

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the
Kingdom of God..."

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

By J. Preston Eby

Kingdom Bible Study books are not for sale for profit. They are printed in this format so that they can be given away to those without internet access. This book can be received by going to kingdombiblestudies.org. to download a pdf of the book or write them a letter requesting a paperback.

Kingdom Bible Studies
PO Box 371240
El Paso TX 79937-1240

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

by J. Preston Eby

This publication has been dedicated to the public domain
Printed in the United States of America

Scripture Quotations taken from:

The Amplified® Bible, Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation, Used by permission." (www.Lockman.org)

Concordant Literal New Testament Copyright ©, 15570 Knochaven Road, Santa Clarita, CA 91387, U.S.A. 661-252-2112

Emphatic Diaglott, Fowler & Wells Co., Publishers, 27 East 21st St. NY

King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved."
New Testament – A New Translation by James Moffatt, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, 1994

Rotherham's Emphasized Bible, by Joseph Bryant. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1994)

The New Testament by Wuest, Kenneth Samuel Wuest, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1994

The New Testament in Modern Speech by Weymouth: Public Domain

Young's Literal Translation: Public Domain

Any authors or artists mentioned in this book does not constitute their agreement or support of the content of this book. It is the expressed desire of the author to allow this book to be reproduced in any form as long as it is given away and kept in context. Any comments may be sent to firestarternow@yahoo.com

Kingdom Bible Study website is <http://www.kingdombiblestudies.org>

Table of Contents

Abraham's Bosom	4
THE PARABLE.....	5
THE RICH MAN.....	8
LAZARUS.....	11
THE DEATHS OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS	15
ABRAHAM'S BOSOM.....	17
ABRAHAM'S BOSOM.....	22
(continued).....	22
TURNUED UNTO FABLES.....	28
LAZARUS IN ABRAHAM'S BOSOM.....	44
THE RICH MAN IN TORMENT.....	56
THE GREAT GULF	60
<i>About The Author</i>	67

Abraham's Bosom

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and you are tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from there to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from there. Then he said, I pray therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house: For I have five brothers; that he may testify unto them, unless they also come into this place of torment. Abraham said unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, No, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead" (Luke 16:19-31).

THE PARABLE

The story of the rich man and Lazarus is without doubt one of the most misunderstood of all the stories in the Bible. Is it a parable, or an actual statement of facts concerning life beyond the grave? It is strenuously denied by most evangelists that this story, as told by Christ, could be a parable. They hold that this is not a parable because it starts out in narrative form. It is argued, because it reads, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day," that Christ is speaking here of an actual incident that took place. But in the parable of the prodigal son, in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, the narrative introduction is found also, for it says, "A certain man had two sons..." Yet it is generally conceded that the story of the prodigal son is a parable and all the fundamentalist preachers love to preach from its beautiful figures, thus applying it as a parable.

Jesus continually spoke in parables. A parable is an analogy - a simile, representation or analogous story - which could even be a fable, so long as it is used to illustrate certain essential points of TRUTH. An analogy is not necessarily the truth all by itself - but is analogous to the TRUTH which it helps to illustrate. For instance, a person might say, "My wife is a regular rabbit." This is a metaphor, or a parable; but we would not conclude from this statement that his wife had two long ears and four feet and that she hopped about clad in fur, but would simply come to the conclusion that this lady is a great lover of vegetables perhaps even a vegetarian. If we were to push the parable to its ultimate analysis, the woman would cease to be a woman and would become an animal.

The disciples were curious as to why Jesus spoke in sometimes confusing parables. "And the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why do you speak unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given" (Mat. 13:10-11). Notice, the carnal minded Pharisees and others in His audience were not privileged to understand. Only His disciples received the later, fuller explanations of His parables. Notice! "Therefore speak I unto them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand! And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which says, By hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; LEST at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them! But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear!" (Mat. 13:10-16). A parable, then, will confuse, bewilder and perplex the doubting and the unbelieving! It will enlighten only the quickened, true disciple of Jesus Christ! It is quite obvious, from the context, that the story of Lazarus and the rich man is in fact a parable!

Usually, when the story of the rich man and Lazarus is considered, its setting is ignored. At the time the story was told Jesus had just eaten dinner with a Pharisee, at which time He not only healed a man with dropsy, but gave some pointed advice about how to give a dinner party. When He left the house, great throngs followed Him. Many of this great company were publicans and sinners who drew near to hear His teaching, and mingled with them were a great number of the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees complained openly and bitterly against Jesus, condemning Him because He received sinners into His company and ate with them. Against this background of biting criticism Jesus stood and gave the teachings found in chapters fifteen and sixteen of Luke. There are five stories which follow consecutively. It is well known, of course, that chapters and verses were not in the original scriptures. We are at liberty to change them when they do not synchronize with other

scripture. Any arrangement of chapter and verse division that clarifies or harmonizes other scripture, is more authoritative than that division that beclouds other statements of the Bible. At the beginning of Jesus' discourse in chapter fifteen of Luke the statement is made that "He spoke this parable unto them, saying," (Lk. 15:3). The Greek is very definite in making the word for parable clearly a singular noun. It is "the parable this.." This statement is followed by five separate stories, the first of which is the story of the lost sheep, and the last is the story of the rich man and Lazarus. You see, the teaching in chapter sixteen is but the continuation of the discourse in chapter fifteen, without interruption. Now, which of the five stories He gave them in this sermon was called a parable? The only one of the five which is prefaced by the claim, "And He spoke this parable unto them," was the story about the lost sheep. Was the lost sheep the only one that could be called a parable? And yet, any preacher or believer that I know will answer that the story of the lost coin, as well as the prodigal son, were also parables. Then why was the singular used - "this parable"? It should be clear to any thinking mind that all these stories were ONE PARABLE, like the facets of a diamond, as they turn each scintillates with new brilliance. Each was illustrating a view point of one great truth, and together they compose a whole. And this parabolic discourse of Jesus is continued into chapter sixteen of Luke, including the story of the rich man and Lazarus. The truth is that all five stories are each a fractional part of the complete parable, and when we read, "He spoke this parable unto them," this embraces the entire collection of symbol-pictures which in their completeness constituted the parable which He spoke. It is a careless assumption and an unfounded assertion to argue that the story of the rich man and Lazarus is not a parable!

L. F. Hurley wrote, "Jesus loved the publicans and sinners and wanted to help and save them. But these self-righteous Pharisees and scribes, whose business it should have been to teach them the love of God and to invite them to love and obey God in return for His grace, not only hated these publicans and sinners, but ostracized and excommunicated them from all the privileges of Jewish worship and fellowship. So, in the presence of both leaders and outcasts Jesus gave this parable, part of it to bring hope to the outcasts and part of it to condemn the leaders for their heartlessness and neglect. The first part consisting of three stories, was for the encouragement of the publicans and sinners; the last part consisting of two stories, expresses His condemnation of the Pharisees and scribes."

There are some serious, solemn and grave implications if indeed this story is not a parable, but a vivid description of conditions as they actually exist for all men immediately after death, as the preachers are wont to proclaim. If this parable is describing conditions actually as they will be in the life to come, then those in heaven will be able to talk to those in hell. Fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, husbands and wives will be able to look across the gulf and see their loved ones in the torment of the fiery regions. Not only will they be able to see them in the lurid flames of hell, but they will hear their piercing cries as they call for a drop of water to cool their tongues. How awful that would be! Could anyone enjoy the bliss (?) of heaven while compelled to listen to the hopeless, screaming pleas of unsaved loved ones and friends just across the narrow gulf. Would not such harrowing din somewhat disturb the heavenly choir with its discord? Worse yet, could that satisfy the heart's love of our heavenly Father who went all the way to Golgotha to save us? Suppose a mother from the heavenly regions could look across the fixed gulf and see her son in the torments of hell; suppose she could hear him crying day and night for a drop of water to cool his tongue because of the burning heat of those lower regions. Would not the mother be as much in torment as the son, and in fact, would it not be more a place of hell for the mother than it would actually be for that son? Therefore, it would seem impossible for anyone to believe that in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus Jesus is depicting conditions exactly as they will be in that world to come.

From what you know of Jesus' teachings, could you say that He would use the figure of a rich man, well clothed, and well fed, to represent all the sinners of mankind? Is that condition in itself representative of all iniquity? Again, will you insist that a poor beggar, full of sores, is a proper representative for all the righteous of mankind? Please remember that Jesus said not one thing concerning the rich man being a sinner. He laid not one crime at his door. He did not accuse him of doing a wrong thing. He was simply a rich man, and lived a good life every day, just like millions of people do today, including CHRISTIANS AND PREACHERS. Abraham's word to him was, "Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things." I would point out that the vast majority of the people in the United States today has as much or more than the rich man possessed. If the rich man of that day could have had the possessions that the majority of people has today, he would have been in a class entirely to himself. He could not dream of the luxury that the modern day person thinks of as necessities. This being the case, and if the popular church doctrine be true, WE HAD BETTER GET RID OF ALL OUR POSSESSIONS, OR WE WILL SURELY END UP IN ETERNAL BURNING HELL! Then again, Jesus never did say that Lazarus was a good man, a righteous man, a Christian or anything of the sort. The only reason given by Jesus for his being in the bosom of Abraham was that he had lived a hard life in the flesh. If that is the sole requirement for a good life in the hereafter, then we say again, that all the teachers, preachers and believers of such a doctrine had better get busy living that kind of life! Instead of praying for healing and blessing and prosperity we should all be seeking to be homeless beggars, full of sores, rotting away with loathsome disease! Otherwise we are liable to end up in the same condition in which the rich man found himself.

Furthermore, of those who believe this story to be a literal statement of the condition of men after death, and that the wicked are tortured in an abyss of fire and brimstone, none actually believes that a single drop of water from one finger of one man could in any measure alleviate the excruciating pain of hell's merciless flame. None actually believes that a drop of water could actually exist anywhere near the place, much less cool the tongue of any unfortunate victim of this abominable torture chamber. The only thing in the parable which the advocates of eternal torture insist is literal is its reference to fire and torment. If they attempt to explain the remainder of the parable at all they are compelled to give it a symbolic meaning, else they are faced with unreal circumstances which they do not themselves believe. Another difficulty with the literalist interpretation involves the rich man being bodily and physically in a place of torment and flaming heat immediately after his burial. Do disembodied "souls" in the spirit world have tongues? Now, who would deny that if we could have exhumed the body of the rich man at the very time at which Christ spoke of him that it would have been stone cold in the tomb and possibly in a state of decomposition? If he had a tongue at all it would be in the grave - not in hell!

These are but a few of the difficulties which confront us when we try to take the story of the rich man and Lazarus literally. Many have contended that, by the very words of Jesus, the doctrine of ETERNAL DAMNATION is confirmed and established, and all the so-called fundamentalist preachers thus misapply this parable completely, using it as the basis of belief in eternal punishment - BUT IS IT? Who has ever heard an evangelist explain the meaning of the "purple and linen" in which the rich man was clothed? What explanation has ever been given for the fact that the rich man had "five brethren" and not, say, four or six? What significance is there in "the dogs licking the poor man's sores"? All these significant details, which must have meant something, or else they would not have been included in the story, are never explained by evangelists and are passed over as if they were entirely superfluous, having little or no special meaning. It is my deep conviction that this parable, like all the

parables and teaching of Jesus, is a parable of the Kingdom of God and teaches us KINGDOM TRUTH. That is what Christ meant it to do. It is not instruction of the existence of heaven and hell, or the conditions therein. It is not instruction on the state of the departed. On many occasions the Son of God spoke a parable, thereby conveying spiritual truth as well as prophecy. In this parable both abound!

THE RICH MAN

The parable of the rich man and Lazarus is without question one of the least understood of all the teachings of our Lord. What is its aim? It is a similitude of something; for all the parables are similitudes, even though, like the parables of the prodigal son, and the unjust steward, both of which are in direct connection with this one, they are uttered like simple narratives, always beginning with, "A certain man," or "There was a certain man." Of what, then, is this parable the similitude? Whom does the rich man represent? Who is the poor neglected beggar full of sores, lying at the rich man's gate?

This story was never intended to be Jesus' belief and teaching on heaven and hell, but Jesus was holding up to ridicule all the teaching and spirit of the Pharisees and scribes and doctors of the law. It is real satire - par excellence! In this marvelous story the Holy Spirit bids us behold the power of Jesus' prophetic spirit as His vision scanned the unborn centuries still to emerge from the bosom of time. Behold the power of our God! in whose hand are the nations; He sets them up and knocks them down as if they were tin soldiers. The fact that He foretells the future, fulfilled in detail by the march of events, constitutes the proof of God's reality, of His power, of His omniscience, as well as the fact that He has revealed Himself clearly and unmistakably to man.

Why was the rich man lost, and why was the poor man saved? There was nothing in the position of either that would of necessity open or shut to them the gates of the Kingdom of God. No man was ever lost simply because he was rich, neither was any man ever saved simply because in this world he had been poor and miserable.

Both the rich man and the beggar had passed through life in the position in which it had pleased God to place them, and that position could not be in itself a position of sin; on the contrary, to both were entrusted talents which they were bound to employ for God's service, and to both He had given opportunities to honor and glorify Him. It was not the difference in their earthly position, but the difference in their response to that position, that made the difference between them when they were called into judgment.

Both the connection of the parable, and its particulars throughout, show that its awful warning is addressed to those who in Christ's day enjoyed the greatest privileges. Observe the particulars respecting the rich man. He was one of Abraham's seed, one who even in hell could not forget his election, but still cried, "Father! Abraham." He was "clothed in purple and fine linen, the raiment of the Kingdom, and, as a child of the Kingdom, he fared sumptuously every day." Who is this man? The rich man in this parable represents the Jewish nation, the house of Judah, and particularly their leaders who embody and personify the spirit and character of the nation. This rich man, in torment, calls Abraham, FATHER. Abraham also recognized such a relationship for he speaks to the rich man as SON. "Son, remember..." Here the rich man is seen to be separated from his father, for "In hell (Hades) he lifts up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, FATHER ABRAHAM, have mercy on me...but Abraham said ... SON (Grk., teknon-offspring), between us and you (Grk., YOU PEOPLE) is a GREAT GULF FIXED: so that they

(Grk., the ONES) which would pass from hence to you (Grk., YOU PEOPLE) cannot; neither can they pass that would come from thence.” If we rightly divide the Word of God we will see that a plurality of people is being addressed, rather than a single individual. Clearly, this rich man was of Israel, of the seed of Abraham, and a blessed and highly favored company. The Pharisees boasted of their descent from Abraham and expected to enter Paradise because of that fact.

Purple is the color of royalty. Fine linen stands for righteousness in this instance the righteousness of the law, established by the priests and Levites who, dressed in white linen, officiated in the sacrifices and ceremonies of the nation. The rich man was “clothed in purple and fine linen.” Those who are in purple are rulers. The rich man was a ruler. And Jesus never uttered His parables or sermons concerning someone away off in Siberia or China. He spoke to and of the Jews, the church of His day. Judah was the royal tribe, and purple is the color pertaining to royalty. The kingdom of Judah had the ministry of the priesthood - clothed in fine linen. The whole nation, in fact, was called to be a kingdom of priests unto God (Ex. 19:6). By this language Christ was making His meaning very clear to the Pharisees.

This rich man “fared sumptuously every day.” But this is not talking about natural food. The Jewish nation was the favorite of heaven - rich in the mercies and blessings of the Lord. No nation in the history of time had been so highly favored as the house of Judah. They had the elaborate sacrificial service of the great and glorious temple in Jerusalem. They had the scriptures, the holy law and covenant of Yahweh. They had the oracles of God, the prophets. They were rich in covenants and promises, rich in the word of God that had been delivered to them. Judah was, indeed, a RICH MAN - with the very riches from the hand of God - rich in oil and wine, rich in doctrine, rich in word, rich in history of holy men, rich in ritual and pomp and ceremony. Ah - how rich he was! Paul spoke exultantly of this vast wealth possessed by Judah, saying, “For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertains 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” (Rom. 9:3-5).

The final factor identifying the rich man is the fact that he had “five brothers.” “I pray thee therefore father ABRAHAM, that you would send him to my father’s house: for I have FIVE BRETHREN; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment” (Lk. 16:27-28). He mentions the fact that his brethren were five in number. But why five? If this is not a parable we can hardly see the reason why the number of his brethren should be so definitely enumerated. If it is a parable then the number given is as symbolic, and significant, as any other item in the story. Naturally we ask who are these five brethren. The rich man is a son of ABRAHAM, through Isaac and Jacob, and you have only to read through the lists of the offspring of Abraham to find out who it was that had five brethren. “Now the sons of Jacob were twelve: the sons of Leah; Reuben, Jacob’s first born, and Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Zebulun: the sons of Rachel; Joseph, and Benjamin: and the sons of Bilhah, Rachel’s handmaid; Dan, and Naphtali: and the sons of Zilpah, Leah’s handmaid; Gad, and Asher: these are the sons of Jacob, which were born to him in Padan-aram” (Gen. 35:22-26). This passage plainly reveals that JUDAH had five brethren. Jacob’s first wife was Leah, and of Leah were born Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun. These were all full-blood brothers. Judah was one of Leah’s six sons. He had five brethren! So when this rich man says, “I’ve got five brethren,” it identifies who he is! If this telling detail has no significance for modern evangelists who preach from this parable, let me assure you that it

meant a great deal to those to whom Jesus was speaking, because they knew their history, they held great pride in their ancestry, they knew who their brethren were, they knew exactly who He was talking about! It established to them the identity of the rich man Judah, the southern kingdom of the Jews!

The table laden with rich foods and dainties, at which the rich man dined, reminds us of God's unbounded provision for His people. But Judah's condemnation stemmed largely from his preoccupation with the gifts instead of the Giver. That Judah's blessings became Judah's curses is clear from Rom. 11:9 where the divine pronouncement is recorded: "Let their table become a trap." Was it not Judah's perverted attitude towards the good things God had given them which brought the swift judgment of God against them? The law with its damning glory was but cause for pride to their Pharisaic self-righteousness. What they were, and what they had - their prophets, their kings, and their position led the nation on to its awful fall. It was natural that the Jews, having sole possession of a pure and divine religion, should think themselves the chosen of heaven. But rather than becoming a Kingdom of priests and a blessing to all the nations of the earth as God intended, they despised and hated all who were not favored as they were, and regarded the other nations with contempt. Their spirit was indeed one of extreme exclusiveness. They were the prototype of the Laodicean church who in the book of Revelation is Pharisaic in its boast, "I am RICH ... and have need of nothing" (Rev. 3:17). That utterance embodies in a simple phrase the abominable attitude of the Pharisee towards God and man. It echoes the language of him who thanked "the God within" that he was not as other men, "not even as this publican." Little glimpsed he the truth of his real state, that he was "poor, blind, miserable, and naked" even as the Laodiceans were to be in all their vain self-sufficiency.

Christ's condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees was not an invective tirade against His enemies; for He loved His enemies as He taught that others should. But He saw piety turned into a pretense by the religious teachers of His time. He saw how they shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men and went not in themselves; how they devoured widows' houses and for a pretense made long prayers; how they compassed sea and land to make one proselyte, who, when he was made, was but a child of perdition; how they painfully kept the letter of the law and the traditions of men, while they omitted the weightier matters of judgment, mercy, faith, and love toward God and man; how they loved the uppermost seats in the synagogues and the greetings in the marketplace; how they bound on men burdens that were grievous to bear, while they touched them not with one of their fingers; how they disfigured their faces and put on a sad countenance that they might appear unto men to fast, while they were full of all hatred and hypocrisy. Such insincerity toward God, such degradation of holy office, such wrong done the sacred rights of souls, such blind leading of the blind, such obstruction to the entrance into the Kingdom of God was to Him high crime against all that is holy in heaven and earth. It grieved Him. It was a sight that saddened Him wherever He went as long as He lived. They might call Him a sinner, a sabbath-breaker, a blasphemer, a devil, a mad man; they might dog Him at every step, ply Him with catch questions, try to trap Him, weave a web of conspiracy about Him, stir up the people against Him, incite the fear and jealousy of the civil power, resolve on putting Him to death; all this He could endure with serenity, and utter not a word in self-defense. But the hypocritical religious tyranny of His time was to Him a perpetual grief. They required rebuke; and in His scathing, consuming denunciation of them there must have been in His voice such inimitable pathos and power, and in His face such an expression of sadness, sweetness, and fearlessness as to terrify His foes and sting them into fury as He tore the mask from their depravity.

Thus ends the portrait of the Rich Man!

LAZARUS

Who is the poor neglected beggar full of sores, to whom the very dogs show more pity and kindness than the rich man? The rich man “fared sumptuously every day” while Lazarus was lying at his gate a mass of sores, loathsome and in want, and yet uncared for and unpitied by him who enjoyed so many blessings. Who is this poor, wretched, pathetic, despised man?

The Jews looked upon the heathen nations about them as barbarians and dogs. It seems quite clear therefore that in this parable Lazarus is the people lying at Judah’s gate who are recipients of none of the blessings so lavishly bestowed upon them. In the rich man we see the children of the Kingdom, who as such were clothed in purple and fine linen, rich and increased with goods, daily feasting on the finest of delicacies, contrasted with the heathen world, lost, full of sores, and lacking everything. Lazarus was laid at the rich man’s gate full of sores, which denotes his cast-out and spiritually deficient condition.

“Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores” (Lk. 16:21). A more accurate translation of the phrase, “moreover the dogs,” would be, “the other dogs.” The Greek word translated “moreover” is ALLA which means OTHER and not MOREOVER. My good friend, Elwin Roach, has done exhaustive research on this passage and shares the following enlightening information: Thayer’s Lexicon gives this definition: “alla... derived from ‘alla, neuter of the adjective ‘allos, meaning OTHER THINGS.” Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance also gives this same definition of ALLA. In Lk. 16:21 ALLA is in the NOMINATIVE case, indicating that it is a word that names the subject, and that it belongs to the noun or pronoun that it names. Therefore, the DOGS, as the subject, are named or modified by the word OTHER (the OTHER DOGS). The word OTHER is an article in this case and is an adjective and, like ALL ADJECTIVES in the Greek, it is declined and agrees in gender, number, and case with the word it modifies. In other words, if the noun is in the nominative, plural, and neuter case, then so will the adjective be also. And this is what we have with “OTHER” and “DOGS”. Both words are declined in these three declensions, indicating that “OTHER” definitely belongs to “DOGS” and is its modifier. What is the word saying then? Primarily, for all who cannot follow the grammatical intricacies stated above, it is saying that LAZARUS IS JUST AS MUCH A DOG AS THE ONES LICKING HIS SORES! I am sure that all my readers are aware that dogs will on occasion lick the sores of humans and other animals but most often they are found licking the sores of their own kind - other dogs! Neither Lazarus nor the dogs are, of course, literal dogs, but they serve as figures of the heathen nations surrounding Judah, and without the abundant blessings of God they soothe one another the best way they can, except when they are fighting - as dogs often do. Lazarus was a dog - a Gentile - for he found himself in the dog class.

