation of how much the church needed such consolation, and how much the God of all comfort wished to have His faithful ones comforted, and how even the strongest in the church, the Apostles, needed comfort. What better evidence could we ask than that the spirit of comfort and of consolation, which the Heavenly Father manifested, which the Lord Jesus manifested, which the Apostles manifested and which all the faithful in Christ Jesus are called upon to exercise, is indeed the very spirit of the Truth, the holy Spirit! Consequently, those who are making greatest progress in this direction, as comforters in Zion, are growing most in grace; and so, we may be sure will be best able to grow also in knowledge, and to be helpful to the Church in every sense of the word, and to be used of the Lord as mouthpieces in the ministry of His Truth.

A little further along in the same epistle (2 Cor. 7:4-13), the Apostle uses this word "comfort," seven times, saying, "I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. For, when we were come into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; And not by his coming only, but by the consolation [*comfort*] wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more . . . Therefore, we were comforted in your comfort."

Here we see illustrated, in the Apostle's language, the mutual helpfulness of the church in this matter of comfort. Titus had a part in it, Paul had a part in it, the Church at Corinth had a part in it—every member of the

one true Church possessing the holy Spirit and exercised by it have a share; and the Apostle declares that all this comfort was of God. And he expresses it as though this were God's general disposition, in every such circumstance of His people, when he speaks of Him as "the God of all comfort," and "the God that comforteth them that are cast down." We may safely understand, therefore, that wherever we find one of the Lord's followers, however great his weakness, however much cast down, we have in his case presented to us an opportunity of serving the Lord, of being channels of His mercy, and carrying to the downcast one something of comfort and consolation and helpfulness.

Speaking respecting his own course, the Apostle, in his first letter to the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 2:11), gives us a little insight into his methods, and shows us that he neither domineered nor tyrannized over the church, nor continually harassed, threatened, and upbraided them. On the contrary, he says, "Ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a [proper] father *doth* his children." This familiar spirit in the Apostles, which enabled them as fathers and as brethren in the church to comfort and assist, should be a guide now to all who would be servants of the Lord and helpful children of comfort—sons of consolation.

It is those who enter into this real Spirit of God, the real Spirit of His Truth, who are thereby proportionately prepared to comprehend the meaning of the prophecies and revelations of the Lord which are hidden to the worldly wise, hidden to all who have not the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of consolation, of helpfulness, of sympathy, of love.

Possibly this is one reason why so few of the professed expounders of the Word of God meet with any success in interpreting it; probably this is one reason why so many are in darkness. They have not received the spirit of comfort and love, and therefore cannot appreciate the loving, gracious Plan which the Word of God upholds. It probably was not by accident that the Apostle, when stating that we are to "grow in grace and in knowledge," put the grace first.

As it is not our commission to break men's hearts, even the worldly, hard-hearted ones, but to leave them for the Lord to break through various disciplines and judgments; so likewise, it is not appointed unto us to comfort those who do not mourn; nor is it our commission to specially cause mourning that we may comfort it. Our commission is to seek out the meek and the mourning ones, who have appreciated their own shortcomings and weaknesses, and who are looking for

refuge and deliverance. It is part of our commission to point them to the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, to point them to the beauty of the resurrection for the ashes of death, and glories which the Lord has promised by and by to take the place of the spirit of heaviness and disappointment and sorrow and trouble of this present time. It is our commission to tell such that "Joy cometh in the morning," and to assist them to arise and at once put on the garments of praise, and begin to walk in newness of life, with "a new song in their mouths—even the loving kindness of our God."

GOD'S PEOPLE NOT TO BE GLOOMY

It is the wrong thought which some good people get, that the Lord's children in this present time should be gloomy, morose, sad mourners for sin. Whoever has heard the Gospel message has cause for rejoicing. When the Lord said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," He said it in the *Jewish Age—under the Law* (italics ours), which condemned all imperfection, on account of which, therefore, all who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness and seeking to walk uprightly were necessarily in mourning for their sins, because of their inability to come up to the grand standard of the perfect law of God, and hence their inability to gain everlasting life under the conditions of that Law (Matt. 5:4).