In this parable Lazarus was both a beggar and a dog - a beggar in his own eyes, but a dog in the eyes of the rich man. Begging in Bible days was always done at the gate of the city where people passed by. To understand the picture presented here let us go back for a moment to an interesting and informative passage of scripture found in Gen. 10:25. “And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg; FOR IN HIS DAYS WAS THE EARTH DIVIDED...” Peleg - or rather, the event associated with his name - is of special interest at this point. “In his days was the earth divided.” Evidently this was a most memorable event, and Eber named his son in commemoration of it. The name “Peleg” means “division.” Almost nothing else is said about Peleg apart from mention of his family line and how long he lived. The fact that the earth was divided in his days seems the only possible item of distinction that

can knowingly be attributed to Peleg himself. The important thing concerns the meaning of this indicated "division of the earth." It is obvious that this division was the division of the peoples that took place beginning with the Tower of Babel. We have such statements as this: "From these were the isles (coasts) of the Gentiles DIVIDED IN THEIR LANDS; and every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations," and again, "These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were THE NATIONS DIVIDED in the earth after the flood" (Gen. 10:5,32).

The descendants of Noah migrated over the whole face of the earth, forming tribe after tribe, city after city, and NATION after NATION. Let all men know that it is the almighty God who is the designer and architect of all the nations in the world. The time periods and localities in which nations flourish have all been pre-arranged by the will of Him who "works ALL THINGS after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. 1:11). The truth of this cannot be made any plainer than it is by Moses in Deut. 32:8: "When the Most High DIVIDED THE NATIONS their inheritance, when HE separated the sons of Adam, HE SET the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Paul refers to this verse when in Acts 17:26-27 he says, "And has made of one blood ALL NATIONS of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and HAS DETERMINED THE TIMES BEFORE APPOINTED, and the BOUNDS OF THEIR HABITATION; that they should seek the Lord."

How clearly the passage quoted above reveals that it was GOD who, from the beginning, set the bounds of habitation (national boundaries) of ALL NATIONS. These boundaries were established in relation to Israel and with a view to their being able to seek after the Lord. While there may yet be a future, and more glorious fulfillment of this, yet it is remarkable that the ancient land of Palestine was originally reserved by the wisdom and goodness of the Lord for the possession of His ancient people and the display of the most stupendous signs and wonders. The theater was small, but wonderfully suited for the convenient observation of the whole human race - at the junction of the two continents of Asia and Africa, and almost in sight of Europe. From this spot as from a common center the reports of God's wonderful works, of His mighty power and awesome glory, of the glad tidings of salvation through the obedience, suffering and resurrection of His glorious Son, of the wonder filled outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost as the faithful disciples of Jesus were set ablaze by the life and power of their glorified Lord, might be rapidly and easily wafted to every part of the globe. Yes, God set the bounds of habitation for all nations and set the children of Israel at the crossroads, to the end that ALL NATIONS should seek after the Lord. Out of Israel came Christ; out of Christ has come the church, His bride; out of the church shall come the manchild, the holy sons of God destined to bring deliverance to the whole creation that the word promised to father Abraham might be fulfilled: "And in your seed shall ALL THE NATIONS OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED" (Gen. 22:18). ALL NATIONS shall be blessed! From the dawn of human history the mighty God not only designed the nations of men to inhabit this planet - He also planned and purposed to bless them - each and every one of them!

Without doubt Lazarus represented the neighbor kingdoms in Asia, Africa and Europe, right at Judah's gate, without promise, without covenant, without hope, without Christ, without God in the world. It is interesting to note that LAZARUS is the Greek form of the Hebrew name ELEAZAR meaning "he whom God helps," or "whom God aids." The Greek word for "name" is ONOMA, and not only means "a name," but also carries the thought of ONE POSSESSING A CERTAIN CHARACTER. Putting this all together the passage could well be translated, "There was a certain begging one who POSSESSED THE CHARACTER OF NEEDING GOD'S AID."

Stand with me for a moment while with bowed head and reverent heart we behold a scene which illustrates in tones clear and vibrant the sacred key contained in the remarkable name of this beggar, Lazarus. Our Lord Jesus Christ in the course of His preaching comes into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. A very remarkable people dwelt there. The Syrophenician were directly descended from those who had invented letters. The first written language we know anything about is Phoenician. But they were heathen; they were very enterprising; they were renowned for their industries, and their magnificent houses, and their wonderful enthusiasm in everything they undertook; but, like the ancient Greeks, with the highest culture, and the most extensive commerce, and great valor on sea and land, they were debased idolaters. When the people of Israel came into possession of the land of Israel, they halted in their work, and did not drive these heathen out, and there never was a time when they were not a thorn in the side of Israel. The Philistines, the Phoenicians, and all that bordered upon the sea were a perpetual curse to Israel and a defilement to the land. They were held in great contempt and abhorrence!

Now a remarkable thing about Jesus going into such quarters as these is this, that He never went beyond the borders of Palestine to preach His Gospel; so far as we can tell, not a step. Some contend that He did, but their information is rooted in legend and fable, not in the Word of God. So Jesus came to the borders of Tyre and Sidon. He came to His own (Judah, for He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah), and His own received Him not, and He came in these three years to minister to His own people, and to die, first for Israel, and then for the world. Now the Israelite had the conception that all nations outside were Gentile heathen outcasts, that God would not listen to them. Coming into the borders of Tyre and Sidon a woman, who evidently was a woman of station, is attracted by the splendor of Christ. This woman was a Gentile, for it says she was a woman of Canaan. But she beholds the Christ, His love, His magnanimity, His great divine personality goes out as He speaks to the multitudes there, and proclaims that He Himself has the power to give rest to the weary, to give salvation to the sinful, healing to the sick, and out of the depths of despair to guide all humanity into the paths of faith, and hope, and life, and love that lead to heaven here, and heaven above.

In that wonderful instant this woman begins to pray to Him. She has a daughter that has a devil, and she is emboldened to ask for healing for her daughter. Oh, I see Him standing there, and He looks at her with great compassion, and yet He utters words that are just the bitterest that can come from His divine lips. He looks at her, and she is pleading, "Oh Lord, you will not send me away. You have healed so many; you have saved so many; please don't send me away." He looks at her and He says these words: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and He walks right off. There she is, and He is gone. Now she is going to give up praying surely. She has gone in vain to Him; she has gone in vain to the apostles, and she has come back to Him, and she is told that He is not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Now, she is a Canaanite; she belongs to that accursed race, and, almost in despair, she looks at His retreating figure. Oh, how hard it is! How hard that answer is!

This woman did not know how to stop praying. She had been to Christ, and to the apostles, and she goes after Christ the second time, and always finds a repulse. Yet she goes after Him again. I like to see that woman. Now, you watch what she says this time. This time she goes right off, and sees where her error has been. She goes after Him, and she seeks Him until she finds Him, and then she falls at His feet; and for the first time she does that which gets her an answer to her prayer - she worships Him. Notice her prayer. The first prayer was a long one, a very long one, and this prayer is a totally different one. It is a very short one. "Then came she and worshipped Him, saying, LORD, HELP ME." When she worships Him

her prayer comes right down to three words. What are they? When she worships Him, she says, "Lord, help me!" And how does He answer her? Oh, how mysterious it is; the most cruel answer that could come from human lips seem to come from His lips that day. There she is; she is worshipping Him. She says, "Lord, help me." And now the great Lord raises Himself, and points down at her, and says, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs." How many American women would go on praying after that? I can imagine how you would start up and say, "I thought you were a kind man. I thought you were God, but you call me a dog, I am not a dog, Sir. I am an American lady. I have rights. You are discriminating against me because of my race. You are a male chauvinist pig!" Every bit of the devil of pride and feminism would be aroused. How the eyes would flash hell-fire, and the teeth clench, and the face become pale with passion, and the heart cry out for revenge, if you, oh women of America, were refused bread and called "a dog!" I do not believe there are a dozen women upon God's earth that would stand that, and I tell you that the greatness of this woman's faith is measured by just that fact, that she lay there at Christ's feet, and she heard Him lift His voice and point His hand, and say, "You dog!" and go off, and she still loved Him.

Now, did she stop praying? Not a bit of it. That woman went right after Him quickly. She went to His feet, and she made her last appeal, and I think it one of the most touching things in all the story of prevailing prayer in the scripture. All her heathen pride has gone. She cannot give up the hope that is bound up in her. She hears Him call her, even in the words that repel her, and she goes to His feet, and she says: "Lord, that is true; I am only a dog; but the little dogs" (for that is the word in Greek - the little dogs, the wee little dogs) "eat from the crumbs that fall from their master's table, and I will take the place of a dog, but I want this crumb. Help me; help my devil-possessed daughter. Give me that crumb." Now, the Lord looks up, and now He speaks the words that ring through the ages. "O woman" - His own heart is touched to the deepest depths by her humility - "O woman, great is your faith! It has stood all these testings; it has stood all My hard answers, all My silence, all the apostles' reproaching, all of My driving you down and back; and now you are willing to take the place of a dog. YOU SHALL TAKE THE PLACE OF MY OWN DAUGHTER. O woman, great is your faith: be it unto you even as you will." She willed her daughter's deliverance from the devil that grievously vexed her, and her daughter was delivered in that same hour.

Lazarus means, "Whom God helps." And the plaintive cry of this Canaanite woman, at the very border of the land of Israel, in all her spiritual poverty and ethnic loathsomeness was, "Lord, HELP ME!" What could be a greater commentary on the true meaning of the parable of the rich man and Lazarus than the expressions found in this remarkable story. When you remember the expressions, "the dogs," and, "the crumbs which fall from the master's table," these parallel precisely the expressions found in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. "And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: the other dogs came and licked his sores." Lazarus' association with the dogs and his lying at the rich man's gate, fed upon crumbs that fell from his table, places him quite convincingly in both the "dog" class and the "Gentile" class. In the encounter with the Canaanite woman it was the "dogs" that ate the crumbs, while in the parable of the rich man it is Lazarus who eats the crumbs. How beautifully this confirms to our understanding Lazarus' identity with the "dogs." The "dogs" of that day were the non-Jewish pagans, and this woman was a Canaanite, the vilest of the vile. Lazarus lay at the rich man's "gate," and this woman encountered the Lord at the "border" of the land of Israel. How plainer can language be! As to religion, all that the nations had of truth and reality were the crumbs that fell from the Jewish table. The heathen had no prophet; they had no scripture revealed by the Holy Spirit; they had no great temple service instituted by the God of heaven; they had no covenant with the true and living God; but in

Eph. 2:11-12 Paul calls the saints to remember that they being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, at that time they were:

1. Without Christ
2. Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel (the house of Israel, many nations)
3. Strangers (foreigners; aliens) from the covenants of promise
4. Having no hope
5. Without God in the world.

Some who read these lines will concur that the rich man is Judah, but will insist that Lazarus represents the gentilized ten-tribed house of Israel which was carried away by Assyria, whom they believe had, by the time of Christ, migrated and settled in the territories and nations around the Mediterranean Sea - Italy, Greece, Asia Minor, etc. There is, however, strong evidence against such a concept. First, the peoples inhabiting the nations of the Mediterranean area at that time were ancient peoples whose origins were historically known - and the Greeks and Romans, among others, definitely were NOT estranged Israelites! There is no basis in historical fact for such a notion. Both the secular historical and scriptural evidence place the "lost ten tribes" much farther away than that - as we shall see later. The second, and more damaging evidence against such teaching, is contained right within the parable of the rich man and Lazarus itself. Now pay close attention! The rich man is Judah. The rich man begged of Abraham, "I pray, therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham said unto him, **THEY HAVE MOSES AND THE PROPHETS; let them hear them**" (Lk. 16:27-29). Judah's five brethren were: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Issachar and Zebulun. Now, of these brethren four - Reuben, Simeon, Issachar and Zebulun - were part of the northern kingdom of Israel which had been dispersed; they were, in fact, four out of ten of the "lost tribes"! Can it not be clearly understood that as tribes of the northern kingdom - if ten-tribed Israel be Lazarus - these four brothers would be **INCLUDED IN LAZARUS AND ALREADY IN ABRAHAM'S BOSOM!** Obviously, no ministry would be needed to save these four brothers from the fate of the rich man. And, if Lazarus is prohibited from going to these brothers, while at the same time he is the brothers, do we not encounter a most remarkable absurdity! There is something wrong with such a faulty theology as that, for it is certain that if four of the rich man's brothers were confronting him from Abraham's bosom in the person of Lazarus, he would recognize them; and our Lord would not manifest such glaring ignorance as to set forth in detail the rich man's pleas for his brethren who were already saved, and with whom he was, even then, conversing! This is a ludicrous misapprehension which can only produce confusion.

THE DEATHS OF THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried. And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom" (Lk. 16:22-23). The language is highly symbolic and the deaths of both the rich man (Judah) and the beggar (the nations) represent a fundamental change in their condition and status. It does not say that Lazarus was buried - it says that Lazarus was carried to the bosom of Abraham but the rich man was buried, never to become the favored nation of God in their own right again. I want to emphasize this, because it is a very essential point. Lazarus was never buried, he was carried away to a bosom. But the rich man, it says, died **AND WAS BURIED**. Never again would the kingdom of Judah become the chosen nation of the Lord in their own right. Not until Judah is

joined unto the Lord and His sanctified people in Christ Jesus will they ever be recognized as the people of God.

But what does this death of the rich man and Lazarus mean? We must travel back in our consciousness to the time in which our Lord related this parable and the tremendous events then transpiring. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world brought a dispensational and spiritual change not only for Israel, but for every nation and people on the face of the earth. It is written, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven" (I Cor. 15:45,47). Can the natural mind ever fathom the depths of the eternal truth that there has never been in the history of the world but two men? There is a deep and hidden meaning in the words, "the first man Adam" and "the last Adam." The natural mind would conclude that, if there were two Adams coming four millenniums apart, the first of these being the first Adam, it would logically follow that the next Adam would be the second Adam. The Lord Jesus Christ is here called the last Adam. But he who is called the first Adam is also called the first man. And He who is called the last Adam is also called the second man. The first Adam is the first man, but the last Adam is the second man, and the second man is also the last man. These simple statements, which on the surface seem so insignificant and scarcely worth our notice, are in fact pregnant with meaning, and full of wisdom and understanding. The first Adam is said to be the first man. The last Adam is declared to be the second man. If the second man is also the last Adam, He is also the last man. Now if the first Adam is the first man, it would of necessity follow that there were no men on earth before him, for he was the first. And if the last Adam is the second man, then there were no men on earth between the first Adam and the last Adam, for the last Adam is the second man, and there can be no men between the first man and the second man. If there were even one other man between the first man and the second man, obviously the second man could not BE the second man; he would be the third man, the one hundredth man, or the five billionth man. And since the second man is also the LAST MAN, there can not have been any men since Him, for if others have followed Him, He is not then the last man. So then, the first man was the first man, the second man was the second man, and the second man is the last man, so that there have been only TWO MEN who have ever lived upon this planet - Adam and Jesus Christ! There were none before Adam, none between Adam and Christ, and none since Jesus Christ. Only two men. No more. No less. These simple statements portray as nothing else can the great truth that all men who have ever lived ARE INCLUDED IN THESE TWO MEN. These two men are corporate men, many-membered men. And since all men are contained in these two men, what happens to these two men happen to us ALL. Let our minds grasp the significant truth that when the first man sinned we all sinned, for we were, each and every one of us, genetically, substantially, and experientially right there in him. The same death that passed upon him because of his sin passed likewise upon us all, even to the last man of Adam's race, for all have sinned.

Now God has declared that our Lord Jesus Christ, the second man, should be both the last Adam and the last man. I cannot explain how divine power can accomplish such wonders, but God has decreed that all men of all ages should be included in Him. God has gathered up all the members of Adam's sinful race out of all ages past, out of the present, and out of all ages yet to come and included them ALL in Christ, the last Adam. Therefore, by one divine and omnipotent stroke God has included all men in His Son, declaring Him to be the last Adam and the last man, the end of the old Adamic creation. God, almighty and omnipotent, gathered up every tribe and tongue and people and race and nation and without either their knowledge or consent, included them in Christ, the last Adam, even as He included them in the first Adam; and, having included them in the last Adam, He crucified Him and them in Him.

May our minds be enlarged by the quickening of God's blessed Spirit of truth that we may comprehend in the wisdom of God how this last Adam included in Himself all the people and nations that had sprung out of old Adam, putting them all out of the way, nailing them to His cross, crucifying the W-H-O-L-E W-O-R-L-D in His Son.

Let all who now read this message know assuredly that, when our Lord Jesus Christ was crucified and died, both the rich man and Lazarus died WITH HIM and IN HIM! A great change came about after the death of Jesus Christ upon the cross. The old dispensation passed away for both the rich man and the beggar, and they both walked up on the other side of Calvary under new conditions. The language of the apostle Paul might clarify this thought of dying as brought to view in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. In pointing out how by the death of Jesus men are delivered from the old conditions and claims of the law to serve God in newness of spirit in resurrection life, Paul explained, "But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of the letter (Rom. 7:6). In other words, the rich man and Lazarus both were dead to the conditions that existed under the old dispensation before Calvary, and they woke up to the new conditions ushered in via the unfolding of God's redemptive processes by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Under these new conditions, the Jew who had lived so sumptuously every day before the days of Calvary, awoke to find himself subject to a new redemptive process, namely, divine correction - buried in the torments of hell, persecuted, cast out, despised. The beggar, on the other hand, had arisen to the position formerly occupied by the sumptuous Jew, for he is now found in Christ, the seed of Abraham - in the bosom of Abraham!

The rich man "lift up his eyes in hell," says the Word of the Lord. The Greek word translated "hell" is HADES. Concerning the literal meaning of the word HADES there can be no doubt. It comes from the Greek A(I)DES. The "a" is a prefix which is equivalent to our "un-" and the stem "-id" means perceive. Thus we have UN-PERCEIVE or imperceptible; the unseen. That is Hades - the unseen world, the unknown realm. Our English word hell is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word "hillan" or 'helan," meaning a cavern, anciently denoting a concealed or UNSEEN place. In parts of England men still say, "I plan to hell my potatoes," meaning to bury them in a hole or pit, that is, a covered place, out of sight. And in the old days a young couple seeking to be alone, sought a hell, a place where they could make love without being seen by prying eyes. The rich man went to hell, into the unseen, entering upon a new condition which he could not in a million years have anticipated, nor would he have sought or desired it. It is a land of shadows, of unrealities, of clouds and mists, of whispers and mystery. What metaphors could more appropriately or adequately describe the condition of the Jews throughout the past two millenniums of their wretched, hunted, haunted, driven, excluded, rejected, outcast, despised and hated Diaspora among the nations of earth! The miserable Ghettos of Europe are certainly vivid examples of the "hell" in which the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torment!

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

There is an old Negro spiritual, the chorus of which concludes its message with the lyrics, "Rock-a-ma-soul in the Bosom of Abraham," repeated several times for emphasis. This spiritual reflects the traditional idea that Abraham's bosom is a figurative expression meaning heaven as the blissful and eternal abode of the saved. Most evangelists in the churches today graphically describe how the rich man died and went to hell, whereas the beggar died and went to heaven. Now, where, I ask, in the Bible is there any warrant for saying that heaven is "Abraham's bosom"? If the popular preachers are right and heaven is Abraham's bosom, then

may I be permitted to ask - What happened to righteous departed who died in the ages before Abraham? What about Abel, Seth, Enoch and Noah? Where did they go? Apparently heaven was not then open to receive visitors!

The expression "in Abraham's bosom" signifies being in the favor and in the place of honor of Abraham. The expression is borrowed from the custom of Christ's day of speaking of the honored guest who reclined nearest the host as reclining on his bosom. The word bosom is used 41 times in the Bible and always means the same thing - the area of the chest or breast of the human being. Anything one embraces is "in the bosom." When I take my wife and wrap my arms about her and hold her close, I take her into my bosom. Isaiah tells us that the Saviour will carry the lambs in His bosom, indicating a close, personal relationship. The people of the East reclined at meals. By this arrangement, the head of one person was brought almost into the bosom of the person who lay above him, and the guests were arranged so as to bring the most honored nearest to the host. At the "last supper" of Jesus Christ, John was leaning on Jesus' bosom (Jn. 13:23) - that is, he was reclining next to Jesus, in the most honored position, indicative of the close, personal relationship that existed between Jesus and John, for John is mentioned in the Bible as that disciple "whom Jesus loved." Christ is in the bosom of the Father; He possesses the closest intimacy with the Father. Even today when we wish to speak of those especially intimate with us, we call them "bosom friends." This expression has come down to us from those earlier days. Because of the association of the bosom with the arrangement of eating at a meal, we get the idea of a banquet. Lazarus, an ulcerated and crippled beggar, who had lain at the rich man's gate, contented with the scraps thrown out to him, was translated to a feast, and he had the most intimate place among all the guests, reclining on the hosts' (Abraham's) bosom. It means he was carried into a close, personal relationship WITH ABRAHAM! So the Jews had for centuries great honors and benefits bestowed upon them as the chosen of God for Abraham's sake, but now this place of honor and blessing would be given to those people represented by Lazarus.

God made great promises to Abraham. You can read them in the book of Genesis. He was to become "a great nation." He was to become "a multitude of nations." God said, "Kings shall come of you." Abraham's posterity were to emigrate and colonize and "spread abroad to the west, the east, the north, and the south." Included in these gracious promises to the founding father of God's chosen people was the promise that his "seed" would "bless all nations."

Take great care, my beloved, to notice the nature of the promises and blessings. The carnal mind which is enmity against God, the God who is spirit and life and speaks a spiritual language, is ever eager to grasp the divine and heavenly promises of God and apply them on the low plane of the natural and the physical. That we might better comprehend the deep spiritual implications of God's wonderful promises to Abraham, the inspired apostle wrote, "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" (Rom. 15:8). In words clear and penetrating Paul shows that one of the primary purposes of Christ's ministry, His death, and His resurrection was to "confirm the PROMISES made unto the fathers." The word "confirm" is from the Greek BEBAIOO meaning "to make strong, firm, or sure." Jesus came for the express purpose of MAKING SURE or GUARANTEEING the fulfillment of all the promises made to the fathers, that is, the INHERITANCE promised by God. The question follows - WHO were the fathers, and WHAT are the promises? "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Son Jesus" (Acts 3:13). "I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Acts 7:32). You

will notice from reading these passages that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the fathers. When the rich man in the parable addressed Abraham, he called him Father Abraham, indicating that he counted himself his son, or as belonging to Abraham's seed.

But what are the promises? We must now prepare to follow into deeper waters. You will not be able to hear with natural ears nor understand with natural minds the words that flow from the anointed pen of the apostle Paul when he writes, "that the BLESSING OF ABRAHAM might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the PROMISE OF THE S-P-I-R-I-T through faith" (Gal. 3:14). You must beseech God to open the eyes of your understanding that you might comprehend spiritual realities, for I declare unto you that reading back through the promises of God to Abraham, aided only by the understanding of the natural mind, you will never find any place in the Old Testament where God promised Abraham THE SPIRIT! Apparently, no promise of the Spirit was ever given to father Abraham. Land, yes! Posterity, yes! Blessing, yes! Greatness, yes! But - the SPIRIT?

Let us examine briefly but one of the remarkable promises made to father Abraham. In Gen. 13:15 we read, "For all the land which you see, to you will I give it, and to your seed FOREVER." If you will read this promise with the illumination of the Spirit you will see that it is something beyond a piece of real estate that God promises to Abraham. You see, the promise of the land is given both to Abraham and his seed F-O-R-E-V-E-R. This is clearly one of the first direct promises made by God to man in which He promises man ETERNAL LIFE. For the only way that Abraham himself, or his seed, can possess the land forever is to first of all possess eternal life! This is not merely the promise of a land for Abraham's descendants, but the promise to Abraham personally, and to his descendants of ETERNAL INHERITANCE!

Did Abraham inherit this promise? Hear the words of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, in Acts 7:2-5: "Men and brethren and fathers, hearken: the God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and come into a land which I will show you ... and He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet He PROMISED that He would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Note that God gave Abraham no inheritance (at that time) in the land - but promised that He would give it to him AFTERWARD. Can we not see by this that Abraham never received the promised inheritance during his lifetime. Yet the land was promised to him. And so we read, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should AFTER receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. These ALL DIED in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them AFAR OFF, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them..." (Heb. 11:8-9).

The promise of eternal inheritance, incorporating within itself the necessity for everlasting life, is the promise made to Abraham! The fact of eternal life is implicit in the promise of eternal inheritance. It is a matter of simple reason that leads to the conclusion that one can only inherit something forever if he is able to live forever. All who go by way of the grave leave their inheritance to their heirs. Jesus came to CONFIRM this promise! In pleading his case before king Agrippa the apostle Paul eloquently elaborated on this very truth, declaring, "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of THE PROMISE made of God unto our fathers: unto which our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing

incredible with you, that God should RAISE THE DEAD? Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue ... saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that He should be the first that should RISE FROM THE DEAD, and should show light unto the people (of Israel), and to the Gentiles” (Acts 26:6-8, 22-23).

Consider now the remarkable statement of Jesus found in Jn. 10:7-10. ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.’ The man Jesus stood one day in the center of the religious world and made the astonishing statement, “ALL that ever came before Me are thieves and robbers.” Did He not take into consideration Abel, who “by faith brought God a better and more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, because of which it was testified of him that he was righteous - and God bore witness by accepting and acknowledging his gifts. And though he died, yet he is still speaking” (Heb. 11:4). Did He not take into consideration Noah, that preacher of righteousness, that man perfect in his generation, who “being forewarned of God concerning events of which as yet there was no visible sign, took heed and diligently and reverently constructed and prepared an ark for the deliverance of his own family. By this he passed judgment and sentence on the world’s unbelief and became an heir and possessor of righteousness” (Heb. 11:7). Did He not take into consideration that great man of faith, Abraham, who “when he was called, obeyed and went forth to a place which he was destined to receive as an inheritance” (Heb. 11:8). Did He not take into consideration that mighty man, Moses, who “when he had grown to maturity and become great, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, because he preferred rather to share the oppression and bear the shame of the people of God than to have the fleeting enjoyment of sin. He considered the contempt and abuse and shame borne for Christ to be greater wealth than all the treasures of Egypt, for he looked forward and away to the reward. By faith he left Egypt behind him ... urged on by faith the people crossed the Red Sea as though on dry land” (Heb. 11:24-29). When Jesus uttered these extraordinary, audacious words, “ALL who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers,” did He not know of all the patriarchs and prophets, and men of faith and exploits? Yes He did! Furthermore, when Jesus was on earth there was already here Hinduism, Buddhism, and all the Eastern religions, and the founders of them. All of those were before Him. Can we believe that Jesus was calling all these good men THIEVES and ROBBERS?

The Jews were greatly offended when Jesus said that HE was the door to life and ALL who came before Him were thieves and robbers, and the thief comes only to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. They understood not the words that He spoke unto them. Oh how good it would be if God’s dear people would only seek to understand the vital message contained in the words which fell that day from the anointed lips of Jesus the Christ! To those who can receive it, our Lord was saying that ANY MAN OR ANY MESSAGE THAT BRINGS TO MANKIND ANY THING BUT LIFE IS A THIEF AND A ROBBER! All who came before Jesus were thieves and robbers because the revelation and message they bore LED TO DEATH. They gave mankind great teachings, inspiring philosophies, wonderful laws and valuable precepts, but not one of them possessed eternal, incorruptible life, and not one of them could minister that life to those to whom they were sent. Many centuries ago the apostle Paul penned an inspired assertion when writing to the saints at Corinth he said, “For HE must reign, until HE has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is DEATH” (I Cor. 15:25-26). Death is not a friend, as the preachers of Babylon are wont to tell us. The greatest enemy of mankind is still DEATH. And good men, holy men, great men like Abraham and Moses and

David, men who heard the voice of God and by faith did exploits in their generation, DIED AND PASSED INTO CORRUPTION. The Holy Spirit witnesses with absolute certainty that "These ALL DIED in faith, not having received the promises" (Heb. 11:13). Jesus looked at all these men with their message and ministry and works and saw that not one possessed life or the ability to impart life into mankind. They all, in very fact, deprived mankind of the most precious gift of all - life! The law that came by Moses was a ministry of death, and the message of every other holy man fell short of life, incorruption and immortality. Jesus came bearing a truth, a reality, a power never before possessed by any man who came before Him. He came with LIFE, eternal life, incorruptible life, abundant life! Life enough for Himself and all mankind! Confucius is dead; Buddha is dead; Moses is dead. I have stood by the tomb of David on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and by the tombs of other great men and I testify that they are both dead and buried and their sepulchers are with us to this day. But Jesus Christ is alive, and all who believe on Him are transformed by His Spirit. There is a coming forth from the tomb of a new kind of life and a new kind of experience which we have not known before. Unto quickened men today Jesus is speaking these magnificent words: "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever live and believes in Me shall NEVER DIE. Do you believe this?" (Jn. 11:25-26).

Jesus came to confirm the promise made to the fathers, the promise of eternal life, and thereby eternal inheritance, by Himself tasting death for every man, and becoming the FIRST TO RISE FROM THE DEAD in immortality and incorruption, never to die anymore! Jesus indeed came to confirm - MAKE POSSIBLE - the fulfillment of the promise. "And for this cause He is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death ... they which are called might receive the promise of ETERNAL INHERITANCE" (Heb. 9:15). It seems to me that to comment on a passage like this would be to do it an injustice, for the unimpaired clarity of its meaning transcends the eloquence of men. Yet be it known to all men that just as eternal inheritance demands eternal life, so does eternal life necessitate the effective work of the ETERNAL SPIRIT, for Jesus Christ was raised from the dead by the Spirit of the Father, and if the Spirit of Him that raised Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you (Rom. 8:11).

It is important to understand that the divine plan of God in redemption begins with Abraham. Before Abraham, God dealt with several important individuals. But God did not deal with them in the light of His ultimate and eternal purpose, only in relation to the time in which they themselves lived. Abel was a righteous man and offered sacrifices in accord with the will of God, but he offered for himself alone. He was not specially chosen in relation to the ultimate and eternal purpose of God. Enoch, too, walked with God, but only in an individual walk. In Noah's day all mankind was living in the depths of corruption, but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord and survived the deluge, but yet we do not find that he was chosen or called in relation to the ultimate and eternal purpose of God, but only in relation to the situation and need of his own day.

But it is when we come to Abraham that we encounter the first example of a man specially chosen of God with the future in mind - the eternal purpose of God in consideration. This is why we say that the divine plan of redemption begins to be worked out with Abraham. When Jesus came to confirm and ratify with His own blood the promises to the Fathers of eternal inheritance, it is not said that He took upon Him the seed of Adam - but "He took on Him the seed of ABRAHAM" (Heb. 2:16). He came not as Adam's "seed," but as Abraham's "seed." All the promises of God which embody the redemptive and eternal plan and purpose of God were made to two specially called and chosen people - Abraham and his "seed" (Gal. 3:16).

Jesus did not come to confirm the promises made to Noah, or to Enoch, or to Abel. He came to confirm the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So everything begins with Abraham; he is the starting point of everything in the redemptive and eternal purposes of God.

There is neither time nor space to examine the many facets and ramifications of God's promises to Abraham, but you can read of them in the book of Genesis and ask God for wisdom and understanding. He was to become "a great nation." He was to become "a multitude of nations." God said, "Kings shall come of you." Abraham's posterity were to emigrate and colonize and "spread abroad to the west, the east, the north, and the south." Abraham was not only to have a multiplicity of seed or offspring, but one particular "seed" through whom ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH WOULD BE BLESSED. This singular seed "is Christ" and yet it is a corporate seed composed of many members - the sons of God (Gal. 3:16; 1 Cor. 12:12). When Abraham received these staggering promises, what did he do? He believed them. "...to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all; (as it is written, I have made you a father of many nations,) before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickens the dead, and calls those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall your seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:16-21).

Abraham was persuaded of the promises and EMBRACED THEM (Heb. 11:13). Now, any thing that a person embraces is in his bosom. This is what is meant by Abraham's bosom - the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant and the gracious promises which God made to him and his descendants! To be in Abraham's bosom is to be like him in heart and faith and to embrace, with him, the promises which he saw afar off - the promises of his covenant-keeping God who had sworn that He would give him a "land"; that the land would be given to him and to his "seed"; that this inheritance would be to him and to his seed FOREVER; that he would become a great nation and a company of nations; that in him and his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed; that his seed would become not only as the dust of the earth, but as the stars of heaven - a glory and dominion extending to the whole earth and far beyond to the eternal vastnesses of the unbounded universe, both earthly and heavenly, terrestrial and celestial, natural and spiritual! To be in Abraham's bosom is to be "embraced" by the Abrahamic covenant, being brought into close, personal relationship with Abraham as a recipient of the promises! It means to be an Israelite, indeed!

ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

(continued)

The Bible is a book written, under full inspiration of the Holy Spirit, by Israel, to Israel, and chiefly concerning Israel. But before we can correctly apply it, we must know who Israel actually is. This knowledge, sad to state, has been lost by the church of our day. So before we can know the full import of the message and its far-reaching consequences, we must first identify these who are God's chosen race.

It is a well established scriptural fact that Jacob's name was changed to Israel, meaning "as a prince thou hast power with God," and that in later years the twelve tribes established by his twelve sons became known as Israel, the twelve-tribed nation. Many people who have some understanding of the Bible know that under Saul, David, and Solomon the people of Israel existed as twelve tribes, each with a territory of land assigned to it. The tribe of Levi was actually the thirteenth tribe, but it had no separate inheritance. (Two tribes came from Joseph through his sons Ephraim and Manasseh.) Israel at that time existed as one nation under God. Immediately following king Solomon's death his son Rehoboam ascended the throne. Because of his oppressive taxation, ten of the tribes rebelled, forming a separate nation. Thus in one day ten of the twelve tribes of Israel broke away forever from the rule of king Rehoboam and the house of David. They made Jeroboam, of the tribe of Ephraim, their king. In his kingdom was all the land northward from Bethel to Dan, and also all the tribes on the east of the river Jordan. His kingdom being the larger, was called Israel; but it was also called "the kingdom of the Ten Tribes," and because Ephraim was its leading tribe, it was often spoken of as "the land of Ephraim." Under Omri, the sixth king of the northern tribes, the capital city was moved to Samaria. From that time onward the northern kingdom was also called "Samaria." When Rehoboam saw that he had lost his kingdom, he rode in his chariot quickly to Jerusalem, where the people were his friends; and there he ruled as king, but only over the tribe of Judah and as much of Benjamin as was south of Bethel. Rehoboam ruled over the mountain country on the west of the Dead Sea, but he had no control over the Philistine cities on the plain along the Mediterranean. So the kingdom of Judah, as it was called, was less than one third the size of the kingdom of Israel, or the Ten Tribes.

The northern kingdom of the house of Israel endured for around 250 years and was ruled by 19 wicked kings from 9 different families. This northern kingdom engaged in the most depraved and degrading idolatrous worship throughout this entire period of time. Not one of the kings was a godly man, and the history of the royal families was filled with tragedy. For generations God pled with stiff-necked, rebellious ten-tribed Israel. Because of their exceeding wickedness God decreed that He would send them into captivity and remove them from before Him. "For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; until the Lord removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day (written about 620 B.C.)." It is a fact of history that the northern ten tribes, with their capital city in Samaria, were utterly decimated, completely overpowered, the kingdom destroyed, and the inhabitants of the land transported into captivity. It was in the years 721-718 B.C. that the house of Israel was conquered and its people driven out of their land—out of their homes and cities—and carried captives to Assyria, on the southern shores of the Caspian Sea. And then...LOST FROM VIEW! Now notice Isa. 8:17: "And I will wait upon the Lord, THAT HIDETH HIS FACE FROM THE HOUSE OF JACOB." This applies to the house of Israel—the ten-tribed kingdom—who were cut off from the presence of God. They consequently lost not only the knowledge of their identity, but the knowledge of the true God, and the true religion.

As surely as it was GOD, omnipotent, omniscient and immutable, who sent the house of Israel into captivity, so is it GOD in His almighty faithfulness who watches over the descendants of Abraham to fulfill in them all His purposes and promises. George Hawtin has ably written, "The ten tribes of the house of Israel had been carried away into Assyrian captivity more than one hundred years when Jeremiah gave the prophecy I shall now quote. The... tribes of the house of Judah were on the very eve of their Babylonian captivity when the weeping prophet Jeremiah called on eight everlasting witnesses to attest God's faithfulness to His covenant,

‘Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is His name: If those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever. Thus saith the Lord; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord’ (Jer. 31:35-37). Then in chapter 33:23 he continues with these words: ‘Moreover the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying, Considerest thou not what this people have spoken, saying, The two families which the Lord hath chosen, He hath even cast them off? Thus they have despised My people that they should be no more a nation before them. Thus saith the Lord; If My covenant be not with day and night, and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David My servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be the rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them.’

“Eight unimpeachable witnesses to God’s covenant with His earthly people are called upon here to bear witness—the sun, the moon, the stars, the heavens, the earth, the sea, the day and the night. As long as these continue, the Almighty declares, so also will His covenant continue which He made with Abraham and with his seed, which Jeremiah identifies as the two families which the Lord has chosen (vs. 24). The two families are the house of Israel, consisting of the ten tribes, and the house of Judah, consisting of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin.

“If the rainbow, appearing occasionally in the cloud was to be an everlasting witness that the earth would nevermore be destroyed by a flood, what shall we say of these eight ever present witnesses that are about us, reminding us continually, both by day and by night, that His covenant with the seed of Abraham can never fail. Cast your eyes heavenward by day, O man, and you will see the fiery witness of the sun as he smiles the message: ‘God will never forget His covenant with His people.’ Lift up your eyes to behold the magnificent heavens at night, for her innumerable lights give the assurance, ‘The Lord has remembered His covenant with Abraham and his seed forever.’ Praise Him, oh ye sun and moon! Praise Him, all ye stars of light! Praise Him, oh ye heavens above, that His promise shall endure while lights do shine and be steadfast while they remain unaltered and unhindered. His promises abide unswayed and unsullied by the failures of carnal man, whose unbelief momentarily hides His face from theirs. Let him that rideth upon the sea remember forever that her mighty waves, crashing with violence upon rock and shore, call with their ever rising and falling that, while her waters fill the seas, God’s covenant with His people abideth sure. Let every farmer who plows the earth and every miner who digs for treasure in the bowels thereof remember the covenant of the Lord, for every grain of wheat that comes from the farmer’s plowing, each lump of coal or nugget of gold that comes from the miner’s digging, bears witness with its silent voice that God’s covenant with Abraham and his seed is standing sure, and while earth and things therein endure, so also will His covenant endure. Thus saith God, ‘While sun and moon and stars endure, My covenant shall endure.’ When these shall be no more, covenants will be needed no more at all”—end quote.

From the time of the captivity of the house of Israel in 721 B.C. unto this day, the ten tribes, to whom God made many wonderful and specific promises, completely separate and apart from His promises given to the house of Judah, have been known as the lost tribes of Israel. But they are not lost! God would not be God if they were not at this very moment fulfilling every detail of His covenant with them even though they be blind to their own identity. Somewhere upon the earth today the dispersed families of Abraham’s seed exist, both the

unbelieving house of Judah and the rebellious house of Israel. The opinion of Jewish scholars respecting the "lost tribes" is most interesting. I quote from the Jewish Chronicle: "The fate of the Lost Ten Tribes is a mystery which has a peculiar fascination for some minds. While not a link is missing of the historical chain so far as the remnant of the House of Judah is concerned, the Israelites, who are subjugated by the Assyrian Power, disappear from the page of history as suddenly and completely as though the land of their captivity swallowed them up. Beyond some vague reference to them in a passage of Josephus, no mention is made by any authentic writer of their surviving the destruction of their nationality. There has always been, however, an unwillingness to admit that a fate which had befallen so many nations has overtaken the Ten Tribes. Why should they have been less tenacious of life than their brethren of Judah? Nay, the Scriptures speak of a restoration of Israel, which clearly is to include both Judah and Ephraim. The problem, then, is reduced to the simplest form. The Ten Tribes are certainly in existence. All that has to be done is to discover which people represent them."

"All that has to be done is to discover which people represent them." Fortunately, that stupendous task is not nearly so difficult as one might think! With but little effort their steps may be traced historically with just as much certainty as the migration of Americans can be followed from the populous East Coast to the wilds of the Western Territories. The ten tribes of the house of Israel grew mightily in numbers during their captivity in Assyria. The renowned Jewish historian, Josephus, writing in A.D. 70, gave us this historic record: "The ten tribes are beyond the Euphrates until now and are an immense multitude, not to be estimated by numbers." Certainly this establishes with credibility the fact of their existence apart from the Jews and identifies their location almost seven hundred years after their captivity. Furthermore, this is in total agreement with the prophecy given in the apocryphal book of Second Esdras. The Apocrypha are "hidden" or "secret" books that are included in many Bibles, but rejected by some as being of doubtful inspiration. These are included in Catholic Bibles and the "King James" Bible contained all fourteen when it was published in 1611 but they are no longer included. Most Protestants today are illiterate concerning the Apocrypha. Even those who reject the divine inspiration of these books, but are informed of their origin and content, recognize their immense historical value and authenticity. The prophet Esdras of the Apocrypha is the same man as Ezra of the Bible. In Second Esdras we read this very remarkable statement concerning the way by which the ten tribes left the land of Assyria: "And whereas thou sawest that he gathered a peaceable multitude unto him; those are the ten tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of Osea the king, whom Salmanasar the king of Assyria led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so they came into another land. But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt, that they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land. And they entered the Euphrates by the narrow passages of the river. For the most High then showed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over. For through that country (Europe) there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half: and the same region is called Arsareth. Then dwelt they there until the latter time..." (II Esdras 13:30,46). Arsareth is the territory to the west of the Black Sea, or Continental Europe. It is important to notice that they did not dwell in Arsareth; they spent a year and a half passing through it to the land where they settled.

This is in harmony with the following: "The breaker is come up before them; they have broken up, and have passed through the gate and are gone out of it, and their king shall pass before them; and the Lord on the head of them" (Micah 2:13). J. H. Allen wrote in commentary upon

this passage, “The clause, ‘They have passed through the gate,’ and the one by Ezra, ‘They have entered into the narrow passages,’ are parallel, and refer to the same circumstance and place. This gate, or narrow passage, which is up among the headwaters of the Euphrates, is now called the Caucasian Pass, or the Pass of Dariel. As Israel goes out through this pass, Micah says that the Lord is on the head of them, but it is left for Ezra to say that the Lord gave Israel evidence of His presence, because He gave them signs and held still the floods, as He did at Jordan, until they passed over” (Judah’s Sceptre and Joseph’s Birthright).

For thousands of years Israel was led by God. In Egypt, through the wilderness journey, the sojourn in Palestine, through the Assyrian captivity, and through the Caucasian Pass, from which they began their onward march across Europe. Where did they settle? There are many “clues” to their destination strewn throughout the pages of the immutable Word of God. I would take you back for a moment to the time of king David, the first great king of the united kingdom of Israel. We find a remarkable prophecy given to David in I Chron. 17:9. The prophet Nathan came to David and told him two things, prefacing each with the solemn “Thus saith the Lord.” The first was this: “Also I will ordain a place for My people Israel, and will plant them, and they shall dwell in their place, and shall be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness waste them any more, as at the beginning.” A strange message indeed! They had a place—they had the land promised to Abraham and they were established there in victory and peace. Nothing could have been farther from their minds than that they would ever move. Yet the word of the Lord was unmistakable, clear and pointed—Israel would be moved to a new place at some future time, from which they would be moved no more! It is interesting to note that when Dr. Moffett made his translation of the scriptures, it was suggested to him to eliminate that expression “I will ordain” or “I will appoint.” Certain individuals wanted him to change the note of futurity—to translate it rather, “I have appointed a place,” that place being, of course, Palestine. However, Dr. Moffatt was constrained by his allegiance to truth to follow the Hebrew—it was to be a new place, future to David’s time, a place other than the land of Canaan. Where is this New Place?

The location of “the appointed place” is also indicated in scripture. The book of the prophet Hosea is directed particularly to the northern kingdom of Israel and specifically concerns their future following the captivity. According to Hosea 12:1, “Ephraim... followeth after an east wind.” An “east wind” travels west. Ephraim was to go west from Assyria. Many passages speak of Israel dwelling in the islands of the sea. “Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jer. 31 :10). Isaiah also addresses many of his prophecies to Israel “in the isles.” “They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea. Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires, even the name of the Lord God of Israel in the isles of the sea” (Isa. 24:14-15). Here, the Hebrew word YAM is translated as “sea,” but it can also translate to “west” meaning a point on the compass. Therefore, the verse could read “the isles of the west.” Then, in Isa. 42:4 we find, “He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth; and the isles shall wait for His law.” Again, “Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise in the islands” (Isa. 42:12). And yet again, “Listen, O isles unto Me” (Isa. 49:1). “To the islands He will repay recompense. So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west” (Isa. 59:18-19). Thus we see the scriptures plainly show a day when Israel would dwell in the islands and Isaiah places these islands “west” of Palestine. From Jeremiah we learn that these islands are not only in the west but in the northwest. The word sent to Israel by Jeremiah is sent to the north: “Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel” (Jer. 3:12). And further, “Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the

coasts of the earth” (Jer. 31 :18). This prophecy is for consideration in the “latter days” (Jer. 30:24; 31 :1), and is addressed to “Israel” (verses 2,4,9), to “Ephraim” (vs. 6,9), and “Samaria” (vs. 5).