The Apostle represented not only himself but also all other sincere Israelites, groaning under the Law, when he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (Rom. 7:24)? He was mourning, and the Lord appointed that all the mourners in Zion should be comforted—comforted with the assurance that, while they were sinners and imperfect and could never justify themselves before God under the Law, nevertheless, God Himself had found a Ransom, had redeemed His people. It is in view of this comforting assurance of the Gospel that the Apostle, after representing himself as the Jew, under the Law, groaning and travailing and crying for deliverance, in the next breath represents himself as the Christian who has found the deliverance, and exclaims, "Thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" (1 Cor. 15:57) Shall the victors mourn, even though the victory be not entirely their own, but primarily bought with the precious blood of Christ? Nay, verily. We neither sorrow nor mourn, as do others, because of the good hope, which is as an anchor to our souls, sure and steadfast—the hope of the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord's people, having embraced the Truth, find themselves beset on every hand with oppositions from the Evil One and his servants; and were it not that they have

the comfort and consolation of the Scriptures, and the joy and peace which the world can neither give nor take away, theirs would be a sad lot indeed. But under conditions as the Lord has arranged them, it is their privilege, even while suffering the loss of earthly things for righteousness' sake, to rejoice in tribulation, and in everything give thanks.

What is the secret of this rejoicing in tribulation? From what source comes so great comfort as this? We answer, it comes through the comfort of the Scriptures, made luminous by the holy Spirit. For instance, take the inspired prophecy respecting Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are not—because they are dead (Jer. 31:15-17). The Lord's message of comfort to Rachel, and thus to all who have suffered loss through the great penalty of death, is, "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: . . . and they shall come again from the land of the enemy." Does this speak peace and comfort to the wounded heart of the parents, thinking of their children which are dead? Yes, verily; it brings a consolation, a comfort, with which no error can compare. There are indeed, various delusive fancies which picture themselves before the minds of the bereaved, in which they fain would trust and hope; but they are weak, they are intangible, they have no foundation in the Word of God. So, they cannot give real rest or peace in such a time of trial.

But when we hear the voice of the Lord assuring us of the resurrection, assuring us that the grave is indeed the land of the enemy, assuring us—not that our little ones are more alive than ever, but that having gone to the land of the enemy, they are secure because Jesus has prevailed, has ransomed the world with His own precious blood. Jesus has "the keys of hell [*hades*, the condition of the grave] and of death" as He declares (Rev. 1:18) and will shortly open and bring forth all the captive prisoners of death from the prison house, the tomb. There is a comfort, a consolation, in this message, which can be applied with profit to every heart bleeding under such wounds.

All "the comfort of the Scriptures" is along this line. They show us that the present reign of sin and death is not to be an everlasting one; that a new dispensation is to be ushered in as the result of the great Redeemer's sacrifice, and that in this new dispensation a blessing will come to all the families of the earth, and a special blessing to the church. Favored now with a knowledge of the Lord, the faithful of this time will be made sharers with Jesus in the great Kingdom work of blessing the world. Unquestionably this is a comforting assurance, not only for those who are striving to attain to the great elective calling, but also in respect to those, their friends, and

neighbors, who will be lifted up and blessed under that Millennial Kingdom.

It is of this deliverance that the Apostle speaks, saying that the Lord's people should not sorrow as others who have no hope, because if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, let us believe also the record of the Scriptures, that His death was a sacrifice on our behalf, and on behalf of the sins of the whole world—so that them which sleep in Jesus will God bring from the dead by and through Him (1 Thes. 4:13, 14). What a blessed, *comforting* thought it is that the whole world of mankind which went down into death in Adam has been ransomed, so that the death penalty will be repealed, and thus their death be turned into a sleep, from which all will be awakened in the Millennial morning, to have an opportunity to learn of the goodness of God, and, if they will, to accept of His favor unto eternal life, by obedience.

Finally, we notice that the Apostle implies in some of his statements that the comfort and peace of the church are dependent largely upon unity of the Spirit of the Lord in the various members: and that we from experience should note that this is the case. He says, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (2 Cor. 13:11), and again (Phil. 2:1, 2), "If *there be* therefore any consolation [comfort] in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of Spirit, if any bowels [the bowels were considered the seat of tender emotions] and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind."

What exhortations these are to unity, peace, brotherly kindness! How they suggest to us patience, forbearance, gentleness, helpfulness, and *comfort* one toward another in the church; that thus the Spirit of the Lord may abound in all, that each may make the greatest possible progress in the right way. Dear brothers and sisters, let us more and more be worthy of the name Barnabas—Comforter of the brethren. Let us have the holy Spirit abounding in us more and more, for this is the Lord's good pleasure; that with it dwelling in us richly we may be all sons and daughters of comfort in Zion, representatives of our Father, and channels of the holy Spirit and the Truth.



WE *Rejoice*
IN THE *Hope* OF THE
Glory OF God

The Three Great Covenants

A covenant consists of promises either binding one party—a unilateral or unconditional covenant—or binding two parties to one another conditionally—a bilateral or conditional covenant.

God has made various covenants with man. Three covenants, however, stand out very prominently, as in them have been bound up all the best interests of mankind.

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT LAW COVENANT NEW COVENANT

Let us read this covenant, and we will see that it contains these two elements and recognizes both natural and spiritual Israel (Gen. 12:2, 3; 13:14-16; 15:5, 18; 22:16-18;

26:3, 4; 28:13, 14). The Apostle Paul assures us that “*the seed*” referred to in this covenant is Christ and the Church (Gal. 3:16, 29). Fleshly Israel lost the privilege of being, with Jesus, the spiritual Seed—they lost the cream or choicest part of the covenant—the spiritual portion (Matt. 21:43). He explains (Rom. 11:7): “Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.”

However, the loosing of this better part did not cut them off entirely from having a part in that covenant. “For, brethren [of the Gentiles], that you may not be conceited with yourselves [thinking that *all* of God’s favor and covenant have been taken from them and given to you], I wish you not to be ignorant of this secret, That hardness in some measure has happened to Israel till the fullness of the Gentiles may come in [*i.e.*, until the Church, the Bride, selected from among the Gentiles (Acts 15:13-18), has been completed probationary in its membership]. And then all Israel will be saved [from their blinded, hardened condition] as it has been written, ‘The Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob’; and ‘this is the Covenant with them FROM ME, when I shall take away their sins’” (Rom. 11:25-27, Diaglott).

Though for many centuries they have been counted as enemies and blinded to the Gospel, yet they are still “beloved for the fathers’ sakes. For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance” (vs. 28, 29); *i.e.*, these earthly blessings are just as sure to them [human beings] as the spiritual blessings are to the spirit beings, because God so promised or covenanted, and never changes. Thank God that since their “double” (Isa. 40:1, 2; Jer. 16:18) of disfavor ended in 1878, their blindness in part is gradually disappearing (See our booklet, *Jewish Hopes and Prospects*).

We see the breadth and grandeur of God’s plan and arrangement—how the natural seed was cast aside for a time, that the spiritual seed might be developed, who, in their turn, are to be made the instruments for blessing the earthly seed, and with them all the families of the earth.

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

1. *This Covenant is of God to Abraham.*
An unconditional covenant
(Gal. 3:16, 29)

THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

1. *The Covenant of God to Abraham.* This covenant, an unconditional covenant, comprehends and includes a blessing on Abraham’s natural, fleshly descendants and the rest of the earthly seed, as well as upon the higher, spiritual, Seed, “which is Christ.” “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:16, 29). If this thought is borne in mind, it will assist us in grasping the full meaning of this covenant. The Covenant of God to Abraham was first made with him after the death of his father, when he entered the land of Canaan (Gen. 12:1-5); it was reaffirmed and elaborated in the Oath-bound Covenant (Gen. 22:16-18), which sets forth the two kinds of seed—the spiritual, or heavenly seed, and the human, or earthly seed.

The spiritual seed is called *the stars of heaven*. Jesus calls Himself “the bright and morning star” (Rev. 22:16), and the rest of the spiritual seed, the spiritual elect, are subordinate stars. The stars seem to have had much weight and meaning to the ancients, who looked up to them with superstitious reverence, believing that they controlled the destinies both of nations and of men. So, this portion of the covenant seed represented by the stars of heaven signifies *heavenly rulers*—especially Christ and His Bride. The earthly seed is said to be as “the sand which is upon the seashore” (Gen. 22:17). The sand represents earthly people developed under the covenant as plainly as the stars represent heavenly people developed under the covenant.