Referring to the house of Israel, not Judah, God says: “Behold, these shall come from afar: and, lo, these from the NORTH and from the WEST; and these from the land of Sinim” (Isa. 49:12). In the Hebrew, the language in which this was originally inspired, there is no word for “north-west,” but this term is designated by the phrase, “the north and the west.” It means, literally, the northwest! The Vulgate renders “Sinim” as “Australi,” or “Australia.” So we now have the location of the dispersed house of Israel northwest of Jerusalem and even spreading around the world. Take a map of Europe. Lay a line due NORTHWEST of Jerusalem and across the continent of Europe, until you come to the sea and the coasts of the continent, and then to the islands of the sea! And where does this take you? DIRECTLY TO THE BRITISH ISLES! M.S. Bergmann, a Christian missionary many years ago to the Jews in the East of London, and himself a Jew by birth, wrote as follows: “I have no hesitation in saying that Great Britain is meant by ‘the isles afar off’ mentioned by the prophets. This has been the opinion of many ancient and modern Jewish theologians.” Rabbi David Kimchi, who wrote a very extensive commentary on the Old Testament, as far back as A.D. 1220, says that the “islands of the sea” of Isa. 11 :11 belonged in time past to the Roman Empire. It is an undisputed fact and matter of history that the Romans were in possession of the British isles.

The renowned apostle of healing, John Alexander Dowie, wrote in January 1904, “I am not a Jew. The Jew is an Israelite, but all Israelites are not Jews. There were ten tribes carried into captivity and scattered abroad. The house of Judah was kept behind. They are the people that form the Jewish race. But there is an Israelitish race that is all over the earth. God is gathering these in the Anglo-Saxon nations. The Saxon is Isaac’s son. They used to be called Isaac’s son; but the name was contracted into Saxon. Up in my native highlands in Scotland, we have a language called Gallic, which is full of Hebrew. Most of its principle expressions are pure Hebrew and the practices are Israelitish. In the western Isles of Scotland when the Sabbath begins the boats are drawn up. All business occupation ceases. The good housewife has the house all clean. Supper is served and then the evening worship that begins the Sabbath is held. When the Sabbath is over, the boats are pushed out for fishing, and business begins again. We have a very strong tradition that the highlanders of Scotland are Israelites. The traditions are clear. You never visit the western highlands without seeing it and hearing it.”

Before closing this chapter I would point out the most interesting fact of the Hebrew meaning of the name of the British people. Israel is the covenant people. The Hebrew word for “covenant” is beryth, or Berith. The Hebrew for man is iysh, or ish. In English, the ending “-ish” means “of or belonging to.” If I were to say of a woman, “She is Canaanitish,” I would mean that she is of or belonging to the people of Canaan. In the Hebrew language vowels are never given in the spelling. So, omitting the vowel “e” from berith, but retaining the “i” in its anglicized form to preserve the “y” sound in the Hebrew, we have the anglicized Hebrew word for covenant, brith. The Hebrews, however, never pronounced their “h’s.” Many a Jew, even today, in pronouncing the name “Shem,” will call it “Sem.” Incidentally, this ancient Hebrew trait is also a modern British trait. So the Hebrew word for “covenant” would be pronounced, in its anglicized form as brit. And the word for “covenant man,” or “covenant people,” would therefore be simply “BRITISH.” And so, can it be mere coincidence that the covenant people today are called the “BRIT-ISH”? And they reside in the “BRITISH ISLES”!

The migration of Israel to the northwest, however, was not limited to the British Isles. The various tribes came overland under the names of Normans, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Danes, etc. and were forced to fight their way to the appointed place. They all got in—not one of them could be kept out. The British Isles, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland—all represent major portions of the tribes of Dan, Reuben, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Zebulon, Issachar and Ephraim, with those of Simeon, Levi and Judah interspersed among them. Some of the prophecies of the Bible clearly point beyond north-western Europe to the New World—the United States and Canada—Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, etc. The scriptures tell us that the “appointed” place is associated with the wilderness. Hosea, who foretold Israel’s captivity, tells of God “alluring” Israel and bringing her “into the wilderness” and speaking “comfortably unto her” (Hos. 2:14). Then there follows a description of the “wilderness” and the blessings that God will bestow upon Israel there. According to Hosea the sequence of these events is plain. The people forming the house of Israel were cast out of their land for their iniquities and idolatries. They were divorced and ceased to be God’s people. They were to become, and did become, wanderers among the nations. Then they were to be gathered out from among those nations into the “wilderness of the people.” “Therefore behold I will allure her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her” (Hos. 2:14), which was the place appointed by God where they were to be planted in a place of their own, to “dwell alone,” and move no more, for this place is to be their headquarters. Here, dwelling alone, their enemies are to no more harass them. Jeremiah speaks of the “wilderness” as the place where “the people which were left of the sword found grace” and affirms the identity of the people by adding, “even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest” (Jer. 31:2).

How precisely was God’s promise to Abraham fulfilled! How truly did his seed become not only a great nation, but a COMPANY OF NATIONS!

TURNED UNTO FABLES

God covenanted with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that they would be the fathers of a great nation and a company of nations (Gen. 17:1-6; Gen. 35:11). At mount Sinai He revealed His purpose in this people of the covenant, saying, “And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Ex. 19:6). But in their own carnal minded state, the nation was unable to bear the responsibility. They were weak in the flesh and could not accomplish the ministry of being a holy nation and a kingdom of priests unto the rest of the world. They kept backsliding, they constantly went a-whoring after the heathen gods around them. Of course God foreknew that they would do this, but that never changed His plan one iota. In fact, He used their weakness for the FURTHERANCE OF HIS PLAN. The entire outline of this dealing of God with the house of Israel may be read in chapter two of Hosea. Hosea was a prophet to the northern kingdom of Israel on the eve of their destruction and deportation. When Samaria fell, some literate refugees escaped the deportation and went south, where they were received and resettled in Jerusalem. One of them brought with him the prophecies of Hosea, and that is how we have them in our Bibles today. The remarkable destiny of these tribes is clearly set forth in these prophecies. I urge my reader to read the entire book of Hosea, but especially chapter two.

What a marvelous working! God not only let them go their own way, after other gods, He helped disperse them among the nations, to lose their own identity, to become identified

among the heathen with whom they came to dwell. They would not be known as Israel for a time, they would be identified as Anglo-Saxons, Celts, Scandinavians, etc. according to their tribal characteristics and the name of the place where they settled. But He promised to bless them there in their wilderness experience, to speak comfortably to them, to take away the names of the false gods out of their mouths, to draw them unto Himself, to betroth them unto Him in righteousness, and in judgment, and in mercies, that they might come to KNOW THE LORD (Hos. 2:14-19). Through the instrumentality of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the vehicle of the church they would become a spiritual remnant according to the election of grace (Rom. 11:5), processed and purged and prepared until they are fully qualified to fulfill the calling that He placed upon them so long ago. God is not limited by time for the outworking of His purpose. He can allow the ages to pass over us in their cycles, and behind the scenes do a HIDDEN WORK, until He is ready to manifest that which shall be to His praise.

We hear a great deal today about many wonderful things. As we draw near to the end of this age and we drink deeply of the intoxicating rays of the Kingdom morning, there is a mighty accelerating flood of light and revelation. This we must certainly expect and accept, for new days bring new things, and new dispensations are sent to flood the world with greater light and greater experience in God. Such is the case with the revelation of the present truth which shows that the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic and kindred peoples are the "lost" tribes of Israel.

I would be remiss, however, if I failed to advise my readers that along with these precious truths a great deal of MYTH has been erected by carnal minded men around what is called the ANGLO-ISRAEL IDENTITY MESSAGE. The Jewish people pushed aside the simple truths of God's Word and the law of Moses, and invented for themselves a large amount of fables which they have taught to their children and believe themselves. They may or may not have a scriptural foundation, but certainly depart from the truth of scripture and fill the mind with untruths concerning God's will for man and especially the Jew. The most renowned writings of the rabbis have been collected together into a large number of books like law books which are called the Talmud. Most of the Talmud is Jewish fables and traditions which they have put in place of the plain statements of God's Word. Evidently the Sanhedrin had some of them and Peter referred to them when he made known the facts concerning the Lord's glory, and stated that he was not making use of any cunningly devised fables, but that he was an eyewitness of the glorious events he was describing.

Rome has followed the example set by the Jews. The Roman Catholic Church has set the Word of God aside, and substituted a wealth of fables, with many fantastic tales about Mary and the Lord Jesus and the saints. They invented purgatory for the punishment of the laity and the profit of the priesthood. They invented the mass as a way to hoodwink the people, substituting the reality of spiritual experience for the notion that the living Christ may be received by swallowing a wafer. The confessional was originally invented as a means of obtaining money under false pretense and of securing information from and about their people. They have pushed the Lord Jesus Christ aside and substituted His mother and deified her, even declaring that Mary sits at the right hand of God in her glorified body, interceding for the faithful. They have arranged seven sacraments, by which they tell their people that they can build up merit by repetition, to outweigh their sins, and even grant them certain number of days in which they may sin without penalty. Rome reached back into the ancient pagan idolatries, which may be traced to Nimrod of Babylon, the real origin of pagan religions, and have taken much of their tradition about the mother and child from these ancient religious mysteries.

This booklet is written for the consideration of saints to whom has been given the spirit of love and of power and of a sound mind. Surely no one who reads these lines would allow himself or herself to be deluded and carried away with such fantastic inventions as the foregoing. We are free from bondage to dark superstitions and offensive myths and ridiculous fables. We are spiritual, of sound judgment, we would never stoop to like ignorance, we are altogether too enlightened! But now are we really as smart as we think? It has been my experience that a great many of the Lord's precious people need to heed the exhortation of Paul in II Tim. 4:3-4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be TURNED UNTO FABLES. "The inspired apostle also admonished young Timothy, "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith" (I Tim. 1:4).

Regrettably, there are a number of unscriptural and fantastic fantasies that have been spawned in connection with the truth of the Anglo-Saxon-Celtic Israel Identity. We have space to deal with only a few of them in this writing.

Myth Number One. The Jews (house of Judah) consist only of the three tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi. The ten tribes of the house of Israel are not among them. None of the Jews pertain to ten-tribed Israel, The house of Judah and the house of Israel are entirely two distinct and separate parts of one nation. The people belonging to one are not to be found in the other. The Jews are, at best, only three tribes.

The name "Jew" came into use about the time of the dispersion of the ten northern tribes. The first appearance of it in the Word is in II Kings 16:6, during the reign of Ahaz. And, contrary to popular belief and the assertions of would-be teachers, it was applied without distinction to both those of the kingdom of Judah and also of the kingdom of Israel, or the ten northern tribes. This is a mere historical fact which can be verified by anyone who will read the Word and face facts. Sad to state, not very many saints are willing to do either. We dare not follow their examples, so we proceed.

During the reign of Rehoboam, son of Solomon, the ten northern tribes separated from Judah. Then we find that Jeroboam, their king, fell into idolatry, the result of which was that the Levites left their possessions in Israel and moved to Judah (II Chron. 11:13-14). Furthermore, we read, "and after them OUT OF A-L-L THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL (the ten tribes) such as set their hearts to seek the Lord God of Israel came to Jerusalem to sacrifice unto the Lord God of their fathers. So they strengthened the kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the son of Solomon strong three years" (II Chron. 11 :16-17). From this it is apparent that certain of all the ten northern tribes came to Judah and remained, besides the Levites, at least for a season. But, then, during the reign of Asa, we read: "And he (Asa) gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of EPHRAIM AND MANASSEH, and out of Simeon: for they fell to him I-N A-B-U-N-D-A-N-C-E when they saw that the Lord God was with him" (II Chron. 15:9). The foregoing two records are of those who would follow the Lord and who left the kingdom of Israel and came to Judah. And many of these remained in Judah, as we shall presently see.

At the beginning of Hezekiah's reign we find him sending posts into all the land of Judah and Israel, urging all twelve tribes to come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover. The ten northern tribes had drifted into terrible idolatry at this late date. Numbers of them had already been carried captive into Assyria (II Chron. 30:6-9), and of those who remained, there were but a

few who had any inclination to serve the Lord. However, in II Chron. 30:11 we find that certain of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem. How many of these remained in Judah we do not know. But in verse 25 we read this significant statement: "And all the congregation of Judah, with the priests and the Levites, and all the congregation that came out of Israel, and the strangers (non-Judahites) that came out of the land of Israel and that DWELT IN JUDAH, rejoiced. So there was great joy in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon...there was not the like in Jerusalem." From this we know that certain of the ten tribes of the northern kingdom had settled in Judah and were dwelling there permanently in the first year of Hezekiah's reign, which was about five years prior to the final dispersion of the northern kingdom. Then following this we find Hezekiah sending out a commandment to the people to bring in their tithes and offerings to the priests at Jerusalem, and in II Chron. 31:6 we read, "and concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that D-W-E-L-T IN THE CITIES OF JUDAH, they also brought in the tithe." From these scriptures we learn that Judah, the southern kingdom, was a haven for not only the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, but for ALL the other tribes as well! This was still just prior to the final dispersion of the northern kingdom.

Next followed the captivity. Now, let us suppose that Canada and the United States were to undergo a similar experience. Let us just imagine that a great power has carried off numbers of Canadians as slaves, and that now they have returned to completely destroy the land and carry off the entire population into captivity. What do you suppose would be done? Would the Canadians sit meekly in their place, waiting patiently for their enemies to carry them away into bondage? NO! Every one that could run, walk, or crawl, who was not actively engaged in battle, would be headed for the border just as soon as it became evident that flight was necessary to escape slavery. And long before the enemy had completely subjugated the country, a good part of the Canadian population would be scattered all the way from Seattle, Washington, to Miami, Florida. My sense of reason tells me that the Israelites were not any more in favor of dying in bondage on foreign soil than Canadians would be. Of course many of them would be cut off from escape. But many more would not, and would from then on be residents of Judah.

Let us go on. Hezekiah reigned 29 years over Judah and died. By the time he died the northern kingdom had long been deported to Assyria. Manasseh his son followed him, reigned 55 years, and died. Amon, his son, reigned two years and was slain. Josiah, his son, then came to the throne at eight years of age. Then in the eighteenth year of his reign, which would be about ONE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THE DISPERSION OF THE NORTHERN TRIBES, we read that the Levites gathered money "of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim, and of all the remnant of Israel, and of all Judah and Benjamin" (II Chron. 34:9). At this time, most of those who dwelt in the northern kingdom would be, as were the Samaritans of our Lord's day, considered a half-caste race, and hence would be regarded as heathen dogs, the offscouring of the earth, by all Israel. 'The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans' (Jn. 4:9). And instead of these worshipping at Jerusalem, they worshipped at Bethel (II Kings 17:28). So it necessarily follows that this remnant of Israel, together with MANASSEH AND EPHRAIM, were for the most part such as dwelt in Judah, some having been there due to unrecorded migrations, some from the migrations in the days of Rehoboam and Asa, some from the days of Hezekiah, who fled to escape captivity at the fall of Israel, and some having escaped out of captivity (II Chron. 30:6) and returned to take refuge, with all the rest of their assembled tribes, in Judah.

Continuing on, we find a number of references to not just Judah, but to both Israel and Judah. And we must note particularly that we are considering now the reign of Josiah, about ONE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THE DISPERSION OF THE NORTHERN TRIBES. In 11 Chron. 34:21, Josiah commands, "Enquire of the Lord for me, and for them that are left in (of) Israel and in (of) Judah." Then in 34:33 he refers to these assembled tribes, not as Judah and Israel, but makes no distinction when referring to them. He simply calls them all "the children of Israel." "And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the Lord their God." At this time a copy of the law had been found, after having been lost for many years. Josiah then kept a Passover according to the commandments of Moses. "And there was no Passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet, neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a Passover as Josiah kept, and the priests, and the Levites, and ALL Judah and Israel that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. In the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah was this Passover kept" (11 Chron. 35:18-19).

Archaeology has confirmed these facts which are so clearly set forth in the books of the Chronicles. Excavations have revealed that the population of Judah rapidly increased after the fall of the northern kingdom as a result of the vast number of refugees mentioned in II Chron. 11:14-16. Furthermore, archaeologists have uncovered the annals of the Assyrian Sargon, in which he tells that he carried away only 27,290 people and 50 chariots (Biblical Archaeologist, VI, 1943, p.58). Since estimates of the population of the northern kingdom at that time range from 400,000 to 500,000, clearly less than one-twentieth of the population was deported, primarily the leaders from the area around Samaria.

Furthermore, the most famous Asherite in the Bible was Anna, the prophetess who greeted the infant Jesus in the Temple (Lk. 2:36-38). This brief reference is evidence, however, that the Jews of our Lord's time still maintained their tribal identity. Anna also provides evidence that representatives of the ten northern tribes still existed in Judah over 700 years after the Assyrian captivity. In other words, the ten tribes were not really lost as they are often described, although a segment of them did indeed migrate to Europe and America in fulfillment of God's purpose and promise, becoming a COMPANY OF CHRISTIAN NATIONS, mighty in strength and power and blessing.

How many people who know the identity of the "lost" tribes know the facts we have presented here? How many know that all the tribes, including Ephraim and Manasseh, were present in the house of Judah a century after the ten tribes were carried away into Assyria? Thousands are COMPLETELY IGNORANT of biblical history! out of this ignorance they make foolish statements like, "The present day Jews represent, at best, only three tribes out of twelve." In view of all the foregoing scriptures, anyone who can read and who is capable of facing facts, has to admit that according to God's inspired Word, beginning with the division of Canaan into two kingdoms, there began a migration of the ten northern tribes into the kingdom of Judah, and that they then dwelt there permanently. Anyone who is reasonable has to admit that all twelve tribes residing in Judah were carried captive to Babylon. And here is another fact that, in spite of all the assertions to the contrary, anyone who is capable of facing facts has to admit. All of these assembled tribes, beginning at about the time of the invasion of Jerusalem and the overthrow of Sennacherib there by God, were called Jews (Judeans). In both scriptures which record the siege (II Kings 18:28; II Chron. 32:18) it speaks of the "Jews' language" or "speech." Note carefully, it does not say the language of "the Jews and Israelites." It says only "Jews," and that included all twelve tribes. They all spoke the same tongue.

Myth Number Two. **Since Israelites are God's chosen race, they are forbidden by God** to integrate with people of other races. Our Israelite blood line must be kept PURE. The Caucasian differs from all races and alone possesses the qualities of mind and spirit which are essential to the fulfillment of the blessing and dominion he is destined to bring to all the other peoples of earth.

This myth is rooted in the bigoted notion of white supremacy. The truth is, however, that God's chosen race has never obtained promises, nor inherited blessings, through a natural line of descent. His promises have always been to those who should come into them through faith. This is a truth that is not generally understood, which fact has unfortunately resulted in great confusion and delusion. The scriptures, however, are very plain on this point. Let us believe them, totally forsaking all the fables of men. Turning to Rom. 4:11, we note that Abraham received circumcision merely as a sign or symbol of the righteousness of the faith which he already had. In other words, he was saved by grace, and knew it. He believed. He was thus credited with God's saving righteousness. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3).

By the time of Abraham, men had lost the knowledge of the true God and of the revelation of His purpose. Man pursued his own ways and devices and sin and violence spread over the earth. It was in such a world, strayed far from God, righteousness and truth, that one man was honest, submissive and teachable, strong and purposeful. So God gave him a test command of obedience. To this man, Abram, God commanded: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation..." (Gen. 12:1-2). Here was a command, which was the condition; and a PROMISE, provided the condition of obedience was met. And so now, as God had started the whole world with one man, He started His own peculiar nation in the world from one single man—Abram. As the world, which had strayed far from God and the blessings of God's worship and rule, was started with one man who rebelled against God and rejected His rule, so God's own nation, from which is to be reborn the Kingdom Of God, was started with one man who obeyed God without question, and accepted His rule! Did Abram quibble, resist, argue, rebel? He most assuredly did not! The scripture account states, simply, "So Abram departed. " Just plain, unquestioned OBEDIENCE! And God established this man, whose name He later changed to Abraham, as the father of His nation, ancient Israel. To Abraham and his seed, were all the promises of God made. And as a result of his undefiled stand for God, he became "the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised" (Rom. 4:11). "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law (not through works, or natural lines) but through (because of) the righteousness of faith" (Rom. 4:13). In other words, all of God's promises to Abraham were because of his faith: because he was in intimate association and vital relationship with God. He obtained them, not because he was white, not because he was a Hebrew, not because he was a son of Terah, or a grandson of Nahor: not because of his works or station, but because he was a believer. And furthermore, that is how all of Abraham's "seed" also come into the blessings promised to Abraham. For the promises are not only to him, but also "to his seed." Well doth the scripture say, "Know ye therefore, that they WHICH ARE OF FAITH, the same are the children of Abraham" (Gal. 3:7).

Both Abraham and his seed come into heirship because of faith. God's chosen race has never followed the line of natural descent. It has always been a promised seed, through faith. If it had followed the line of natural descent, then Isaac would never have come into the blessing.

Ishmael was the elder of the two boys, and according to natural laws and customs would have been the next in line. If the line had followed the natural descent, then Jacob never would have come into the promises. Esau was his elder brother, and according to all propriety would have come into the inheritance and birthright and blessing. In that case neither Jew, nor Briton, nor American, would have had any part or lot in the inheritance. It would have gone to the Edomites instead (Gen. 36:1). God's promises to Abraham were not predicated upon any maintenance of "racial purity." The argument has been made that "When Abraham's servant Eliezer (Gen. 15:2) went seeking a bride for Isaac, he was led by the Holy Spirit to the house of his master's brethren (Gen. 24:27). This point is emphasized to establish that Isaac's bride was not a Gentile bride, as the preachers are so fond of declaring. She was an Hebrew just as certainly as Isaac was an Hebrew. Furthermore she could not have been much more closely related to Isaac than she was. This fact is important, because it is through Abraham and his seed that all other nations of the world are to be blessed. Abraham's wife was an Hebrew woman (his half-sister). Isaac's wife was also an Hebrew, and Jacob's wives, Rachel and Leah, were also Hebrew women, daughters of Laban, who himself was a son of Nahor, Abram's brother (Gen. 29:5). Now, since Rachel and Leah were the daughters of Laban, the son of Nahor, and Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel, the son of Nahor, then Bethuel and Laban were brothers and Rachel and Leah were first cousins of Rebekah. How anyone can conclude that Rebekah was a Gentile bride in the face of this close relationship is more than I can imagine. She was definitely an Hebrew bride" (The Abrahamic Covenant, p. 93, 94).

The argument cited above sounds very logical on the surface. It must be clearly understood, however, that Rebekah was just as much a "Gentile" as any Chinese or African girl would have been. There were but two classes on earth: Abraham and his seed (descendants)—and the rest of humanity, REGARDLESS OF THEIR ETHNIC CHARACTER. Just who constituted the Hebrew race, anyhow? "Hebrew" comes from the name Eber, who was a great-grandson of Shem and an ancestor of Abraham. The genealogies are recorded in Gen. 11:10-26. In Gen. 10:21 Shem is specifically designated as the father of "all the children of Eber"—the Hebrews. And Abraham was of that family line—a Hebrew. All of his family, therefore, were also Hebrews. But you see, precious friend of mine, God gave NO promise to the Hebrew race. God made NO covenant with the Hebrew race. It was not a matter of Hebrew race at all. God did not choose Abram because he was of the Hebrew race. God chose Abram because of His own sovereign purpose and confirmed His covenant with him because of his faith. God's covenant was not with any race; it was with A MAN and HIS FAMILY (offspring). Search as you will through the pages of holy writ and you will not find one word spoken to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, or the nation of Israel about the Hebrew race. In fact, the word "race" is not used even once in the whole Bible in reference to Israel! The truth is that God's covenant was with a man and his family. That man happened to be of the Hebrew race, but the covenant was made with the man Abram, not the race from which he came. "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. And I will establish My covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations...to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. Thou shalt keep My covenant therefore, and thy seed after thee" (Gen. 17:4,7,9). "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:1- 2).