Then *they* (the earthly seed) shall obtain mercy through *your* (the spiritual seed's) mercy (vs. 31, 32), when "The Deliverer [Jesus and the Church] shall come out of Zion [Nominal Israel—Fleshly and Spiritual] and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob [Fleshly Israel]" (see vs 26 Diaglott). When we understand this, we see the fullness of this covenant to Abraham. It shows us what God meant when He promised that Abraham's seed would be mighty, possessing the gate of their enemies [they would overcome Satan, sin, error, selfishness, and worldliness], and be so far above others as to be able to "bless all the families of the earth." "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?" (vs. 33, 34).

THE LAW COVENANT

THE LAW COVENANT

2. *This Law Covenant*, is conditional and bilateral—two-sided, was between God and Israel (Deut. 5:1-3).

2. *The Covenant of the Law*. This covenant was unlike the Abrahamic Covenant, in that it was *conditional* and *bilateral—two-sided*; it was made between God and Israel, and by its arrangements, God was bound to do certain things, *if* Israel did certain other things.

"*The Law*" is called a covenant (comp. 1 Kg. 8:21; Gal. 4:24). It was ordained in the hands of a mediator (Moses—Deut. 5:5; comp. Gal. 3:19), which proves that it contained conditions binding upon two parties for its fulfillment; for "a mediator is not of one" (Gal. 3:20), *i.e.*, not necessary where there was only one party contracting, as in the case of the Abrahamic Covenant.

The Law was not a part of the first covenant, neither was it made with *the people of the world*, but only with Fleshly Israel—"And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel . . . The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, *even* us, who *are* all of us here alive this day" (Deut. 5:1-3).

That the *Ten Commandments*, particularly (Ex. 34:28; Deut. 4:13), and the rest of the law, incidentally, constituted this covenant, is clear from the reading of the remainder of Deut. 5. This Law Covenant was *seemingly*

designed as a blessing to Israel, yet *really* by coming under it they condemned themselves; for it is written, "Cursed [condemned] *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. 3:10). God never intended therefore, that they should receive life by this covenant, for "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16).

What then was the object of this covenant? It had two objects: (1) it demonstrated that the natural man, as a *fallen* creature, could not live in harmony with God, (2) it was proved and illustrated that a *perfect man* could keep *God's perfect law*, when Jesus *did* keep it; and He thereby became heir legally, as well as by grace, to all the provisions of both covenants.

Furthermore, the Law "was appointed on account of TRANSGRESSIONS, till the SEED should come to whom the promise related" (Gal. 3:19, Diaglott). God knew the best time, and "in due time sent forth His Son." The Law was introduced beforehand because the proper time—the Gospel Age—for the development of "the seed," *i.e.*, the spiritual seed, referred to in the covenant to Abraham, had not come; and the Law was intended to prevent Israel's becoming degraded like other nations, and to act as a restraint on their fleshly nature, an educator of self-control in them, *etc.* It was to be a "schoolmaster," which, by showing them their own weaknesses, would prepare them to receive Jesus Christ as their *justifier* from the things which the Law condemned (Gal. 3:24). And it did this very work in some individuals. By the time the seed was due to be brought forth, it had prepared *some* to receive Jesus (John 1:12). Also, the Law Covenant was used as a type, not of the Abrahamic Covenant, but of the New Covenant, to illustrate the operations and conditions of the New Covenant, as we shall see under the Millennial Mediatorial Reign of Christ.

Let us take note that the Law Covenant is typed by Hagar [flight], who was added to the Sarah [princess] features that is plainly taught in Gal. 4:23-31. As the seed-promising part of the original Covenant, given first without an oath as the first promise of the original Abrahamic Covenant [2045 BC], was 430 years before the Law Covenant [1615 BC], so this fact was pictured forth by Sarah being Abraham's real wife years before Hagar was taken as concubine. But as the concubine bore her son before Sarah bore hers, so the Law Covenant developed Fleshly Israel before antitypical Sarah developed Spiritual Israel (PT '27 p 114).

THE NEW COVENANT

THE NEW COVENANT

3. *This Covenant*, is conditional;
between two parties — “God and men,”

(1 Tim. 2:5)

3. *The New Covenant*. This covenant is repeatedly mentioned in the Bible. It should not be misconstrued as being God’s covenant with *the Church*—“the Seed” of promise; no, the Church was developed under the Sarah features of the Oath-bound Covenant given to Abraham (Gal. 4:22-31). In Acts 3:25 members of the prospective Church gathered from Israel are called “the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.”

Jesus, the Head, was surely not developed under the New Covenant; so, the Church, His Body, could not be developed under the New Covenant, for obviously the Head would not be developed and born of one mother and the Body of another! The Sarah features of the Oath-bound Covenant, and the New Covenant, are not the same, nor is the New Covenant made with the Church at all; it does not come into operation until the *spiritual Seed* has not only been fully developed but has also come into possession of its Millennial office powers as the Mediator of the New Covenant.

The New Covenant, like the Law Covenant, which was its shadow or type, is between God and fleshly men—the twelve tribes of Israel (Jer. 31:31-34). If, therefore, this covenant is between two parties (“God and men,” 1 Tim. 2:5), there must be conditions binding upon both; so, there must be a mediator (as in the type) to stand responsible for the fulfilment of the conditions of both, guaranteeing each party to the other.

Who, then, is to act as mediator of the New Covenant? The Apostle Paul answers: “Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant” (Heb. 12:24). Yes, Jesus, our Head, is the one, and the only one, who can stand uncondemned before God’s righteous law. In Him God recognizes His holy Son, separate from sinners; and in Him mankind may, and soon will, recognize their Lord (Phil. 2:9-11), now highly exalted, but once the “man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,” who, “by the grace of God, should taste death for every man” (Isa. 53:3; Heb. 2:9), and who

is a faithful High Priest, able to sympathize with and lift up the fallen. Only through Him can the world ever be made at one with God—His great work is *at-one-ment*. Jesus associated with His tried and faithful Bride will do this Millennial Mediatorial and Priestly work.

Now, what are the conditions of this New Covenant? They are, as in its type, the law, *do and live* (Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5). God can never be a party to any covenant recognizing sin. *Perfect righteousness* (“Be ye perfect,” Matt. 5:48) has always been the condition on which God recognizes or communes with any of His children. Christians in the present Age, although *not individually perfect*, are *reckoned* so, by faith in the merit of Jesus’ Ransom-sacrifice, being hid in Christ, and covered by His robe of righteousness. His righteousness is imputed to them. But in the coming time, after the application of Jesus’ merit on behalf of the whole world (1 John 2:2), His imputed righteousness will not avail, but “every man shall die for his own sin” (not the sin of Adam), or *vice versa*, live by his own righteousness (perfect obedience; Ezek. 18). Faith in Christ will be needed, but they will be judged then “according to their works” (Rev. 20:12).

It may be asked, then, in what way will conditions in the new Age under the New Covenant differ from those in the Jewish Age under the Law Covenant? If the conditions of life are obedience to God’s perfect law, will it not result, as the Law Covenant did, in condemning all under it to death? We answer, No; the difficulty then was, not with the *law*, but with *man*. Man, in his fallen, imperfect condition, could not keep the Law, “which *was ordained to life*” (Rom. 7:10).

But the conditions of this New Covenant on God’s part are, that man shall be brought to a condition in which he can obey the perfect law, and always keep it in his heart; as it is written, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah . . . This *shall* be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people . . . for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” “In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children’s teeth are set on edge, but every one shall die for his own iniquity” (Jer. 31:31-34, 29, 30).

“And in that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and *with* the creeping things of the ground: and I will

break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth” (Hosea 2:18; comp. Jer. 32:37-41; Ezek. 37:26). We see clearly that the New Covenant is yet *future* and also that a great change will be effected in the condition of Israel, who, under the Law previously, were unable to keep it. The trouble then was that the fathers (Adam and his successors) had eaten the sour grape of sin, and the children’s teeth were set on edge, so that they could not keep the Law of God. However, the great Day of Atonement, by virtue of the Ransom-sacrifice of Jesus, who, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9), will bring an opportunity for mankind to attain everlasting life in “a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Pet. 3:13).

The *man* Christ Jesus who was holy, harmless, *undefiled*, separate from sinners, was made a curse for us, He was “made sin, [*i.e.*, a *sin-offering*—(Diaglott)] for us, [He] who knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21). It is *after* the completion of the “better sacrifices” of the Gospel Age (Heb. 9:23; for an explanation of these, see BS ’60, p. 75), when mankind’s sins are forgiven freely for Christ’s sake, and after they are restored to the condition of sinless, perfect manhood at the end of the Millennial Age, that the New Covenant between God and men will be fully established. And to this thought agree the words of St. Paul (Rom. 11:27), “This is my [new] covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” The nations, or peoples, mankind in general, including even those of ancient Sodom, Samaria, *etc.*, will be blessed under this “everlasting covenant,” this New Covenant, that God will make with Israel, by becoming Israel’s “daughters” (Ezek. 16:46, 47, 53, 55, 60, 61).