God's covenant was with Abram and with his seed. At the time Abraham selected a wife for Isaac there were only three "Israelites" on earth—Abraham, Sarah (by marriage), and Isaac. Rebekah was not of the seed of Abraham, she was not his descendant, therefore, though a

racial kinswoman, she was a Gentile so far as the covenant was concerned. Only by marriage could she be brought into the covenant family. All of her relatives were strangers to the covenant, and outside the covenant family, though they were Hebrews by race. At no time did God instruct Abraham that the covenant was with him and other Hebrews. The covenant was with Abraham and his seed—his OFFSPRING! It had nothing whatever to do with his ancestry, but everything to do with his posterity! Should Isaac have married an Egyptian, or an Ethiopian, Jacob his son would still have been Abraham's chosen seed, his offspring of promise; therefore, the covenant would still have been with him. There were no racial conditions—only a family consideration.

True, long centuries later when the children of Israel went in to possess the promised land, God strictly charged them, "When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them: neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son" (Deut. 7:1-3). But notice, now, the divine reason for this striking prohibition against intermarriage with these heathen nations: "For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly" (vs. 4). Ah! The command was definitely not, "Thou shalt not make marriages with them, for thou shalt not pollute the pure blood of the superior Hebrew race." No! A thousand times no! In every passage in the books of Exodus and Deuteronomy where the Lord commanded His people not to marry the heathen it is clearly stated that the reason is because they would turn the people's hearts away from following the Lord, that they might serve other gods. One of the Chaldee paraphrases adds, as a reason for the command given above, "For he that marries with idolaters does in effect marry with their idols." It had nothing to do with race—it had everything to do with WORSHIP! The very same prohibition is found in the New Testament. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness: and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Cor. 6:14). "The wife is bound by the law so long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; ONLY IN THE LORD" (1 Cor. 7:39). As with Israel under the law, so with the body of Christ under grace; it is not a question of race, but of being made ONE IN HIM.

Israel of old was a mixture of just about every race and tribe under heaven. Let us look at just the lineage from Abraham to David, as given in Mat. 1:1-5. It is very enlightening. We have already noted that neither Isaac nor Jacob were the first in line. They were both supplanters. We also find that Reuben was the oldest son of Jacob, yet the birthright was given to Joseph and the kingly line descended through Judah. But here we first find confusion. Judah married a Canaanite, who bore him three sons: Er, Onan and Shelah. Both Er and Onan died, leaving Shelah the next in line; but instead of the kingly line descending through Shelah, it descended through Phares, one of the twins born of whoredom between Judah and his daughter-in-law, Tamar. From here on we have no record of marriages until we come to verse five. Here Salmon begat Booz of Rahab, the Canaanite harlot, who hid the spies at Jericho and was therefore preserved with her family (Josh. 6:22-25). So, discounting the probability of there having been other intermarriages through the years, Booz then would be half Israelite and half Canaanite. Then Booz married Ruth, the Moabitess, who bore Obed. If Booz were one half Israelite blood, then Obed would be only one quarter Israelite. Joseph married Asenath,

who was not only an Egyptian, but the daughter of a priest. Thus, Ephraim and Manasseh (who many teach are Britain and the United States) were half Egyptian. King David's mother was a Moabite, and David had many wives, some of them of foreign blood. Bathsheba was obviously a Hittite, for she had been the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and the etymology of her name indicates a Hittite origin (see *Harper's Bible Dictionary* and *The Thirteenth Tribe*, by Arthur Koestler). The great king Solomon was half Hittite, part Moabite, mingled with other strains then flowing in the bloodline of Israel. Solomon himself "loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites... he had seven hundred wives, and three hundred concubines" (1 Kings 11:1,3). The Bible also makes it clear that the royal example was imitated by many, high and low. Besides, the biblical prohibition of marrying Gentiles exempted female captives in times of war—and there was no shortage of them. In the days of Ezra many had taken strange wives (Ezra 10:2). Nehemiah 13:23 records that many Jews had married wives of Ashdod and Ammon and Moab. Foreigners who would follow the Lord under the laws of Israel were required to be circumcised, and they were then counted as though born in the land (Ex. 12:48).

Consider the honesty of the Bible. Just before announcing the birth of God's Son, it tells us a few things about Christ's ancestry. What a motley group! Only four women are mentioned by name in that Royal Line—and all of them are full of moral and/or ethnic blemish and stain. There was Tamar the prostitute; Rahab, the Canaanite and a temple harlot; Ruth the Moabite, alien to the covenant; and Bathsheba, both a Hittite and an adulteress. SO MUCH FOR RACIAL PURITY! By the time Jesus came into the world there was precious little "pure" Hebrew blood in either the house of Judah or the house of Israel! In view of all the intermarriages and intermixtures, what race, then, is Israel? Maintain a pure race? Impossible! The race is not pure to begin with. Furthermore, Israel is not and never was a race in the sense of an unmixed bloodline—Israel is a family—the family of Abraham. And all born into this family are descendants of Abraham irrespective of the kinds of blood coursing through their veins. Israel was an intermixture of many races. We have many accounts of these infusions of foreign blood. There would be many more which were never recorded. Therefore, if our Lord, when He came to His own, came to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, it would mean that He came to just about every race under heaven!

Myth Number Three. This third myth contends that the word "Gentiles" in the New Testament means "nations" and refers generally to those specific "nations" which were to come out of Abraham: "I will make of thee a great nation" (Gen. 12:2); "A father of many nations have I made thee" (Gen. 17:4,5); "A nation and a company of nations shall be of thee" (Gen. 35:11); "Thy seed shall become a multitude of 48:19). Thus, when Paul preached to the "Gentiles" he was not preaching to non-Israelites, pagans, or heathen, but to the lost tribes of Israel which had migrated to Europe, Asia Minor and the Mediterranean area, becoming the "nations" of that day.

The argument goes something like this. For proof that Paul was not writing to GENTILES in the Epistle to the so-called Romans, note how Paul tells these "saints" in Rome to whom he writes in the 4th chapter of Romans that "Abraham is our father, as pertaining to the flesh," and "Abraham, who is the father of us all." Certainly he could not have told any "Gentile" that Abraham was his father, as pertaining to the flesh! Again, this is consistent with what Paul wrote to the "saints" in the city of Corinth, for in 1 Cor. 10:1-4 he writes, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that ALL OUR FATHERS were under the cloud, and ALL passed through the sea; and did ALL eat the same spiritual meat; and did ALL drink

the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them: and that Rock was Christ." Paul could not have truthfully told Gentiles that their fathers, like his, had all passed through the Red Sea with Moses and had all been protected by the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night and had all eaten the manna and had all drunk of the water which poured out of the rock in answer to Moses' prayer. Only to ISRAELITES could he have said this with the slightest spark of truth. And then there is James. James addresses his Epistle "to the twelve tribes scattered abroad." This could not be the Jews, the faulty reasoning goes, for none of them were of the ten tribes of Israel and also they were not "scattered abroad" when James wrote. And what about Peter? The first Epistle of Peter leaves no doubt that he was writing to Israelites. The first verse is badly mistranslated. Instead of "the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia," as the King James Version reads, the actual wording in the Greek is "to THE EXILES OF THE DISPERSION in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia." Pontus, Galatia and Cappadocia are the eastern part of modern Turkey and we know that the tribes of Israel did pass through this region before they moved on to their long journey to northwest Europe. They were exiles from their original homeland in Palestine; they were dispersed over a wide region. Finally, to clinch the matter, Peter identified them in the second verse as "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father." But who were God's elect? In Isa. 45:4 the Lord speaks of "Israel Mine elect."

The foregoing argument, condensed as it is, sounds quite plausible to people who have no background in history. Were the "Gentiles" or "nations" to whom Paul and the other apostles carried the Gospel actually the "Israel nations" descended from the lost ten tribes? Were the believers in Galatia, Corinth, etc. actually people of the ten tribes? Were none of them non-Israelites, Gentiles, pagans, or heathen? It is absolutely true that the word "Gentile" in the Bible means precisely NATION, and nothing else. The word "Gentile" is a translation of the Hebrew words GOI (singular) and GO YIM (plural) and the Greek words ETHNOS (singular) and ETHNE (plural). Using the word "Gentile" to translate these words is misleading because it is a misapplication of the Hebrew and Greek words as meant in the original text. The modern use of the word "Gentile" is interpreted to mean "non-Jew or non-Israelite," but that meaning cannot be maintained when viewed in its correct translation. The Hebrew word GOI is a collective noun meaning NATION or NATIONS. The same thing is true of the Greek word ETHNOS. Any good Concordance or Lexicon will show that these words mean NATIONS, and nothing else. It is clear that Paul never once wrote "Gentiles" in all his writings, he only wrote ETHNOS, which means "nations." Therefore, when you read in Rom. 1 :13, "that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles," Paul actually wrote, "even as among other nations." Paul had made converts who lived among other nations, in Greece, in Syria, in Asia Minor. One must carefully judge from the general context in which the term occurs whether the particular nation of which he speaks is an Israel nation or a non-Israel nation. If it is a non-Israel nation (as in almost ALL cases!), then the common term "Gentile" may well be used, even though inaccurately, because we are accustomed to it.

Again, I ask, were the nations among whom Paul labored and founded the New Testament church, ISRAEL NATIONS of the lost ten tribes? When Paul wrote to the Roman saints, the Galatians, the Corinthians, etc. as though they were Israelites after the flesh, was it because they pertained to the ten-tribed house of Israel? When Peter wrote to "the twelve tribes scattered abroad" was it because he had received a special revelation of the identity of the dispersed house of Israel, and possessed the secret knowledge that the lost tribes had been converted and brought into the church?

If you will look closely you will plainly see that “Gentiles” or “nations” does not generally refer to Israel nations in the New Testament. We will cite but a few examples. “These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles (ethnos, nations), and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Mat. 10:5-6). If the “Gentiles” here are the dispersed tribes of Israel, then Jesus’ statement should read, “Jesus...commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the dispersed Israel nations...but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” Obviously, such an order would constitute a ridiculous CONTRADICTION! A child often could plainly see that. The “Gentiles” and the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” are here set in contrast to one another, clearly showing that the people of the house of Israel to whom the twelve were sent were right there in Palestine, not out among the “nations.”

The careful student of scripture is aware that Jesus and His disciples never went outside the land of Palestine during the three years of Jesus’ ministry, but confined their ministry to these three spheres—Jerusalem, Judea and Galilee. Only once did our Lord minister in Samaria. It was right there within the land of Palestine that Jesus sent His disciples to reach the “lost sheep of the house of Israel.” These were the twelve tribes which we have previously shown were present in the house of Judah.

Of the Jews and their city, Jerusalem, our Lord prophesied, “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” (Lk. 21:24). Jerusalem trodden down by dispersed Israelites? I think not! Rather, Jerusalem was oppressed first by the Romans, and then by one Moslem power after another all down the centuries from the time of the early church. The latest oppressor was the Turkish power and in 1914 Jerusalem was still in the Turkish Empire, by which the city had been “trodden down” for four centuries. But in that year of destiny 1914, Great Britain declared war on Jerusalem’s oppressor, Turkey, only a few weeks after the beginning of World War I and, after a little over three years of fighting, Jerusalem was freed by the British under General Allenby and delivered from ages of oppression, in December, 1917, whilst the Turkish Empire was smashed the following year and reduced both in territory and power to a mere skeleton of its former glory. Even the manner in which the city was delivered in 1917 was explicitly foretold by the prophet Isaiah: “As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also He will deliver it; and passing over, He will preserve it” (Isa. 31:5). Unlike almost every other town on a battlefield, Jerusalem suffered no damage from shell-fire on that great occasion. Doves of British airplanes of the Royal Flying Corps flew low, to and fro over the city, roaring at high speed, almost at house-top level, and scared the city into surrender without firing a shot and at the same time defended it from Turkish planes. In detailed fulfillment of Isaiah, the British took Jerusalem as lions “roaring” (vs. 4) yet “as birds flying” and “defended it,” “delivered it,” and “passing over it, preserved it,” as the prophet said. It was Number 14 Bomber Squadron of the Royal Flying Corps who flew over Jerusalem in that manner in fulfillment of the prophecy and it is most remarkable that their Motto as inscribed on their badge was “I spread my wings and keep my promise”—an indication of Divine overruling in every detail. Britain, having declared war on Jerusalem’s last oppressor, Turkey, in 1914 and cleared the Turks out by 1917, not only caused the “treading down” to cease, but actually took part in the reverse process, the vigorous restoration and reconstruction of the country. The Jews have been pouring back into Palestine and today Jerusalem is a large, rapidly growing, prosperous city, and the Capital of Israel. Thus, the long and continuous period of foreign oppression ceased with the deliverance of Jerusalem from Gentile rule BY DISPERSED ISRAEL!

If "Gentiles" means "Israel nations," how do we understand this plain statement of scripture? "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..." (Acts 4:27). Again, "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he (Paul) is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear my name before the GENTILES, and kings, and the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL" (Acts 9:15). In both of these scriptures the Gentiles and the people of Israel are clearly contrasted. And thus the "Gentiles" unto whom the apostle Paul was sent were definitely NOT Israelites! Certainly no further evidence is necessary to prove that point! Let us turn from fables and the vain imaginations of men and heed the incomparable Word of God!

Two thousand years ago a mixed gathering of people representative of a large section of Europe and Asia Minor were gathered in Jerusalem. They had come to observe the feast of Pentecost. Who were these people? Some tell us that these were dispersed Israelites of the ten tribes. But the record is clear. "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem J-E-W-S, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this (the outpouring of the Holy Spirit) was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, "Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?" And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God. And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?" (Acts 2:5-12).

According to the author of the book of Acts this was a huge assembly of devout JEWS from all over the world of that day. I do not hesitate to tell you that anyone who tries to transform this crowd into men of the lost ten tribes wrests the scripture. And anyone who argues that Paul's ministry was to the people of ten-tribed Israel is abysmally ignorant of the plain facts of history. Josephus tells us that the ten tribes were, in the days of the apostles, "beyond the Euphrates." Esdras informs us that they had long ago passed through the Caucasian Pass and within a year and a half had migrated to and settled in "their place" in the isles of the sea. The Word of God establishes that they would have entered into their new land far to the northwest of Palestine by the time the Gospel would reach them. No, my friend, the people of the northern house of Israel were not inhabiting the areas of Paul's missionary journeys. They were not in Egypt, and Greece, and Asia Minor, and Rome. History shows conclusively that it was JEWS who dwelt among the non-Israelite peoples inhabiting those lands. The dispersion of the Jews began with the Babylonian captivity and continued through the centuries, under the oppressions of the Macedonians, Egyptians, Syrians, and Romans. This dispersion or scattering of the Jews is commonly referred to as the "Diaspora," meaning "to sow, to disperse." This term and these facts are clearly known by all students of history. The Jewish Diaspora occupies such a prominent place in the New Testament and in world history that it astounds me to the point of leaving me in a state of speechless wonder that Anglo-Israel teachers totally ignore it, and wholly misapply and misconstrue every reference to it.

The Diaspora, through which Paul and others eagerly traveled, was vast. The Roman geographer Strabo said that the Jews were a power throughout the inhabited world. There were a million of them in Egypt alone. In Alexandria, perhaps the world's greatest city after Rome itself, they formed a majority in two out of five quarters. They were numerous in Cyrene and Berenice, in Pergamum, Miletus, Sardis, in Phrygian Apamea, Cyprus, Antioch,

Damascus and Ephesus, and on both shores of the Black Sea. They had been in Rome for two hundred years and now formed a substantial colony there; and from Rome they had spread all over urban Italy, and then into Gaul and Spain and across the sea into northwest Africa. The Jews of the dispersion were possessed of a profound sense of their unique mission in the world, and assiduously proclaimed the true God among the heathen. As a result, great numbers of Gentiles were brought into the light of Old Testament revelation. These PROSELYTES existed by the tens of thousands throughout the Roman world. Proselytes were of two orders. "Proselytes of Righteousness," and "Proselytes of the Gate." The former were obliged to undergo the rites of circumcision and baptism, undertook to obey all the observations of Jewish law, and received all the privileges of a born Jew (Ex. 13:43-49; Num. 15:14-16). Many patrician families in Italy were converted, but also the royal family which ruled the province of Adiabene. Philo speaks of numerous converts in Greece; Josephus relates that a large proportion of the population of Antioch was Judaized; the apostle Paul met with proselytes on his travels more or less everywhere from Athens to Asia Minor. The enormous growth of the Jewish nation in Egypt, Cyprus, and Cyrene cannot be accounted for without supposing an abundant infusion of Gentile blood. Proselytism swayed alike the upper and the lower classes of society.

When we come to the eighth chapter of Acts, we find the Gospel message reaching a son of Ham, in the Ethiopian eunuch, who undoubtedly was a "Proselyte of Righteousness," coming all the way from Ethiopia to worship in Jerusalem. Such proselytes, being circumcised, came fully into the fold of Judaism, religiously and socially, with the true born Israelite. In the tenth chapter, we find the Gospel reaching a "Proselyte of the Gate" in the conversion of Cornelius. Worshipers like Cornelius, termed "fearers of God" or "the devout," renounced idolatry and acknowledged the God of Israel as the one true God, worshipping Him by prayer and alms, but were not circumcised and gave only scant heed to the ceremonial observances. Jews by birth and the "Proselytes of Righteousness" were called "THE CIRCUMCISION." Gentiles and the "Proselytes of the Gate" were known as "THE UNCIRCUMCISION."

The centers of the propagation of the Word of God were the synagogues which sprung up everywhere Jewish communities existed. In Jerusalem alone there were well over four hundred. The apostle James aptly remarked, "Moses from generations hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath" (Acts 15:21). The dispersion of the Jews at the time of Christ provided a marvelous opportunity for the spread of the Gospel. Jewish communities were found in most parts of the civilized world, and Jewish religious activities were a well-known part of city life everywhere. Jewish scholars had translated the Old Testament into the Greek language, and religious teachers were busy propagating the Jewish faith among the Gentiles. As the apostles of the Lord went forth they searched for those who were most receptive to their message. Invariably they went first to the synagogues, which were found in almost all the key towns of the Empire. The congregations consisted of both Jews and proselytes—"God fearers" (Acts 13:16)—the section of the population which had a particular interest in spiritual things, and many from both these groups received the message of Christ (Acts 3:43) which, from the customary liberty of ministry in the synagogue, the apostles had freedom to proclaim. They were a people remarkably prepared for the revelation of the Gospel, and in accepting Christ as Messiah and Lord they were entering into the fulfillment of that for which they longed and lived and hungered and thirsted.

Consider now the factual, scriptural evidence for who the apostle Paul ministered to and what class of people comprised his converts in every place he traveled. The record begins early in the book of Acts.

DAMASCUS, SYRIA. Saul of Tarsus, recently converted, dwelt for a season with the disciples in that city, "And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God...but Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ" (Acts 9:20,22).

THE ISLAND OF CYPRESS. Paul and Barnabas "preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews" (Acts 13:5).

ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA. "They...went into the synagogue on the sabbath day and sat down. Then Paul stood up, and beckoning with his hand said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought them out of it." There follows a lengthy discourse of the Gospel, after which we find, "Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God" (Acts 13:14,16,17,43,44).

THESSALONICA. "Now...they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews: and Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures. And some of them believed...and of the devout Greeks (proselytes) a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few" (Acts 17:1-2,4).

BEREA. "And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews...they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them (Jews) believed; also of honourable women (proselytes) which were Greeks, and of men, not a few" (Acts 17:10-12).

ATHENS. "Now while Paul waited. ..at Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons (proselytes), and in the market daily with them that met him" (Acts 17:16-17).

EPHESUS. "And he...entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews... and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 18:19; 19:8).

You will note that in every place the apostles' ministry was to the Jews and the proselytes of the Gentiles who followed with them. Paul Johnson, in his book A HISTORY OF THE JEWS, states that the Jews of the Diaspora that turned to Christianity numbered in the millions. I marvel that these plain facts are ignored by most Anglo-Israel Identity teachers. Is it not crystal clear that when Paul wrote the saints as though they were Israelites he was writing to JEWS AND PROSELYTES. Certainly Abraham was their father! Truly their fathers passed through the sea, followed the cloud, ate the spiritual meat, and drank from that spiritual Rock which followed them! To say that Paul's language indicates that these people were Israelites of the lost ten tribes is to create a lie of enormous proportions and alter totally the testimony of both scripture and history. I marvel that men who profess to love and know the Word of God ignore these obvious truths and choose instead to follow unfounded myths. They choose instead to

teach the error that Paul's converts in practically every part of the then-known world were people of ten-tribed Israel. The Word of God, however, declares that they were Jews of the Diaspora and Gentile proselytes. As for me and my house, we choose to believe the Word of God.

Earlier we considered the incontrovertible evidence that all twelve tribes of Israel were represented in the Jews. In the light of these facts which I have briefly touched upon, it becomes clear that when the apostle James addresses his Epistle to "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad" it is to the JEWS OF THE DIASPORA that he writes, not to ten-tribed Israel dwelling in far away Scandinavia and the British Isles, whose identity as Israel was lost both to themselves and to the Jews of that time. If the reader will earnestly consider the evidence I have set forth, it will become plain that when Paul writes to the believers in Rome concerning the law, and Abraham our father, he most definitely was NOT saying that the Romans were gentilized members of the ten-tribed house of Israel! Even if they were, they wouldn't have known it, and would not understand his speech! He wrote to Jews of the Diaspora and proselytes of the Gentiles who had become Israelites and who were diligent students of the scriptures and knowledgeable about spiritual matters. Paul wrote to the saints in Corinth, to the Galatians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the Ephesians, yea, to practically all the Churches he founded as though they were Israelites versed in the scriptures, acquainted with the promises, participators in the covenants. Certainly they were! Not because they were remnants of the lost tribes of Israel, but because they were Jews of the Diaspora and proselytes of the Gentiles in whose synagogues the Gospel had first been proclaimed! Yes, multitudes of these early Christians were Gentiles, in the commonly accepted usage of that term, but, for the most part, they, too, were learned in the Word of God and as proselytes, now in Christ by faith, were truly "the seed" of Abraham, co-inheritors of the promises!

Myth Number Four. Modern Jews are not the descendants of the tribe of Judah at all, but descendants of the Mongoloid Khazar gentiles, a race of Turkish stock in southern Russia which were converted to Judaism in the seventh century. The inhabitants of the present State of Israel are not racial Jews and are, therefore, imposters, not entitled to the land of Palestine, not preservers of the law of Moses, and cannot be expected to fulfill the prophecies and promises to the house of Judah. God will destroy them finally and give the land to the true Israelites.