JESUS THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT

We have seen that to every covenant to which there are obligations of two parties, there is a *mediator* or one who stands between, guaranteeing the fulfilment of its conditions. Moses was the mediator of the Law Covenant, and Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant. God looks to Him for the fulfilment of the Law on the part of mankind who are to have everlasting life, and Israel and the world will look to Him for the ability to comply with its requirements. The Gospel Church does not come to Christ under the *New Covenant*, nor under the “old” or Law Covenant, but under a covenant older than either of these (Gal. 3:17), *i.e.*, the Abrahamic Covenant, as part of the Seed (Gal. 3:29).

As the typical or Law Covenant (or “testament”) was ratified or sealed by Moses, its mediator, with the blood

of bulls and goats (Ex. 24:1-8), so the New Covenant is to be sealed with the blood of the “better sacrifices [plural],” which these represented, *viz.*, the sacrifices of the Christ—Head and Body (Heb. 9:18-23).

Moses took a bunch of hyssop and scarlet wool and therewith sprinkled of the ratifying blood mixed with water, upon both the book (type of the Law—Divine justice) and all the people (Heb. 9:19). So, with the New Covenant, it must also be ratified with blood; and its Mediator gives His own blood (life), both *Head* and *Body*, during the Gospel Day of sacrifice. And after the completion of the better sacrifices, the people will be sprinkled figuratively with the merit of this cleansing blood (life) and with the pure water of Truth. It will sprinkle both the *book* (Law) and the *people*, bringing the people into harmony with God and therefore into harmony with His Law. Their teeth will no longer be set on edge, because of the sins of the fathers (Jer. 31:29, 30); no longer will they, when they would do good, find evil present with them; for then they will, “Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest” and “The knowledge of the LORD shall fill the whole earth” (Jer. 31:34; Num. 14:21; Isa. 11:9).

Who will do the sprinkling after the sacrifices are completed? It was Moses in the type; it will be the Great Prophet and Mediator in the antitype—“A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:22, 23). This prophecy applies to the “times of restitution of all things,” and is quoted by St. Peter as applicable then (Acts 3:21).

That prophet or teacher, “the Christ”—Head and Body, is “raised up” during the Gospel Age; and soon, during the Millennial Age, the work of sprinkling and cleansing humanity will begin; and the soul (person) who will not then obey and be cleansed shall be destroyed. In that Age, the sinner a hundred years old will be cut off, though at that age he would be comparatively but “a child” (Isa. 65:20).

ABRAHAM’S THREE WIVES

Let us briefly review these covenants as they are illustrated in a type or allegory (Gal. 4:22-31). The Apostle Paul explains that Abraham’s wife, Sarah, was a type of the covenant made with Abraham, referring to “the seed.” As years rolled by, and no child came, they

began to look for a fulfilment in some other way, and Hagar took the place of a wife and bore a son, who apparently was to be the *heir*. Likewise, the original promise of God to Abraham meant Christ, but He was not born until “due time”; and in the meantime, “the Law” was given from Sinai, apparently taking the place of that original covenant; and under the Law Covenant a *fleshly* seed was developed—Fleshly Israel. But the Abrahamic Covenant had not failed, for after the Hagar Covenant had borne Fleshly Israel (typified by Ishmael), the true seed of Abraham, the “heirs according to the promise,” Christ Jesus and the members of His Body—Spiritual Israel (Gal. 3:29), began to be brought forth under the Sarah features of the original Covenant.

This is as far as St. Paul carries the type and antitype; because he was speaking only of the two *seeds*, natural and spiritual, and the two covenants under which they come into existence. But as we find that God is to make “a *new* covenant,” “after those days,” we naturally inquire: Why was not this *new* covenant also typified by a wife of Abraham? And upon examination, we find that it was so typified. Turning to Gen. 24:67, we read that Isaac received Rebekah into Sarah’s tent, and she became his married wife, *etc.*, typifying how the Heavenly Bridegroom receives His Bride at the end of her earthly sojourn, at the end of her Gospel-Age journey, and brings her into, and associates her with Himself in the enjoyment of all things promised in the first (or Sarah) Covenant. In the next verse we read: “*Then again* Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah,” who illustrated, as plainly as a type can, the New Covenant.

KETURAH’S SIX SONS

Each of the first two covenants bore but *one* offspring: the first, Spiritual Israel, “the heir of all things” (Isaac; Heb. 1:2; Rom. 8:17), and the second, Fleshly Israel, “beloved for the fathers’ sakes” (Ishmael; Rom. 11:28). But the New Covenant (Keturah) bears six sons (Gen. 25:2). So the New Covenant will bring everlasting life to six classes, in the Millennial Age, which may be fittingly represented as follows: (1) Zimran: the 70 most prominent of the Ancient and Youthful Worthies (the *ancients* and *youthfuls* of Joel 2:28), who will be given the most prominent positions in the earthly phase of the Kingdom during the making, sealing, of the New Covenant (Ex. 24:1, 9); (2) Jokshan: the Worthies in general; (3) Medan: the Consecrated Epiphany Campers—those who consecrate to God and are faithful in their consecration during the Epiphany—the very end of the Gospel-Age, after the four elect classes

have been fully made up in their membership; the four elect classes of Abraham’s seed are pictured as serving in the Court of the Tabernacle as it was set up for Israel in the wilderness, and these consecrators are pictured as being among those in the Camp—therefore the name “Campers”; (4) Midian: those Fleshly Israelites who during the Jewish and Gospel Ages have in faith and practice come into harmony with the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants, and remained faithful therein, though not consecrating; (5) Ishbak: those Gentiles (and some Jews) who throughout the Gospel Age, including our day, while not consecrating, or dedicating, their lives to God, have repented of their sins and accepted Jesus as their Savior and remain faithful to the ransom and to righteousness; and (6) Shuah (*low place, depression*): the non-elect, unbelieving world of mankind, consisting of unbelieving Gentiles and those Fleshly Israelites who have forsaken the covenant promises; the unbelievers represented by the “daughters,” the believers being referred to as, “sons”—the stronger ones (Joel 2:28 and Isa. 60:4).

The six sons of Keturah seem to picture six classes who will receive everlasting life under the New Covenant, after the two Spirit-begotten elect classes of the Gospel Age (the Little Flock and the Great Company—Luke 12:32; Rev. 7) have first “passed from death unto life” (John 5:24; 1 John 3:14) and have received their inheritance in the spirit realm with the Lord (John 14:3; Matt. 5:12). Keturah’s other descendants (Gen. 25:3, 4) type subdivisions of some of these six classes.

How significant, then, are Abraham’s three wives, representing the three great covenants: Sarah (*princess*), the Christ-developing features of the Oath-bound Covenant to Abraham; Hagar (*flight*), the Law Covenant, which was ordained to life, but found to be unto death (Rom. 7:10), and was cast out during the Gospel Age (Gal. 4:30), and Keturah (*incense*), the New Covenant, which brings restitution blessings to all the families of the earth in the Millennial Age! And how the Sarah—the Royal—Covenant looms up above the others! Let us not forget that the Body had to *die* with the Head, Jesus, in order to *live* with Him (2 Tim. 2:11, 12) and share with Him in the glorious Mediatorial work of sprinkling and cleansing the world in the incoming Millennial Age. And may we each be faithful in serving Him now, that we may also share in “the world to come” (Heb. 2:5) in helping the world of mankind up the Highway of Holiness, to obtain joy and gladness, when sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isa. 35).

**The Fall of
Man**
Gen. 3:2-24

Bible Talks

**The Murder
Of Abel**
Gen. 4:1-22, 25

Stories In Simple Language
From The One Book That Never Grows Old

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

The Serpent is Cursed.

And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and

I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and

between thy seed and her seed; and it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.

And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.

And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

THE MURDER OF ABEL.

Gen. 4:1 22, 25

AND Eve bare unto Adam a son, and called his name Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect.

And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And

why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.

And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? 26

And he said, What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand; when thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

And Cain said unto the Lord, My punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and

it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me. And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And to Cain was born Enoch: and Cain builded a city, and called it after his son, Enoch. And unto Enoch was born Irad: and Irad begat Mehujael: and Mehujael begat Methusael: and Methusael begat Lamech.