The "Israel Identity" movement has for years claimed that the Jews are not lineal Israelites. They often refer to Arthur Koestler's book, THE THIRTEENTH TRIBE, and other sources, to establish that most Jews today are descendants of the Khazars. What the "Identity" preachers don't usually tell you, however, is that the Jew-Khazar theory is just that—a theory. Nay, in fact, it is not truly a theory, but a hypothesis. Consider the dictionary's definition and differentiation. Theory is distinguished from hypothesis thus: a THEORY is founded on inferences drawn from principles which have been established on independent evidence; a HYPOTHESIS is a proposition assumed to account for certain phenomena, and has no other evidence of its truth than that it affords a possible explanation of those phenomena. In Arthur Koestler's book, THE THIRTEENTH TRIBE, by his own admission, the evidence indicating a Khazar ancestry for the Jews is scant, fragmentary, conjectural, and at best a HYPOTHESIS. Here are his own words: "What is in dispute is the fate of the Jewish Khazars after the destruction of their empire, in the twelfth or thirteenth century. On this problem the sources are scant, but various late mediaeval Khazar settlements are mentioned in the Crimea, in the Ukraine, in Hungary, Poland and Lithuania. The general picture that emerges from these

fragmentary pieces of information is that of a migration of Khazar tribes and communities into these regions of Eastern Europe—mainly Russia and Poland—where, at the dawn of the Modern Age, the greatest concentrations of Jews were found. This has led several historians to conjecture that a substantial part, and perhaps the majority of eastern Jews—and hence of world Jewry—might be of Khazar, and not of Semitic origin. The far-reaching implications of this HYPOTHESIS may explain...” (The Thirteenth Tribe, p. 15,16).

The notion that the Jews are Khazar imposters is nothing more than conjecture—an elaborately contrived hypothesis. To conclude that the vast majority of the millions of Jews living today are descendants of the Khazars, and don't have enough Israelitish blood coursing through their veins to qualify them as legitimate descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is nothing short of ridiculous. Apparently many Khazars did convert to Judaism after A.D. 740, but historians do not know exactly how many converted, nor do they know how many of them continued in the religion of Judaism in the years which followed. Some Jews today, perhaps many of them, may have the Khazarian race in their ancestry. But there can be little doubt that most of today's Jews are also descendants of Jacob.

The Jews in every generation since Christ have been scattered throughout every nation of Europe and most of the world. For the entire Jewish population to be Khazarian would have necessitated the migration of the ENTIRE RACE FROM EVERY PART OF THE WORLD to the Khazar kingdom, followed by their return back to the lands of their previous residence. Historically, no such massive migration to and from the Khazar kingdom ever took place. Paul Johnson, in his scholarly and well-documented work, A HISTORY OF THE JEWS, traces the migrations of the Jews through Europe and Asia on an almost day to day basis from the times before Christ right down to the present. The evidence is overwhelming that the kingdom of the Khazars played a very minor role in the history and ethnic composition of the modern Jew. Those who carelessly grasp a theory and then proclaim it as fact should heed the warning of Paul to Timothy: “Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith” (I Tim. 1:4).

Myth Number Five. The Jews of Jesus' day (and therefore ours) were not Israelites, but Edomites. Jesus showed that they were not true Israelites when He said to them, “If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do” (Jn. 8:39-40,44).

The Edomite nation and its people were the descendants of Esau (Gen. 25:30; 36:1,8). The territory in which the Edomites lived was the mountain plateau area between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqabah. Under the Persian Empire Edom came to be called Idumea, the Greek form of Edom. In Maccabean times, John Hyrcanus subdued the Idumeans and forced them to accept Judaism. When the Romans took over Palestine the Edomites were included. They migrated into the Negeb desert south of Judah and eventually pushed farther north and the southern part of Judah became known as Idumea. This is the basis for the contention that the Jews—or Judeans—were actually Edomites. But king Herod, in the days of Jesus, was an Idumean—and therefore despised by the Jews who hated his pro-Roman Hellenizing policies, and who never forgave his Edomite blood. How, then, could the Jews have been Edomites? Furthermore, millions of Jews were scattered throughout the whole world long before the Idumeans moved into Judea. Most modern Jews are descendants of the Jews of the Diaspora rather than the Jews actually living in Judea at the time of Christ. So—how could the Jews of today be Edomites?

Let's understand the truth. The word Jew is merely a late English form, and a shortened form, of an older English word Judean. The word Judean means a man descended from the patriarch Judah or one descended nationally from the house of Judah or the kingdom of Judah. Christ descended from Judah. Joseph, his father through whom His lineage is reckoned, was from Bethlehem of Judea. Jesus was a Judean. He is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah." HE WAS THEREFORE A JEW! Nothing could be plainer. Notice the following passage: "And after these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for He would not walk in Judaea, because the JEWS sought to kill Him" (Jn. 7:1). Note that Jews were in Judea, in what came to be called Palestine, during the time of Christ. The original inspired Greek word translated "Jews" in this verse is IOUDAIOI, meaning "men of Judah." A Jew is one descended from the house Of Judah. That is the exact meaning of the shortened English word Jew.

The real proof that the Jews of Jesus' day were Israelites lies in the words of Jesus Himself: "Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto Him, Master, thus saying Thou reproachest us also. And He said, Woe unto you also, ye lawyers! (scribes) for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers. Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and YOUR FATHERS killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of YOUR FATHERS: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres" (Lk. 11:45-48) Who killed the prophets? Israelites! It was the people of Israel who killed the prophets, and the scribes of the Jews were their descendants, according to Jesus. Again, "Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the CHILDREN OF THEM WHICH KILLED THE PROPHETS" (Mat. 23:31). "Which of the prophets have not YOUR FATHERS persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom YE HAVE BEEN NOW THE BETRAYERS AND MURDERERS" (Acts 7:52). To the Pharisees Jesus said in the plainest of language, "I KNOW THAT YE ARE ABRAHAM'S SEED; but ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you" (Jn. 8:37). When Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye are of your father the devil," He was speaking spiritually, not racially. The contrast is between being children of GOD and children of the DEVIL. It has nothing to do with whether they were sons of Jacob or Esau. Jesus didn't say, "Ye are of your father Esau, and the works of your father ye will do." The meaning of His words is very plain when taken in context: "If GOD were your father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from GOD; neither came I of Myself, but HE sent Me. YE are of YOUR FATHER the DEVIL, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him" (Jn. 8:42,44).

LAZARUS IN ABRAHAM'S BOSOM

In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus the rich man stands for the Jewish nation which at that time enjoyed the favor and blessing of God above all the nations of the earth. Lazarus, on the other hand, represents the people lying at Judah's gate who were recipients of none of the blessings so lavishly bestowed upon them - the "Gentile" nations. Lazarus found himself in the "dog" class - an ostracized "Gentile," an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a foreigner from the covenants of promise, without Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world. As to religion, all that the nations had were the crumbs that fell from the Jewish table. The influence of the Jews, as we have shown, permeated the whole of Roman life throughout the Empire in the days of Christ, so that the nations did indeed eat the crumbs from their spiritual table. No more graphic picture could have been drawn of conditions at that time than that portrayed by Jesus in this remarkable parable. The story, however, contains a

striking and astonishing PROPHECY - the rich man and Lazarus are to change places - the rich man finding his lot in estrangement, impoverishment and punishment, while Lazarus is spectacularly promoted to "Abraham's bosom" - the place of honor by Abraham, the position of favor and blessing, and of close, personal relationship. Oh, let us grasp this great truth! So few have ever gone deep enough with the Lord to discern its great import and far-reaching consequences. Very few really understand or believe this truth. To reject it is to parade the mere words of man and his ignorant imaginings as superior to and more dependable than divine inspiration. We dare not listen further to man. We must listen only to "Thus says the Lord." Now let us consider the actual fulfillment of our Lord's prophecy, and its wonderful significance and far-reaching consequences.

"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision. For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:2-3). This text is taken from Paul's epistle to the Philippians. In the course of Paul's Spirit-inspired admonition to the saints in Philippi he states, "Beware of the concision." The word "concision" is an ironical expression which means mere "mutilation," that is, to cut off an essential part of; to render imperfect; to maim; to cut up; to destroy. Through the entire period of Paul's ministry, he constantly waged warfare against a class of Christians known as Judaizers. These Judaizers were actually Jews who made it their business to follow around in the places where Paul had ministered, creep into the midst of the believers (vast numbers of whom were Gentile "Proselytes of the Gate") whom Paul had founded on the truth, and defile these believers by proclaiming error and persuading them to become legalistic in their thinking and life-style by placing themselves under the law. And by so doing, the law became the rule by which they measured their righteousness. They were placing their confidence of righteousness in the works of the flesh; in the external observances, the things which they could or could not do, thus making the platform of their salvation to be flesh rather than the reality of HIS INDWELLING LIFE.

We find the description of these Judaizers in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. They were from Judea (Acts 15:1). They were "Pharisees which believed" (Acts 15:5). They had belonged to the Church at Jerusalem (Acts 15:24). They were, or had been, in fellowship with the apostles. We learn these facts in Acts 15:1-2: "And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved ... therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them..." 'But!' one may exclaim, "what possible harm could be done simply by being circumcised or keeping some tenet of the law?" In answer we hear the words of the apostle Paul: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty where with Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that IF YOU BE CIRCUMCISED, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; you are FALLEN FROM GRACE. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which works by love" (Gal. 5:1-6).

Those Judaizers who taught legalism, law, and works, were those of whom Paul spoke when he cried out, "Beware of the concision." Beware of the concision! Beware of the mutilators! Those who would mutilate, cut off, cut up, make maim your faith in Jesus Christ and your standing in Him by grace, thus making your faith void and of no effect through the keeping of the law. They would mutilate your flesh by having you circumcised; but in the mutilating of the foreskin of your flesh they would in reality be mutilating your faith and standing in Christ by grace. For says the apostle, "Your circumcision is made uncircumcision," and again, "and

circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter (law); whose praise is not of men but of God” (Rom. 2:25,29). How clear that our circumcision is spiritual, in the heart and spirit of the inner man; but if we put confidence in the flesh we then make void that which is spiritual, life, and reality.

For what then did circumcision serve? Paul tells us in Rom. 4:11 that circumcision is merely a “sign,” symbol, indication, or token. It is a seal or stamp; a mark of the righteousness of that faith which Abraham had BEFORE he was circumcised. Circumcision was a mere ordinance, an outward sign or symbol of an innerwork of grace. The inspired apostle declared that Christ came to bring into being the circumcision which is in the heart and in the spirit. Stand with me for a moment with bowed head and reverent heart while we hear Paul speak again, “What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, has found? For if Abraham were justified by works, he has whereof to glory; but not before God. For what says the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that works is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that works not, but believes on Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. Comes this blessedness then upon the circumcision (Jews) only, or upon the uncircumcision (Gentile proselytes and Gentile believers) also? For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be THE FATHER OF A-L-L T-H-E-M T-H-A-T B-E-L-I-E-V-E, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: and the FATHER OF CIRCUMCISION to them who are NOT OF THE CIRCUMCISION only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised. For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which be of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: for the law works wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to A-L-L T-H-E S-E-E-D; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM; who is the FATHER OF US ALL, (as it is written, I have made you a father of many nations)” (Rom. 4:1-17).

What could be any plainer than these words of the apostle?

Abraham believed God. And it (his faith) was credited to him for righteousness! He then received the sign of circumcision, which was a seal or symbol of the righteousness which he already had by faith when he was not yet circumcised (still a Gentile!), that he might be the father of all those who now believe, though they are uncircumcised, in order that this righteousness might be credited to them also, as it was to Abraham before he was circumcised, before he was of God’s chosen family by covenant.

Abraham is emphatically declared to be the father of A-L-L who believe! There is no distinction as to race, nationality, or color. There is no distinction between Jew, Israelite, or Gentile. Abraham is the father of ALL those who believe, who are of the faith of Abraham! That includes every born-again believer through the ages, of whatever ethnic origin or color, whether he be Jew or Greek, bond or free, male or female. Flesh, racial lines, color, station,

and class, all fade and pass away in Christ. In HIM there is no middle wall of partition: no distinction. Can we understand that? That regardless of a man's race, nationality or color; if he is a believer; if he is of the spirit and faith of Abraham he can stand and say, "I have Abraham to my father! Father Abraham has many sons and I am one of them!" And being a son of Abraham of necessity makes him an Israelite. Who, then, shall inherit the promises made to father Abraham? Who are his heirs? Hear the answer! "For the promise that Abraham should be heir of the world, was NOT made to Abraham, NOR to those who are his seed through the law, but rather, to those who are His seed through the righteousness of faith!" (Rom. 4:13). The apostle goes on and says that it is this way so that the promise made to Abraham might be sure to ALL the seed, to ALL his offspring; not only those who were under law, but also to those who are made heirs through faith.

There is no distinction. All are one. Paul then closes his argument by declaring that Abraham is the father of us ALL. Paul was writing this letter to the believers in Rome, composed of Jews and Gentile proselytes and converted pagans, and stands as it were in their midst and with one grand inclusive gesture declares, "Abraham is the father of us A-L-L!" Then hastily he adds, "As it is written, I have made you a father of many nations." The significant phrase, "AS it is written," makes the fact that Abraham is a father of many nations contingent upon the foregoing fact that he is the father of US ALL: and the fact that he is the father of us all rests firmly upon the blessed foundation that he is the father of ALL WHO B-E-L-I-E-V-E. So while it is true that a great company of nations has come from Abraham according to the flesh, a beautiful tenderness fills my spirit when the precious thought thrills my soul that Paul is here talking about something higher and grander far than flesh. It is not through natural lineage that Abraham truly fulfills the promise of being a father of many nations, but through those, gathered out of every tongue, and tribe, and people, and nation who have become the children of Abraham through faith!

God's chosen people are not counted according to the natural line of descent. They never will be. Faith in God through Jesus Christ is all that matters. Faith makes all the difference. Those who have received this living faith are children of Abraham. All others are simply strangers and foreigners. Natural lines make no difference whatsoever. "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" (Rom. 10:12). Some would question this word of the Lord and protest, "Oh, but there IS a difference!" But the Holy Spirit says, "There is NO DIFFERENCE between the Jew and the Greek." There is N-O D-I-F-F-E-R-E-N-C-E! For the same Lord over ALL is rich unto ALL that call upon Him. All nationalities are on exactly the same footing. "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness. Know therefore that they which are of faith, the same ARE THE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen (ethnos: nations) through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In you shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:6-9). These words speak for themselves.

When Jesus Christ came to this world of the seed of Abraham through his son Isaac, He came as a seed. Abraham was the seed from which sprang the millions of the house of Judah and the hundreds of millions of the house of Israel. But Paul, in unfolding this great mystery, fastens the hope of all creation on one particular seed, and that seed is Christ. This he does in Gal. 3:16 by saying, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to your seed, which IS CHRIST." Therefore of all the vast multitudes as the dust of the earth, the sands of the sea, and the stars of heaven

in number, the one seed of greatest importance, and the only seed which is made the heir of all the promises given to Abraham, is Jesus Christ.

It is a thing of magnificent wonder that our Lord is called the seed of Abraham! It seems a most singular thing that in that long ago Eden the Lord God told the serpent that the seed of the woman would bruise his head. Why did He not say that the man that should come from the woman would bruise the serpents head? Why did He refer to that man as "her seed," the seed of the woman? It will be a great blessing to your heart to understand the vital truth that "seed" is not only the product of some other life before it but seed is also that which reproduces itself and its kind many thousand fold from generation to generation. On a certain day some Greeks approached the disciples of Jesus with the request, "Sirs, we would see Jesus." This request was promptly carried to Jesus by Andrew and Philip, and our Lord gave this strange and very remarkable reply, "The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit" (Jn. 12:23-24). In this cryptic statement Jesus likened Himself to a seed, a grain of wheat, which was to fall into the ground and die. He would be sown as a seed into the earth and be raised again. Not only would He be raised in glorification, but in centuries yet to come this seed, which was Jesus Christ, would produce a vast harvest of many sons of God in His exact image and likeness. No seed is raised from the earth as just a singular seed, there is always an increase, the natural law of development being "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." Only one seed was planted in the earth, and the Christ who came out of that Palestinian tomb was not the harvest - merely the blade breaking the ground. The multitude that will appear in the time of harvest will be the seed of the seed, the increase, every one bearing the image and likeness of that Christ seed which was planted in death.

I am certain that our Lord's reply was a mystery to those men to whom He spoke. They made their earnest request, "Sirs, we would see Jesus," and He responded with His mysterious dissertation. We are not told whether Jesus ever consented to have these Greeks interview Him, but in answer to their request He gave the strange reply, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone: but if it die, it brings forth much fruit." His message to them was simply this: If they saw Jesus at that time they would see only one seed, one grain in the image of God - the man Christ Jesus. But there would be more, much more to Christ than appeared to them that day! A whole universal field of ripened grain was to follow in His likeness, born of that original seed, imbued with the very same life, raised in the same resurrection, who would be the SONS OF GOD and THE CHRIST even as He is a Son of God and the Christ of God. The many sons would form ONE CHRIST, Head and body, each having the seed of life in himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ, the seed of Abraham, appeared as the firstborn among many brethren (Rom. 8:29). And you, my beloved, will understand a great mystery when you understand that ALL who are products of and partakers of the life of Him who is the seed of Abraham themselves become T-H-E S-E-E-D OF ABRAHAM.

Those in these last days whom God is giving, by His Spirit, understanding of the whole mystery of God in Christ that is in the scriptures, know that the whole mystery and purpose and plan of God in Christ is revealed in the family of Abraham, and in God's dealings with the family of Abraham, from Genesis through Revelation. This mystery begins in Genesis 12, where God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees, and gave Abraham a promise saying, "Leave your home, your country, and your father's house, and go into a new land that I will show you, and I will bless you, and make your name great, and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Few of God's people today and not very many of

God's ministry fully understand this promise that was given by God to Abraham. What God was really saying was that some day, yea, in these last days He would ultimately bring forth a perfect seed, a many-membered perfect seed, a descendant from the line of Abraham who would rule and reign and govern this earth, solve all the world's problems, and bring perfect blessing to all the families of the earth.

Now the apostle Paul, in the book of Galatians, tells us that when God gave this promise to Abraham, if He had said seeds, plural, in you and in your seeds, instead of seed, singular; then the promises of God to Abraham would be fulfilled to the Jews in the State of Israel, or in the great Israel nations of Europe and America, the natural descendants of Abraham according to the flesh. But the apostle tells us by the Spirit that since God said seed, singular, and not seeds plural, then the seed that God was referring to which would bless all the families of the earth is THAT SEED WHICH IS CHRIST, and since we are the body of Christ, then we the body of Christ are that ultimate seed of Abraham that God promised in the long ago would come forth in the earth, and ultimately govern the earth, solve all the world's problems, and bring blessing to all the families of the earth. Therefore, the whole Bible from Genesis 12 through Revelation 12, is just the divine record of God progressively working in every generation through the family of Abraham to purify and perfect the line of Abraham, until ultimately in these last days He would bring forth from the line of Abraham a perfect seed, a many-membered perfect seed, who would govern this world, rule and reign in the earth, solve all the world's problems and bring perfect blessing to all the families of the earth.

When once one's eyes are opened to this mystery in the scripture it is very easy to follow the lineage of Abraham, generation after generation, down through the ages, and see how God has been working in each generation to progressively purify the line of Abraham more and more, to ultimately bring forth that perfect seed. Therefore, when we follow the line of Abraham down through the scriptures we find that out of Abraham came Isaac; and Isaac was the seed in his generation. Then out of Isaac came Jacob; and Jacob was the seed in his generation. Then out of Jacob came twelve sons, a many-membered seed; and they were the seed of Abraham that God worked through in their generation. Then out of twelve sons came twelve tribes of Israel, and they were the seed that God worked through in their generation. Out of them came twelve more tribes in the next generation, and they were the seed in their generation.

Finally, two thousand years ago, out of the twelve tribes came Jesus, and HE WAS THE SEED while He was here. Then Jesus, while He was here, purchased a bride with His own blood, the woman the Church, and on the day of Pentecost His Spirit roared back into this Church which is His body, and this people were born again of the incorruptible seed of the Word (Christ) of God, which lives and abides forever. The first generation of spiritual Israel was born, and they were the seed of Abraham in their generation. The ministry of that generation preached into the spiritual womb of the Church the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, and the second generation of spiritual Israel was born, and they were the seed in their generation. Out of them came the third generation of the true Israel of God, and they were the seed in their generation. Finally now, in these days out of them has come us, the present generation of Israel, the seed of Abraham. We are the seed of Abraham that God is working through in our generation, and out of us is going to come a many-membered manchild who will grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ, be changed into the incorruptible, immortal, eternal nature of God, and become that perfect masculine seed through whom Christ will reign throughout the age and ages of the Kingdom of God on earth,

solve all the world's problems and bring perfect blessings to all the families of the earth, even as God promised Abraham long ago.

All the wonderful promises of God made to Abraham were given to only two people - Abraham and his seed. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to your seed, which is Christ." Then follows the enlightening proclamation: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). As many of Y-O-U (Galatians: Jews, Israelites and Gentiles) as have been baptized INTO CHRIST have put on Christ! And to this very Christ ALL THE PROMISES TO ABRAHAM ARE GIVEN! Can we not see by this that the Abrahamic promises are realized only in that people who are MADE ONE IN HIM, partakers of His life; the promises are to the body of Christ, irrespective of race, color or nationality. No wonder Paul cries out in the very next verse: 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for YOU ARE ALL ONE in Christ Jesus. And IF YOU BE CHRIST'S, THEN ARE YOU ABRAHAM'S SEED, AND HEIRS ACCORDING TO THE PROMISE" (Gal. 3:28-29). Oh, let us grasp this great truth! Whether you be Jew, Israelite, Greek, Galatian, British, American, Spanish, African, Chinese, or any other nationality - I-F you be Christ's, T-H-E-N (and then only) are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

One day Jesus was speaking with some Jews. They were the religious leaders of their day, honored and respected. They thought that they amounted to something because they claimed the distinction of being the natural descendants of Abraham. They said, "Abraham is our father. "Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me ... you are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do" (Jn. 8:33-44). These were, without doubt, the natural seed of Abraham. But they made the fatal mistake of rejecting the Christ - THE seed of Abraham; the co-sharer of all Of Abraham's promises - realizing not that their position in Abraham and also in God depended upon their position in Christ, who was both the son of Abraham and the Son of God. IF YOU BE CHRIST'S, T-H-E-N are you Abraham's seed, says the Lord. And not until THEN! If the Jew be outside of Christ, he is not the seed of Abraham. It is just as simple as that. And, precious friend of mine, the white, English-speaking Anglo-Saxon man or woman outside of Jesus Christ is no more the seed of Abraham than the Ethiopian bushman or the Australian aboriginal! When the heathen do believe in Christ, being washed by the water of regeneration, partakers of His life, born of His Spirit, a new creation in Christ Jesus, they then become the seed of Abraham by the faith of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. When, because of a Roman centurion's great faith, his servant was healed, it was with this very truth in mind that Jesus remarked, "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 (natural heirs, fleshly offspring) shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mat. 8:11-12). In a coming day Abraham will stand at the head of a vast multitude and will look upon his Seed which has sprung forth out of every tribe and kindred and tongue and nation and people. There will be the red, brown, yellow, black and white; and Abraham will be able to say, "These are my children, for they have my faith!" Then Abraham will step back and merge with the multitude, and Jesus will include His father Abraham in the company of His own sons, and the Head of this great Christ will say, "Behold, I and the children which God has given Me are for signs and wonders in Israel" (Isa. 8:18; Heb. 2:12-13).