And Lamech took unto him two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. And Adah bare Jabal: he was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle. And his brother's name was Jubal: he was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ. And Zillah, she also bare Tubal-cain, an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron.

And Eve again bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.

BIBLE QUESTION

Question—Which is greater, the Abrahamic Covenant or the New Covenant?

Answer—The Abrahamic Covenant is an all-embracing arrangement. Everything that God has done and will yet do for our race is included in it. The Law Covenant was added to this Covenant “because of transgressions” (Gal. 3:19). Although only a typical arrangement, nevertheless the Law Covenant developed a certain class that will be used of the Lord in a subordinate way in blessing mankind during the Millennial Age. This Covenant is represented by Hagar; and her son Ishmael represents the nation of Israel (Gal. 4:21-31). The Christ, Head and Body, is represented in Isaac, Sarah's son. Sarah, Abraham's first wife, represents the Christ-developing part of the Abrahamic Covenant, which pertains to the primary spiritual Seed. We sometimes speak of it as the Sarah Covenant. This Sarah Covenant—the Grace Covenant—brings forth the Isaac class, the Christ, Head and Body.

Even as Isaac was not born after the flesh in the ordinary sense (Abraham and Sarah being too old naturally), but was a special creation, so with Christ. This “Isaac” class is a distinctly new creation. Jesus the Head became a New Creature at Jordan. The Body has been formed from members of the fallen human

race during the Gospel Age. The Divine invitation to these was to present their bodies living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1), that they might attain with their Head the Divine nature—something that had never before been offered. After the completion of the Christ class and their entering with Christ into His Millennial throne (Matt. 25:31), the blessing indicated in God's promise to Abraham will reach all the families of the earth. It will reach them through the “Isaac” Seed, the Christ, and subordinately through the Great Company, and also through the Ancient and Youthful Worthies, developed respectively before and after the time in which believers could attain to Little Flockship.

In the incoming Messianic or Millennial Age, all kindreds and families of the earth who have not had an opportunity in this life will be blessed by the privilege or opportunity to become children of Abraham, children of God. Abraham represents God in a figure. He said to Abraham, “I have made thee a father of many nations” (Gen 17:5; Rom. 4:17); “in becoming thy seed shall all nations of the earth bless themselves.” They will be blessed under the New Covenant, the arrangement whereby the earthly features of the Abrahamic Covenant will be fulfilled as relates to Israel and others. Accordingly, the Abrahamic Covenant embraces all the



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other covenants, which are merely different features of God's arrangement by which the work implied in the great Abrahamic Covenant is to be accomplished.

Abraham, representing God, took another wife after the death of Sarah, named Keturah, representing the New Covenant. By her he had many children (Gen. 25:1-3), representing those who will obtain everlasting life under the New Covenant. This is typed the New Covenant and its grand work of bringing many to life—to "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:19, 21).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR LORD'S MEMORIAL 2023

**Monday April 3rd
 After 6:00 PM**

BIBLE STANDARD MINISTRIES 2023 CONVENTIONS

CHESTER SPRINGS, PA MAY 12, 13, 14, 2023

Exton & Chester Hotel, 815 N. Pottstown Pike, Exton, PA 19341; Phone: 610-363-1100.

Rate \$79.99 per night plus tax. Breakfast Buffet furnished Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Lunch Buffet furnished, Friday and Saturday. **Make reservations directly with the hotel by April 12. Mention you are attending the Bible Standard Ministries Convention for the special rate.**

For more information contact L. Lounsbury, 610-827-7665. A Bible House Service will be held on Thursday evening May 11, at 7:30.
 1156 St. Matthews Road, Chester Springs, PA

ATHENS, OHIO

JULY 14, 15, 16, 2023

Site: Ohio University Inn, 331 Richland Ave., Athens, OH 45701; Phone: 866-593-6661.

Rate: \$109.00 per night (if made by 6/15/23). Lunch furnished Friday and Saturday. For further information please contact: Bro. Mike Hanning: 740-707-4898 or Sr. Karrie Hanning: 740-590-3802

TULSA, OKLAHOMA

OCTOBER 13, 14 & 15

Additional information will be announced when arrangements are finalized.

We now have a new supply of the cross and crown tie clasps and the cross and crown lapel pins. The Tie clasps can be purchased for \$6.50 and the pins for \$5.00, just place your order with the Bible House or you will be able to purchase them at Conventions.



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