My sincere purpose in writing of these mysteries is that all who read might see WHO ISRAEL IS. There is a marvelous prophetic passage of scripture in Gen. 28:24-28 in which is related

the experience of the very first Israel of God. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaks. And he said, I will not let you go, except you bless me. And he said unto him, What is your name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, your name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince has your power with God and with men, and has prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray, give me your name. And he said, Why is it that you ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."

It may stagger your imagination to hear what I now say, but once you grasp the truth, you will be mightily helped by it. The kernel of truth in the story related above concerns how Jacob became Israel, Prince of God. It's so very important for those who would go on to sonship to study the life of Jacob who was first called Israel. For, as a brother has written, "Jacob was not the only Israel, but he was only the first Israel of God. For you see, the word Israel simply means PRINCE OF GOD, and Jacob was only the first man that God called out of the world to deal with him until He had changed his nature from the nature of a schemer and a grasper and a supplanter, which was what his name Jacob meant by interpretation, to the nature of one who no longer went through life and thought to conquer life by his own scheming and grasping and supplanting, but became one who, completely helpless in his own strength, could take hold of God and say, I will not let you go until I get the blessing. And when God had changed Jacob's nature from the nature of a schemer, a grasper, and a supplanter to the nature of a prince of God, He gave him a new name to fit his new nature.

"The Bible says there wrestled a man with him all night long. And toward the breaking of the day, when he prevailed not, the man touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh and Jacob became absolutely helpless and could walk no longer in his own strength. And then the picture changes. No longer is the angel of the Lord wrestling with Jacob, but now Jacob is wrestling with the angel of the Lord. And he takes a fresh hold and the angel of the Lord said, Let me go, for the day breaks. The angel really didn't want him to let go, he was only testing Jacob to see how hard Jacob could hang on. And Jacob takes a fresh grip, and says, I will not let you go until I get the blessing. And the angel of the Lord says, What is your name? He says, Jacob, schemer, grasper, supplanter. And the angel says, No, you shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, prince of God. For as a prince has your power with God and men, and have prevailed. No longer Jacob, schemer, grasper, supplanter, but Israel, prince of God. And as such Jacob was only the type of all those in every generation that God calls by His Spirit, out of the world, to change their nature from the nature of schemer, grasper, supplanter, fleshly dependency and effort to a prince of God with power. Then He gives them a new name to fit their new nature. Therefore, Jacob was the first Israel for he was the first called out of the world that God might change his name and his nature. Out of Jacob came twelve sons and they were God's Israel for that generation. Out of them came twelve tribes and they were God's Israel for their generation. Then, finally, out of the twelve tribes came Jesus, and while Jesus was in the world, He was God's Israel, God's Prince. And then out of Jesus came a generation of enchristed Israel and they were God's Israel in their generation. Then over the last 2,000 years have come generation after generation of enchristed Israel. Each out of the other generation, and they were God's Israel for their generation and now, we, who have been called by the Spirit of God out of the masses of the world and religious Babylon that God might deal with us and change our nature, that He might change our name, we are God's Israel for our generation.

“Dearly Beloved, this is the place that God has been apprehending you and me for, waiting for us to come to from the day we were born. Yea, the river Jabok where we have been brought to the place of aloneness with God, separated from the world and religious Babylon. Here we sit completely helpless and the hollow of our thigh has been touched where we can no longer walk in our own strength. No more schemes to depend on, no more of our own thinking, ways, and effort. The flesh has schemed and worked our way into a corner where we can’t go backward or forward, the only way we can look is up. Then the Spirit of God begins to wrestle with us through that long night of darkness wherein He seeks to change our nature from one who is always seeking to grasp and scheme and push our own way through life, to one who has become completely helpless. No longer able to walk in our own strength, but in prayer and the spirit can take hold of God and say, I will not let You go until I get the answer. There is going to come a breaking day for us; yea, our long night of darkness and testing is coming to an end, and the daybreak is coming to us where we’ll become that helpless in our own strength. And God will have finally changed our nature from one who continually tries to grasp and supplant our own way through, to one who, completely helpless, takes hold of the Lord, and in the spirit says, I will not let you go until I get the blessing and the answer.

When that happens God will change our name and give us a new name to fit our new nature. Only the new name that He gives us is not just Israel, Prince of God. The name that He gives us is CHRIST SON OF GOD. For then will be fulfilled the scripture wherein Jesus said, “Him that overcomes ... I will write upon him My new name” (Rev. 3:12). From that hour forth we have power with God and with men and have prevailed over every battle that will ever come against us, for God has changed our nature from one who fights his own battles to one who has become completely helpless; one through whom God fights. Then the angel of the Lord will say to us, ‘What is your name? Jacob, schemer, grasper, supplanter? Oh no! From henceforth you shall have a new name. Not just Israel, Prince of God, but Christ, Son of God. And you have prevailed. Hallelujah!’ “ And these, my beloved, as Jacob-Israel of old, ARE THE TRUE ISRAEL OF GOD! “If you be Christ’s, T-H-E-N are you Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Paul says to the saints in Galatia, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, ARE THE CHILDREN OF PROMISE” (Gal. 4:28).

The Philippian Church most certainly consisted of both Jews and Gentiles. The first convert was Lydia, who was a Jewess (Acts 16:14). Then followed the case of the girl possessed with a spirit of divination. Paul cast out the spirit, and undoubtedly the girl was saved. In Acts 16:19-21 we learn that her masters were Romans, which means in all probability that the girl was also Roman. Then followed the conversion of the Philippian jailer, who most certainly was a Gentile. It is only reasonable to conclude that the greater part of the Philippian Church were Gentile Proselytes of the Gate or pagans, as were the other Churches founded by Paul who was the apostle to the nations. And note carefully, that he draws no distinction between himself and his Gentile converts. “WE are the circumcision” (Phil. 3:3). And oh, that the Church today might learn this simple, yet immensely important truth! “W-E (both Israelite and Gentile) are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and HAVE NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH. “It is high time for us to understand that natural birth has nothing to do with being of the circumcision or the Kingdom of God. “Except a man be born again he cannot... enter into the Kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:3,5). Natural lineage and natural rites and ceremonies and ordinances have nothing whatever to do with making us a part of Gods chosen people. WE are the circumcision who have NO CONFIDENCE in the FLESH! But we, Jew, Israelite, and Gentile; rich and poor; free and bond; male and female,

worship God in the Spirit, having received a circumcision of the heart by the operation of the Spirit of God.

This blunt expose of the fleshly confidence of the natural Israel was certainly a blow to the Jews of Paul's day. The new standard of righteousness and favor with God no longer depended on their genealogy or lineage, for now the axe was laid to the root of the tree. The Jews' religion was based on the fact of their ability to trace their ancestry back to Abraham, but fleshly lineage would no longer count or be acceptable to God. "WE are the circumcision ... who have NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH." When Jesus was selecting His twelve disciples the scripture says, "Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile" (Jn. 1:47). Jesus' reference to Nathanael as "an Israelite indeed" implies that at the time Jesus came there were those who were Israelites in name only. One unmistakable mark of an Israelite in name only is one whose confidence is in the flesh. It pains me to say it, but it has been my experience that many who embrace the identity of Anglo-Saxon-Celtic Israel are High-Masters in the cult of those who place confidence in the flesh. Some, like the Jews of old, feel that ancestry with Abraham gives special claim to the promises and purposes of God, even claiming that fleshly descent is the first prerequisite for sonship. God forbid! We might well fill this whole book with the glorious truth of sonship, but no factor of this truth is more solemn or of greater import than the words of our Lord wherein He stated, "It is the Spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing" (Jn. 6:63). Notice that Jesus did not say that the flesh profits a little, or has a small advantage, or that the flesh gives you a head start towards sonship. He said plainly, "The flesh profits N-O-T-H-I-N-G." It is vain and foolish to trust in the flesh, and John the Baptist put it rather succinctly, "And begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father..." (Lk. 3:8). So you have Abraham for your father! That fact alone will not get you into the Kingdom, nor will it enable you to inherit the promises. In order to qualify as the Israel of God one must come by way of the cross and the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. John went on to say, "...for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." And let me ask you, precious friend of mine, If God is able of stones to raise up children unto Abraham, should it be thought a thing incredible or impossible that He should of the Gentiles raise up seed to Abraham? Because men walk in the natural and are thus incapable of grasping spiritual realities, even though they may profess to be spiritual, we have on every hand those who think of Israel almost wholly on the natural plane. Brethren, WE are Israel. WE are the Kingdom of God. WE are the elect. WE are the many-membered Christ. WE are God's chosen people. WE are the sons of God. WE are God's witnesses. And it is not because of our national or blood lines, but altogether by grace and through faith. "They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." Do you believe it?

All who partake of this circumcision of which Jesus is the minister, are the true Israel of God. And so, contrary to popular belief, the natural Jew is, in reality, no Jew at all! That is, if the Word of God means anything at all. And it does. Hear me you all! "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly (in the flesh); neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter" (Rom. 2:28-29). The testimony is sure: He is NOT a Jew, which is one outwardly in the flesh! But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, in the heart and spirit, REGARDLESS OF WHAT HE IS IN THE FLESH. The inner man of the new creation is unaffected by what a man is outwardly, in the flesh He has no confidence in the flesh, but worships God in the spirit. And, I might add, he is NOT an Anglo-Saxon Israelite, who is one outwardly, in the flesh! But he is an Israelite, which is one inwardly, in the spirit. Do you believe it? Do you? God says so. Is His Word true or false?

Those who say they are, and without doubt are, the natural descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; who call themselves Jews and Israelites are nothing more than counterfeits and frauds. The real Jew and the real Israelite is one who has become the seed of Abraham through faith. Not by natural blood, but by the transfusion of the blood (life) of the Christ. These are they who have been circumcised in mind and heart and spirit, without hands. It is all by faith, the faith of Abraham. Therefore, all who call themselves the seed of Abraham, or the circumcision, or Jews, or Israelites, without being born again are bastards, or as our Lord said, "You are of your father the devil." These are spoken of in Rev. 2:9, "I know your works, and tribulation, and poverty, and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are of the synagogue of Satan." These solemn words of wisdom and understanding are written to the Church which is His body. Again, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you" (Rev. 3:9).

In spite of these scriptures, there are some who still declare that the "circumcision" or these false Jews will rule the world. Shame on them! Those who are true Jews are going to rule the world! Those who are Christ's, irrespective of race or color. Of course there will be natural Jews (and Anglo-Saxon-Celtic Israelites!) among them; those who through faith in Jesus Christ, like every other man, have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ALL of God's chosen people, those who worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh, will rule the world. "For the saints of the most High shall take the Kingdom, and possess the Kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever!" (Dan. 7:18). The SAINTS shall possess the Kingdom. The Jews, as a people, have never been saints. The Anglo-Saxon-Celtic peoples, as a race, have not been saints either! No one will dispute who the saints are. They are most certainly those who have been regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost, irrespective of nationality. This fact is testified by the whole of the New Testament.

As the glory has departed from the natural seed of Abraham, and from the fleshly circumcision, so it long ago departed from the earthly Jerusalem, and has fallen instead on the heavenly Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem, which is from above, which will rule as the city foursquare from pole to pole and from sea to sea. To believers at Ephesus Paul declared, "Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom all the building fitly framed together grows unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom you also are built together for an habitation of God through the spirit" (Eph. 2:19-22).

Those who would relegate the blessings and promises to a natural seed of Abraham seem to have forgotten that it is those who "suffer with Christ" that shall also reign with Him (Rom. 8:17; II Tim. 2:12). The natural Jews would not have "this man" to reign over them. They said "His blood be on us, and on our children" (Mat. 27:25). They cited, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Little wonder that Jesus said unto them, "Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard His parables, they perceived that He spoke of them" (Mat. 21:43,45). So we learn that there definitely was a transfer of the Kingdom of God from the house of Judah to a nation born of the seed of the Christ, gathered out of all nations, sanctified by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, made precious and elect. And it is this great multitude which IS NOW LAZARUS IN ABRAHAM'S BOSOM! The Kingdom of God was taken from the house of Judah and their house has been left unto them

desolate unto this day. THE RICH MAN IS IN HELL! Now, we must all enter into the Kingdom of God by the same route. Jesus said, "I am the way. I am the door." He that climbs up any other way, even by claiming natural descent, is a thief and a robber. Intimate relationship and vital union with Jesus Christ is all that counts. And that's all that ever will count. He that has the Son has life. He that has not the Son of God has not life. He that suffers with Christ shall reign with Him. He that is of faith, the same is the child of Abraham. It's just that simple.

This brings us to the question raised by the apostle Paul in the eleventh chapter of Romans where he says, "I say then, Has God cast away His people (natural Israel)?" (Rom. 11:1). The apostle is asking, Is there no hope left for the natural seed of Abraham? Is the door forever closed on them? Are they utterly rejected from the favor and blessing of God? Are they cast away from the purposes of God with no promise remaining? He then answers his own question by saying, "God forbid!" The apostle goes on to assert that he, himself, is an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. If they were utterly rejected, then he himself would be hopeless, cut off from Christ, rejected from his apostleship. Following this he speaks of how Elijah thought that all Israel had rebelled against the Lord and had been abandoned by Him. But in that hour, God made Elijah to know that there were yet 7,000 who remained faithful to Yahweh. Then the very definite and glorious statement shows just how the fleshly Israel is preserved as God's chosen people: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. 11:5). Oh no! God has not utterly rejected the descendants of Abraham, for they, too, like any man of any race may be saved! And so the apostle says that there is a remnant, a portion, a company of the natural seed which now has found favor with God according to the election of GRACE. They too, can become recipients of the promises - through faith in Jesus Christ! It is by grace through faith. Interestingly enough, in our day there is more than merely a small remnant, there is a vast multitude of Abraham's seed that serves the Lord. And the great majority of these are from Anglo-Saxon-Celtic Israel! The inspired apostle hastily adds, "And if by grace, then it is NO MORE OF WORKS (natural means): otherwise grace is no more grace. What then? Israel (natural) has not obtained that which he seeks for; but the election (of grace) has obtained it, and the rest were blinded. According as it is written, God has given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day. 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 fullness? 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? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree (Abrahamic Covenant); boast not against the branches. But if you boast, you bears not the root, but the root you. You wilt say then, the branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. But be not high-minded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not you. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness; otherwise you also shall be cut off. And they also, IF THEY ABIDE NOT STILL IN UNBELIEF, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again" (Rom. 11:5-23). This whole matter of branches broken off and other branches grafted in is but another parable illustrating the same truth contained in our Lord's story of the rich man and Lazarus. The branches broken

off are the rich man; the branches grafted in (in Abraham's bosom) are Lazarus. Blessed be the name of the Lord!

THE RICH MAN IN TORMENT

One of the cherished doctrines of those who know not the truth, is the pathetic ignorance that such as call themselves Jews, and have returned to the land of Palestine will, in time, rule the world. They are merely too ignorant of facts to know that the new land of Canaan for the new age is a domain on which the sun never sets. "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:10; Ps. 72:8). They are also too ignorant to know that this worldwide dominion is even now ready to be established by the sons of God, the Christ, the seed of Abraham, through whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. All of this was prophesied by our Saviour in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Alas, for the poor rich man, how many things he does now that he never did in his day of splendor. Old things have passed away, all things have become new. The purple, the fine linen, the sumptuous fare, are all gone, and in their place is torment, want, prayer; and, though last mentioned, not the least point recorded for our learning - the eyes of the rich man have been opened and he sees the Kingdom of Heaven. What a reversal! "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." Oh, what a rude awakening! Here he had thought himself to have a through ticket straight to glory. But he was wrong! The poor, despised, insignificant Lazarus, whom he would not even countenance on earth, is now at the place of honor afar off, where he thought he should be. This indicates the house of Judah or the Jews of this dispensation seeing the Abrahamic Covenant fulfilled in another people (Mat. 21:43), and as far as they are concerned the prospect of the gracious promises given to Abraham being fulfilled in them is certainly "afar off," and it devastates them. And you will find that they are ever envious of the constant blessing God has given to His people.

"And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame" (Lk. 16:24). What? Think about it! If he is in a literal, raging flame, completely surrounded and engulfed by seething fires, would he be carrying on a conversation? Instantly his hair, eyebrows, eyelashes would have dissolved; his skin would begin blistering, and he would have only a fraction of a second to emit a bloodcurdling SCREAM! No, this conversation is not coming from a man who is completely engulfed in literal fire! What then is TORMENTING the rich man? Why, what he SEES! Notice: It says he "lift up his EYES..." even as Jesus warned the Pharisees, "You shall SEE Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom, and you yourselves cast out!" Shocked realization comes to the rich man's mind. According to the parable, he instantly recognizes Lazarus, and Abraham. He sees them as if in a glorious state; perhaps even engaged in partaking of a sumptuous banquet, not unlike the hundreds of banquets the rich man enjoyed during his life, all the while offering only the leavings of his table for Lazarus! The fire is a word, a burning word of authority, as Jeremiah said, "Your word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones" (Jer. 20:9). Ah, it was the WORD OF THE KINGDOM brought by Jesus, which always angered, enraged, and infuriated the Jews! Provoked and indignant beyond explanation his mouth becomes completely dry, his tongue virtually cleaves to the roof of his mouth, and he cannot even moisten his lips! In mental anguish and paralyzing fright he calls out for Lazarus to at least "dip his finger in water" and COOL his Pharisaic TONGUE (doctrine of the Pharisees), for he was TORMENTED in this flame!

In the Greek, the word used here for “torment” is BASANOS which is what is commonly known in English as the “touchstone.” Its proper usage in olden times was to try the genuineness of gold. The pure gold rubbed on the stone would leave a peculiar mark, different to that of other metals or alloys. Therefore it acquired a symbolic significance: a test or criterion for determining the quality or the genuineness of a thing; to test for purity or truth. The hell of the rich man was not a place where he was tortured by a torment sadistically inflicted, but a condition of testing for truth or purity. Our great God is not an almighty monster, a celestial Hitler or a heavenly Stalin, but ever the Lord of compassion and tender mercies. However, the best of earthly fathers must at times find it expedient to inflict a measure of pain and suffering on a son, to serve as a means of correction. That is the way in which the word “touchstone” is used in this parable. The rich man’s torment, then, is that which is effected by the LIVING and ENERGETIC WORD of God, for this Word is the “discerner and analyzer and sifter (Wuest) of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). When the rich man was being tormented in the flames, as he watched Lazarus from afar in Abraham’s bosom, he was having his GENUINENESS AND QUALITY tested by the ESSENCE-WORD of God, which is the living spirit of prophecy, which is, in reality, God Himself - for in the beginning was the Word, and the Word WAS GOD! Truly, OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE!

On the individual level I have seen many a man tormented by the living Word of God! A friend has ably written, “We have seen that the pouring out of the New Wine, which is the positive anointed Word of the Kingdom, will break the old wineskins. What we are confronted with here, however, is the awful truth that there are two ways that it will work to destroy the wineskins. In the first, which relates to the remnant, the election, the New Wine is poured in, bringing such an essence of truth with it that the elect will automatically reject and move out of the realm of static religious form. This brings life! But to those who cannot release the form and offer it up as a sacrifice to God, there comes an altogether different effect. God must move in to claim His own sacrifice. This is what happened in the period that brought the Church age. Those who formed the remnant of Israel received the New Wine of the Spirit with joy, and left behind the animal sacrifices, because they knew they were partaking of the true sacrifice. They forsook the law and commandments, the rituals and ceremonies and endless ordinances because they had grasped the reality of the new day. The essence of Judaism was fulfilled in them. But to those who clung desperately to the old, the New Wine had another effect. Fulfilled in the firstfruits of that day, the old form was already cracked, and because it was already fulfilled God sent the Roman armies in to carry out the garbage that remained. Thus we find that it was as Paul said, ‘We are a fragrance of life unto life, but we are a fragrance (odor) of death - unto death.’ To those who are alive, we smell fragrantly alive. But to those who are dead, we have the stench of death! But it was the same anointing that did both works. There was not a word of life for one group and a word of death and judgment for another. It was the SAME WORD - but falling on different ears. It was the same rain - but falling on different ground. It was the same sun rising - but shining on different material. As the old saying goes, ‘The same sun that melts wax, hardens clay.’ That is why, in Rev. 22:11 the Lord says, ‘He that is unjust let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.’ One Greek commentator said that the sense of the Greek in this passage is, ‘Let him be more and more filthy, more and more unjust, more and more righteous, more and more holy.’ In other words, the LIGHT reveals the condition - it does not CREATE IT! I like what I read in Wuest the other night: ‘Light rejected, blinds!’ Jesus said, ‘Men refuse to come to the light because their deeds are evil.’ The same Word that blesses one will become a curse to another because of the difference in the heart that receives it. This is why I say there is no need to judge Babylon, because ‘He that believes not is condemned already.’ A BEAUTIFUL WORD

will condemn an unrighteous heart - and will at the same time deliver the righteous" -end quote.

The rich man was tormented by the effect of the very Word of the Kingdom which brought salvation to Lazarus! But beyond this - there is also that sense of torment that has been experienced by the rich man by virtue of the very condition in which he has found himself throughout the centuries since the dispensations changed. History interprets the rich man's doom. The story of Judah is the story of the flame of fire. Jewry as such has been in a veritable lake of fire ever since they as a nation rejected Christ. "You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?" (Mat. 23:33). Jesus Christ foresaw and foretold the rejection of the Jews and the long night of wandering in unbelief that would follow. In Mat. 23:37-38 we have depicted the Lord Jesus Christ standing on the mount of Olives. He was weeping over the great city of Jerusalem that lay just below Him, and the great love of His heart for the Jews was poured out in most tender and sympathetic words. He exclaimed, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kills the prophets, and stones them which are sent unto you, how often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

What a beautiful figure Christ is using here to express His tender love for His own people according to the flesh! "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah" (Heb. 7:14). When the mother hen sees a storm brewing, immediately her first concern is for the fluffy little chicks that compose her brood. She gathers them under her wings, and protects them from the storm or from the hawk that may be flying overhead. Close to her breast they are sheltered and can feel the very heartbeat of the mother bird's love for them. This is the picture of the MOTHERHOOD OF GOD revealed in Jesus Christ. So He expressed Himself concerning the Jews. He would have gathered them to His bosom, and they would have felt His heartbeat of love for them, if they had only given Him a chance to do so; but they had rejected Him and were just getting ready to cry, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" He knew all about it. Jesus could foresee the entire scene of trial and crucifixion, and as He stood there upon the mountaintop weeping over them He was forced to exclaim, "Your house is left unto you desolate." The great and beautiful temple would soon be a desolation and a mass of debris. The service that had been the center of the worship of Jehovah for centuries was about to come to a close. Great Zion, the glory of the whole earth, would soon be a heap of ruins, lying in the dust.

The Roman people came to the city of Jerusalem some thirty-five Years after Jesus Christ was sent to the cross, and besieged the Holy City. When the city was captured, it is said that over a million Jews perished. Every tree that grew around the city of Jerusalem for over the radius of a mile was used in making crosses to crucify the Jews. History tells us that as many as ninety Jews were crucified upon one tree. Thus was fulfilled the prediction made by the Jews themselves - Let His blood be on us and on our children. Whereas the Jews sowed one cross upon Calvary's hill, they reaped thousands for themselves at the destruction Of the Holy City. The Romans scattered the Jews to the four winds of heaven; and for two long milleniums they never came back again to Jerusalem and have not to this day returned to the bosom of Abraham. They have been rejected and despised as they have gone from nation to nation, until the Jewish name became a byword in almost the entire world. Just a few Jews continued to dwell in the city of Jerusalem during the centuries, and from week to week they came and continue to come out to a spot called the "Wailing Wall," and there they have wept, longing for the return of those wonderful days of the long ago when Judah was basking in the sunlight of the favors of God and they were considered the favorites of the Most High. At the Wailing Wall the mournful wail of the Jews is heard: "On account of the priests, who have stumbled,

we sit lonely and weep. On account of our kings who have despised Him (Jehovah) we sit lonely and weep. Oh, make haste, O Redeemer of Zion: speak to the heart of Jerusalem. May the royal government shine over Zion. Comfort those who mourn in Zion." But although twenty centuries have passed by, their tears and prayers have been of no avail, for there is still a great gulf fixed and there is no way for them to pass over again to the old days of glory.

The Wailing Wall is mentioned in scripture. "Their heart cried unto the Lord, O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest" (Lam. 2:18). The Wailing Wall is an ancient wall, consisting largely of huge blocks of stone, which once formed part of the old temple of Solomon. This to the Jews is by far the most sacred part of the city of Jerusalem. They know that these colossal fragments of the time of Solomon antedate by a thousand years even the oldest of all other such memorials. There, century after century, the wretched exiles from Mt. Zion have come to kiss or bathe with tears these relics of their former glory. Now they are free to do so; but in past ages they paid enormous sums to their oppressors for this miserable privilege. It is a most pathetic instance of a nation's grief. How well I remember that when we were in Israel the scene at the wailing wall was to me the most pathetic scene of all. No one who has a particle of sympathy with human sorrow can gaze upon that scene without emotion. For, while some read aloud from the Old Testament words which describe the splendors of the ancient Kingdom, others moan and sob and beat their trembling hands against the wall. Everyone seems to be in motion, either nodding rhythmically, or rocking back and forth while chanting, mumbling, whispering, or shouting forth their words, while interspersed among the jumbled murmur of prayers are deep groans and sighs, and betimes a sudden shriek as if of pain.

What wonder that they mourn! For two thousand years this former rich man has been in hell, tormented in his flame! For long centuries his history has been one of almost uninterrupted tragedy. Scattered throughout the world, scorned by all nations, Judah has been forced to suffer every form of persecution which men have been sufficiently cruel and ingenious to invent. Words fail to depict their sufferings. To torture, rob, and exile them, the despotism of a hundred kings has been exhausted. They have been bought and sold as slaves. The plague which devastated Europe in the Middle Ages was ascribed to them with horrible results. In France, throughout whole provinces, every Jew was burned. In Germany, too, their history for centuries is a hideous chronicle of human cruelty, culminating in the monstrous holocaust during the second World War. We shudder at the brutal policy of Russia toward the Jews in this century and before, but let us not forget that all other nations, except free America, have acted in a similar way. The desperate situation into which the Jews fell as a result of their rejection of Jesus Christ is unequalled in human history. The Jews have been in torment ever since. And although a remnant now possesses the land of their fathers, their unending troubles make them a cup of trembling unto all who burden themselves with them. At this date the rich man is still in hell!

While the rich man had previously fared sumptuously, he is now seen in dire need - but he makes a mistake - he cries for the lost promises in Abraham instead of his Saviour! He pleads for Abraham to send help instead of Israel's Redeemer. He is all mixed up. His prayer is addressed to a person who has no power to answer prayer. Abraham has no power to save. Israel has no power to save. Fleshly identity and carnal works have no ability to bring the glory of God. He cries amiss and pleads his affliction which he has brought upon himself when he crucified his Saviour, even the Lord of Glory. He pleads for a drop of living water at the hands of Lazarus to cool his Pharasaic tongue, but it cannot be! The man is in want, and his need is a need that in this world God not only promises, but delights to supply. The scriptures abound

with invitations to the poor and needy lacking water. To them “the Spirit and the bride say, Come.” And they who have accepted the invitation for themselves, are commanded to say, “Come.” And to all the words are addressed, “Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” But the same God, who without exception gives to every thirsty soul these most gracious invitations, tells them also to WHOM they must come for water. Not to saints, or angels, or the spirits of just men made perfect, but to the Lord Jesus Christ; to Him of whom, under the teaching of God’s Spirit, the Samaritan woman asked water; to Him who in the temple stood and cried, “If any man thirst let him come unto ME and drink”; to Him who has said, whosoever drinks of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.” The rich man went to Abraham and asked him for water, and had he asked him for it when he was on the earth, Abraham would have been just as unable to give it to him, as he was when he asked him for it in hell.

But, thank God! it can be obtained. Never has the cry, “I thirst,” gone up unto GOD, never did man feel his need of God, and cry for Him, and unto Him, without getting God. To every thirsting soul on earth, thus says the Lord: “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue fails for thirst, I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water” (Isa. 41:17-18). As certain as the rising of tomorrow’s sun is the faithful promise of the almighty Lord, “For I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part has happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so A-L-L I-S-R-A-E-L SHALL BE SAVED: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion 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 you 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 has concluded them ALL in unbelief, that He might have mercy UPON ALL. 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!” (Rom. 11:25-33).

THE GREAT GULF

“Abraham said, SON” (Lk. 16:25). What bitter retrospection of privileges enjoyed, of opportunities neglected, must that first word have called up! And remember, that like all other scripture, that word was written for our learning. “Abraham said, SON.” What! A son of Abraham in hell! Can this be possible? And will Abraham himself, to whom the promises were made, acknowledge as his son one of the children of the wicked one? Yes: for no one knew better than did Abraham the distinction between a mere Israelite after the flesh, and the true descendants of that SEED in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

When the rich man in hell begs for mercy he is reminded that “there is a great gulf fixed” in between the poor man in Abraham’s bosom and him in his hell, “so that they which would pass from us unto you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.” Surely this was to clinch agony with agony and to rivet it with despair. There is certainly a great gulf fixed today between the Jews who have suffered hell during this dispensation of the Church, and the people who are now enjoying the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant. The Jews believe that Jesus is an imposter to this very day. They are Christ rejecters, and

know nothing whatever of life and reality and blessing and glory in the Spirit; but the body of Christ gathered out of all nations, enjoying the covenant blessing, is the seed of Abraham by faith, inheriting the promises. And between these two there is "a great gulf fixed." For the house of Judah to return to Abraham's bosom today would mean for the Jews to return to the bosom of Jesus Christ and this seems to be far from the present tendencies or aspirations of the Jewish people.

Certainly THIS GREAT GULF explains the mystery of why the Jew is the hardest and most discouraging mission field in the world. Has it never amazed you that many heathen can hear the Gospel once, see it clearly, accept it, and be born again by faith in Him? Prostitutes, drug addicts, the poor, the illiterate - all have gladly received the message of Christ and have been wondrously transformed thereby. They have been awakened! Their eyes see it - their ears hear it - their hearts understand and respond! Yet the Jew is under the grip of the spirit of slumber! A deep sleep from the Lord has fallen upon them, and they simply cannot understand anything that is said or preached about the Lord Jesus Christ. There are thousands of Jews dying right now in total spiritual darkness about the Christ - going out into the spirit world under the spell of a thick darkness. It is not that they will not hear, rather, it is that they CANNOT! What a tragedy - millions of spiritually hungry, searching, seeking Jews; and they cannot find what they are looking for. The Messiah came - He lives today - and they can't see Him! They can't hear Him! They are in the dark about Him! They are in a spiritual coma!

Resigned, at last, to his fate, the rich man begs Abraham to send someone to his father's house, to warn his five brothers "lest they also come into this place of torment." Abraham then says, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them!' Amazing. It was by means of Moses and the prophets that Jesus opened the eyes of the two men that were with Him on the way to Emmaus, which caused their hearts to burn within them as they listened to Him on the way. It says in Lk. 24:27, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." And later these two men said one to the other, "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the scriptures?" And when He stood in the midst of the eleven that night, and they were full of doubt and fear concerning His resurrection, even after He had eaten in their presence, and they had had a chance to gaze upon Him for some time and to become convinced that He was actually risen from the dead, yet it seems that the greatest confirmation came from the scriptures to which He referred. In Lk. 24:44-45 we read, "And He said unto them, These are the words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning Me. Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures."

We live in an hour when many, including those who embrace the truths of sonship, reconciliation, etc., depreciate the value of the written Word of God. But it is through the power of the scriptures that nations are brought to the obedience of the faith of Christ. "Now to Him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of the faith" (Rom. 16:25). The prophecies of Moses concerning the Lord Jesus Christ are very clear and convincing. Just before Stephen was stoned, he mentioned one of those predictions made by Moses, which said unto the children of Israel concerning the coming of Jesus Christ, "This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto

you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall you hear" (Acts 7:37). Moses looked forward to the coming of Jesus Christ as seeing Him that is invisible and our Lord Jesus used Moses repeatedly to confirm His teachings. He even quoted Moses to the devil at the time of His temptation in the wilderness of Judea. Moses and the prophets were of special significance to the house of Judah and all Israel, and Stephen indicted the Jews for their blindness and unbelief in what was written in the scriptures concerning the Christ. He said, "Of this man's (David's) seed has God according to His promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus ... and ... 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" (Acts 13:23,27-28).

Notice what the rich man's final argument is. "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." In his vision of the Kingdom of God he hears Abraham finally say, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, **THOUGH ONE ROSE FROM THE DEAD!**" What a shocking truth! For in these very words the Lord Jesus proclaimed to the Pharisees **HIS OWN RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD**. For Jesus Christ of Nazareth, did, literally, **RISE FROM THE DEAD** - and the vast majority of Jews and Israelites scattered throughout the nations still didn't believe, even though the fact was proclaimed to them from the scriptures and by eye witnesses to His majesty. On another occasion the Lord told them, "For had you believed Moses, you would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if you believe not his writings, how shall you believe My words?" (Jn. 5:46-47). So Jesus commissioned His apostles, sent the Holy Spirit, and formed them into the nucleus of His Church. He delivered to that Church the commission to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and to disciple **A-L-L NATIONS** - Lazarus in Abraham's bosom! The rich man went to his hell. And there is a Great Gulf between to this very day!

A dark picture, yes. But wait, we are not through. We have yet a bright picture to present of this selfsame nation. These black clouds of judgment have a bright silver lining. There is a better day coming for the house of Judah, a glorious day. "Oh," you exclaim, "but no one can cross the Great Gulf - how can the Jews be saved?" Let us not be guilty of adding to the divine words. A. Burns wrote, "Here the parable comes to an end. It bears the marks of being an unfinished picture. The revelation of truth concerning the rich man's future rests, so to speak, while waiting the further unfolding of the divine plan concerning him. That unfolding takes place elsewhere in scriptures. This particular passage does not contain the entire history of this unhappy nation. It is but the darker side of it." There is a glory beyond the gloom, as Romans nine to eleven makes clear: "What will their taking back be but **LIFE FROM THE DEAD?**"

The Bible says that Abraham could not cross that abyss, nor could Lazarus. There is no denying that. But this fact must not be warped into the assertion that no one can cross it, or that it can never be crossed, for that would be adding to the Word of God. Let it be carefully noted that if inability to cross the Gulf is taught, as it certainly is, it is man's inability and not God's. The "Great Gulf fixed," which severs those who once were nigh but now are cast out, though utterly impassable for man, is not so for "Him who has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, and shuts and no man opens, who **HAS THE K-E-Y-S OF DEATH AND HELL**" (Rev. 1:18; 3:7). Andrew Jukes asked, "Who are we, to say that the gulf, impassable to man, cannot be passed by Christ, or that He cannot bring the last prisoner safely back, even out of the lowest prison? As well might we argue that because 'the Ethiopian cannot

change his skin, or the leopard his spots,' - because the evil man can never by his own act make himself good, - therefore God can never change him. The firstfruits are a proof of what God can do."

I declare to you today that THE CHRIST HIMSELF CROSSED THAT ABYSS. There is the difference! You say that Abraham said, "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they which would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us." Let me remind you that, although Abraham said that, the Christ did not. That is right, Abraham; you could not bridge it! And even if you could, you did not have the keys to the gates. But the Christ crossed that Gulf, and HIS SALVATION BRIDGED IT. Christ bridged it! The Christ Himself IS THE BRIDGE! It is no use talking nonsense, saying that the Gulf was not bridged. It was not bridged at the time Jesus told that story, but when He arose and grasped the keys of death and of hell, He made a way for His banished to return. Granted, the Gulf still exists in the consciousness of the people, of both the rich man and Lazarus, but from Christ's standpoint it is bridged so that even now "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

It was bridged by Jesus Christ, and there is not any gulf that He cannot bridge. I believe it! If there is, then He is not God, because there is no gulf that God and His love cannot bridge. Jesus Christ has bridged the gulf between God and man, between Israelite and Gentile, between bond and free, between male and female, between rich and poor, and between heaven and hell. He has bridged all the gulfs, blessed be His name, and so "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). Thank God! a greater than Abraham is here! He bridges the gulf between heaven and earth and between earth and hell, for it is written, "That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11). Weymouth translates, "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of beings in the highest heavens, of those on the earth, and of THOSE IN THE UNDERWORLD, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Every knee, every tongue, every being certainly includes the rich man and Lazarus! The hymn writer captured the wonderful truth when he penned these immortal words:

Oh, the love that drew salvation's plan!
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man!
Oh, the mighty GULF THAT GOD DID SPAN - at Calvary!

The Jewish nation has passed through a time of great darkness. They have had deep sorrow. But if we are sure that God's Word has been fulfilled in scattering them among the nations, and blinding their hearts to the glory of Christ, the Messiah, we should have no hesitation in believing that at the conclusion of this age God will gather them, and lift the dark veil from off their minds, for the promise of the Almighty unto them is sure: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you shall call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord your God has driven you, and you shall return unto the Lord your God, and shall obey His voice ... you and your children, with all your heart, and with all your soul; then the Lord your God will return your captivity, and have compassion upon you, and will return and gather you from all the

nations ... and He will do you good, and the Lord your God will CIRCUMCISE YOUR HEART, AND THE HEART OF YOUR SEED, to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, that you may live” (Deut. 30:1-6).

The dark covering that has been cast over the minds and hearts of the people of Judah for lo! two thousand years will be completely destroyed when the sons of God reign in the Kingdom of their Father. We have not yet witnessed the magnitude of ministry that shall be revealed through the manifested sons of God. God is preparing His perfected and matured body, anointed with the fullness of the seven-fold Spirit of God, and this enChristed company shall appear on the cosmic stage of history in these last days with ten thousand times more power than a Moses, a Joshua, a Samuel, a David, an Elijah, a Peter, a Paul, a St. Patrick, a Wesley, a Whitfield, a Finney, or any of the mighty ministries of this century. God has moved deeply upon my heart in these days to prophesy to God’s elect that there is coming a great and glorious MANIFESTATION OF CHRIST before the face of all nations and the whole earth. There will be a fresh and universal and dispensational revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It’s going to come in the midst of a people who truly “love His appearing,” and I see and hear signs that already He is beginning to come. We are standing on the threshold of a new and fresh and transcendental manifestation of the Lord. These things are burning like a furnace inside of me. I am being quickened by these things. I know God is on the move, and my deepest desire is to be a participator in this outflow of HIS LIFE that will usher in a new day for this sin-cursed planet. The Lord wants to reveal Himself in our midst in a new way, and through us to creation. I am asking God to unveil and manifest Himself to me in these days in a fuller way. Oh God! do a new thing!

To the same Jews in whose hearing Jesus gave the parable of the rich man and Lazarus He also said, “YOU shall not SEE ME henceforth, till you say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord” (Mat. 23:39). “Until” recalls the words of divine grace. He will not hide His face forever. He left their house unto them desolate, He dispersed them into the flame of hell, and hid His face, His presence, His favor, His glory - from them, “till” - not for ever, but “till you say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!” Again, “And they shall SEE the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” (Mat. 24:30). “Behold, He comes with clouds; and every eye shall SEE Him” (Rev. 1:7). Every one who is a scholar knows that the words “see” and “know” are identical in their spiritual meaning. When I tell a brother something he did not see before, and I am trying to get him to see it, all at once there passes over his face the illumination which indicates intelligence. He says, “Brother Preston, I see it!” What does he mean? He does not mean that he sees anything with the eye of flesh. He means that he “knows” it. I talk to a blind man who has no eyes to see at all. I explain something to him and presently he says, “Brother, I SEE it!” Does he see anything? No! But he KNOWS it. How many times in the day do you say, “I see it.” Jesus said, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall SEE GOD,” yet no man has seen God at any time, the scripture affirms. Suppose I give you the meaning of this passage: “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall KNOW God.” It is better to know God than even to see Him by the eyes of sense. There are many who saw Jesus who did not know Him. They saw the Christ, but they knew not that He was the Christ. They saw His miracles, but they did not know Him. They even rejected Him and hated Him, many of them. It took the illumination that comes only by the effectual influence of the Holy Spirit to say with the Roman centurion, “Truly this was the Son of God.” You could see Jesus Himself in bodily form today, but unless you had purity of heart you could not know Him to be the Christ. It is only purity of heart which gives purity of sight.

Yes, the hour is wonderfully near at hand when the words of Christ shall be finally fulfilled, "You shall not see Me henceforth, till you shall say, Blessed is HE that comes in the name of the Lord." The time is nigh when the Jewish nation shall behold with astonishment the matchless wonder of the Christ coming again to be "glorified IN HIS SAINTS, and to be admired IN all them that believe in that day" (II Thes. 1:10). The history of Jewish persecution at the hands of so-called Christians forms a significant part of the backdrop against which Jews have tended to perceive both Christ and Christians. The Christians they have known have, for the most part, been citizens and ambassadors of Mystery Babylon. They have not seen THE CHRIST. They have not beheld the love, wisdom or glory of God in His saints. Can we not see by this that when Jesus said, "You shall not see Me henceforth, till you shall say, Blessed is He that COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD," He spoke of the arising of a people into the name or nature of the Lord to so become the revelation of HIMSELF to the house of Judah that they shall cry, "BLESSED IS HE THAT COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!" IN scripture "name" means "nature." Ah, methinks that the Jew has not for two thousand years SEEN THE NATURE OF THE LORD in His people! All creation, including the Jew, stands on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of God's sons coming into their own, a people fashioned into His image and likeness, showing forth the virtues and excellencies of our God. When at last they behold this their hearts shall be ravished with the revelation of HIS LOVE, God shall anoint their eyes with heavenly eye salve, the divine harmony of truth shall sound upon their hearts until their spirits are caught away to the mount of the Lord, and in that vision of the sons of God standing with the Lamb on mount Zion they shall say, "Blessed is HE that COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!" Blessed is that many-membered Christ that comes in the nature of the Lord. Blessed is He, the Christ, Head and body, the revelation of the likeness of the God of Israel.

Judah is being regathered in unbelief. They know not the Christ. No fruit has grown on the fig tree of their nation for a whole age. But now the hour is at hand for the curse to be lifted and Judah will accept the Christ and the whole nation and people will be born again in this day by the power of the Holy Spirit. The next great event of earth-shaking importance, following the manifestation of the sons of God, will be the national conversion of the Jews. Jesus Christ will soon reveal Himself to the Israeli people in and through the sons of God. The veil shall be lifted from their eyes and they shall SEE HIM IN HIS BODY and shall cry, "Blessed is HE that comes in the name (nature) of the Lord!" The hour is wonderfully nigh at hand when the word of the Lord by the prophet Zechariah is to be fulfilled, "And I will pour upon the house of David (Judah), and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness" (Zech. 12:10; 13:1).

The first step in this wondrous process here described is the descent of the Spirit upon them nationally, and first He comes upon them as a "spirit of grace," to which they are "twice dead" - devoid of it by nature, but over and above this judicially graceless because of the curse of their awful sin in rejecting their Messiah and Saviour. But along with this He shall come as a "spirit of supplications," leading them out of the depths to cry mightily unto God for mercy and light. Thank God! the long night is almost over. He who has the KEYS OF HELL is none other than the blessed Saviour. The age of curse and judgment is even now swiftly drawing to a close. And now, at last, "A-L-L Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26). He who sent the rich man to hell, and put in place that ominous Gulf of separation from Abraham's bosom, is the very

same One of whom it is written, "For God has concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon ALL" (Rom. 11:32).

And now, my friend, you know the real TRUTH about the parable of the rich man and Lazarus!

About The Author

J. Preston Eby was born into a Mennonite family in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. While still a toddler his parents received the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the witness of some Pentecostal brethren in the area. They were led of the Lord to sell their business and move to Alabama to do missionary work. In his twelfth year Preston was filled with the Spirit – and in that same year the Holy Spirit sovereignly unfolded to his understanding the wonderful truth of the reconciliation of all things and all men unto God. No one else around him – in family or church associations – embraced this revelation. Through those early years he kept this truth to himself and pondered it in his heart. Later he came into contact with, and was touched by, a mighty move of the Spirit known as the "Latter Rain", with emphasis on the body of Christ, gifts of the Spirit, laying on of hands, impartation, five-fold ministry, prophetic ministry, spiritual worship, the kingdom of God, and going on to perfection, unto fullness of sonship to God.

The Lord pressed him into a deeper walk with Him, intensifying within his heart the truths of sonship and the kingdom of God, already planted within as seed through the visitation of the Lord as Latter Rain. Along the way he became associated with brother Gerald Derstine and The Gospel Crusade in Sarasota, Florida, serving as an associate minister with him for eight years, first co-pastoring and later pastoring the Revival Tabernacle in that city. His wife Lorain and he, with their family, were on the mission field in Latin America for a total of five years, with ministry in several other areas as well. For seven years, following this, he was an elder in a fellowship of believers in El Paso, Texas where they witnessed a precious move of the Spirit and a body of saints flowing together in the liberty and life of the Spirit.

Eventually the Lord changed even that order, and in 1976 led him into a full-time writing ministry directed to those who are called and chosen as elect of God to grow up into the full stature of Jesus Christ as sons of God. The writing ministry includes a monthly message titled KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES as well as a number of booklets on various subjects. This ministry is greatly expanding throughout the world and our sincere hope and earnest prayer is that this course shall redound to HIS GLORY in encouragement, strengthening, edification and blessing to unnumbered thousands of God's elect sons everywhere – that creation may at last witness the true manifestation of the sons of God, setting all creation free from the bondage of corruption, restoring all things to God, and bringing to pass the glory of the kingdom of God throughout the whole earth and unto the unbounded heavens.

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES are sent free to anyone upon request. God's Word is always free to all. God's way is, "Freely you have received, freely give" (Mat. 10:8).